

Public Document Pack

Meeting Supplement

Council

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Tuesday 16 April 2024 7.00 pm

Council Chamber - Town Hall - Maidenhead & on [RBWM YouTube](#)

The following papers have been added to the meeting's agenda as they were not available for publication when the notice of meeting was issued.

Supplement

Item	Description	Page
6	<p>Petition for Debate: Restoration of direct bus service from Maidenhead to Heathrow</p> <p>Hari Sharma of Furze Platt Ward has submitted the following petition for debate:</p> <p><i>We the undersigned petition the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead to restore every half an hour direct bus service from Maidenhead to Heathrow. A. Recently Maidenhead had lost every half an hour direct bus service Number 4 to Heathrow Central. B. This direct bus service to Heathrow had been running more than 20 years, serving Maidenhead train station/Taplow/Burnham/Slough/Colnbrook /Heathrow Central. C. New replaced service number 6 terminates at Wexham Estate in Slough D. Residents have to change at Slough to another bus service to get to Heathrow which is causing inconvenience to elderly, disabled in wheel chair and people with young children in buggies + luggage. especially in the dark, rain and bad weather as there is no waiting space due to non-operational bus station.</i></p> <p>Full information about the petition, context and signatures can be viewed on the petition pages of the website.</p> <p>The Constitution provides for a maximum time of 30 minutes for councillors to debate petitions; this can be extended at the Mayor's discretion.</p> <p>a) The Mayor will invite the Lead Petitioner to address the meeting (5 minutes maximum)</p> <p>b) The Mayor to invite the relevant Cabinet Member to speak, including proposing any recommendation in the report (if relevant) (5 minutes maximum)</p>	3 - 12

	<p>c) The Mayor to ask for the motion to be seconded</p> <p>d) Motions without Notice (other than those detailed in Part 2 C13 of the constitution) will not be allowed.</p> <p>e) The Mayor to invite any relevant Ward Councillors to speak (5 minutes maximum each)</p> <p>f) The Mayor will invite all Members to debate the matter (Rules of Debate as per the Constitution apply)</p>	
8	<p>Council Plan 2024-28</p> <p>To approve the new Council Plan, 2024-28, setting out the council's strategic aims and priorities for the next four years. This includes a Technical Appendix, comprising of key deliverables for 2024-25 and a revised set of performance metrics to monitor performance and progress against the Plan.</p>	13 - 20
13	<p>Unit 4 Agresso Finance System - Upgrade and Transition to Cloud Version</p> <p>To consider the proposal to continue use of an updated Unit 4 Agresso Finance system and its transition to a Cloud based version.</p>	21 - 26

By attending this meeting, participants are consenting to the audio & visual recording being permitted and acknowledge that this shall remain accessible in the public domain permanently.

Please contact Kirsty Hunt, kirsty.hunt@rbwm.gov.uk, with any special requests that you may have when attending this meeting.



Report Title:	Restoration of direct bus service from Maidenhead to Heathrow e-Petition
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Hill, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre and Employment
Meeting and Date:	Council – 16 April 2024
Responsible Officer(s):	Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place Services & Alysse Strachan, Assistant Director of Neighbourhood Services
Wards affected:	All wards

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REPORT SUMMARY

An [e-Petition](#) has been received and secured 1,170 signatures. The lead petitioner requested it be debated at a meeting of Council.

The Petition says “We the undersigned petition the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead to restore every half an hour direct bus service from Maidenhead to Heathrow. A. Recently Maidenhead had lost every half an hour direct bus service Number 4 to Heathrow Central. B. This direct bus service to Heathrow had been running more than 20 years, serving Maidenhead train station/Taplow/Burnham/Slough/Colnbrook /Heathrow Central. C. New replaced service number 6 terminates at Wexham Estate in Slough D. Residents have to change at Slough to another bus service to get to Heathrow which is causing inconvenience to elderly, disabled in wheel chair and people with young children in buggies + luggage. especially in the dark, rain and bad weather as there is no waiting space due to non-operational bus station.”

This paper explains the options that are available in response to this petition and what the effects would be on other bus routes within the borough. In addition, it also addresses the issue of which local authority, this particular service was originally provided by.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Council notes the petition and:

- i) **Agrees that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre and Employment writes to their counterpart at the relevant authority, to bring their attention to the petition and the number of signatures that it received.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre and Employment writes to their counterpart at the relevant local authority, to bring their attention to the petition and the number of signatures that it received. This is the recommended option	As the mentioned bus service was not originally funded by the Council, the recommended option is that the relevant Cabinet Member writes to their counterpart at the relevant local authority to bring this to their attention. However, the Council does acknowledge the financial constraints that presently face local authorities, which if the service was re-introduced, could cause major risk.
That a new bus service is created, which replicates the route discussed within the petition. This is not the recommended option	Funding would need to be obtained by removing one or more currently existing bus service(s) within the borough, in order for a new one to be created, as this additional funding was not agreed in the 2024/25 Budget.
Do Nothing This is not the recommended option	This would not uphold the Council's Petitions Protocol in welcoming residents to share their concerns with the Council.

- 2.1 This e-Petition was received in early August 2023 and was administered in the correct way. However, in due course, it had been identified by officers that the wording used within the petition, was not entirely accurate. However, due to the quantity of signatures having been received and after officers had explained the issues to the Lead Petitioner, it was decided to allow the petition to remain active as also requested by the Lead Petitioner.
- 2.2 Through subsequent investigations by officers, "Bus Service Number 4" that has been referred to in the petition was funded by a neighbouring authority and not by RBWM. Therefore, there is no possible way of 'restoring' the bus service, as this is outside of the Council's jurisdiction.
- 2.3 However, an agreed way forward due to the significant amount of public interest, that had been reflected within the petition's signature quantity, it was agreed that a reasonable course of action would be for the relevant Cabinet Member to write to the local authority and make them aware of the public interest.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Any introduction of a new bus route within the borough would incur a financial cost to the Council, hence why this was not recommended due to it being not budgeted for.
- 3.2 For the recommendation option, there would be no key implications for the Council, however it could have an implication on a neighbouring local authority, dependant on how they proceeded.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Letter is sent from RBWM to neighbouring LA	If the letter is not sent within 3 weeks	If the letter is sent within 3 weeks	If the letter is sent by 23.04.24	If the letter is sent by 17.04.24	7 May 2024

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 The recommendation of the report has no financial implications to the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The identified and potential risks associated with the options and the proposed and the proposed course of action are detailed in table 3.

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Threat or risk	Impact with no mitigations in place or if all mitigations fail	Likelihood of risk occurring with no mitigations in place.	Mitigations currently in place	Mitigations proposed	Impact of risk once all mitigations in place and working	Likelihood of risk occurring with all mitigations in place.
There is a risk that if publicly a letter is agreed to be sent to the local authority, then this would put the financial burden on them. However, the risk to RBWM would be low.	Minor 1	Very unlikely – only a small chance this will occur	The Council has various bus services in operation currently. The one that is the subject of the petition, does not fall within the Council's remit.	n/a	Minor 1	Very unlikely – only a small chance this will occur

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 Equalities. An Equality Impact Assessment is available as Appendix A.

8. CONSULTATION

- This is a report that responds to a petition. No consultation has been undertaken.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 Implementation date if not called in: Within 3 weeks of the meeting of Council. The full implementation stages are set out in table 4.

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
16/04/24	Council meeting
07/05/24	Letter is sent within 3 weeks of Council meeting

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 This report is supported by no background documents:

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>	
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources & S151 Officer	08.04.24	
Elaine Browne	Deputy Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer	08.04.24	08.04.24
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Julian McGowan	Senior Business Partner & Deputy S151 Officer	08.04.24	11.04.24
Jane Cryer	Principal Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer		
Helena Stevenson	Principal Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>	
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>	
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer		

Mandatory:	<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>		
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	08.04.24	
Mandatory:	<i>Assistant Director HR – to advise if report has potential staffing or workforce implications</i>		
Nikki Craig	Assistant Director of HR, Corporate Projects and IT		
Other consultees:			
Executive Directors (where relevant)			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive		
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place Services		
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Social Care, Health & Communities		
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services & Education		
Assistant Directors (where relevant)			
Alysse Strachan	Assistant Director of Neighbourhood Services	08.04.24	
External (where relevant)			

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre and Employment	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Council decision	No	Yes

Report Author: Oran Norris-Browne, Democratic Services Team Leader & Tim Golabek, Service Lead – Transport, Highways and Parking
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Appendix A - Equality Impact Assessment

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

www.rbwm.gov.uk



1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	Restoration of direct bus service from Maidenhead to Heathrow e-Petition
Service area:	<u>Transport</u>
Directorate:	<u>Place</u>

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal:

- What are its intended outcomes?
- Who will deliver it?
- Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?

The relevant Cabinet Member is to write to a neighbouring authority to make them aware of the public support for a bus route that is no longer active. This was never an RBWM bus service, and therefore cannot be reinstated by the Council.

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees?

- If No, please explain why not, including how you've considered equality issues.
- Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage? (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)

No – as this does not fall under RBWM's jurisdiction, this does not directly impact any of the above. This would only change if the local authority in question, were to change their decision.

If 'No', proceed to 'Sign off'. If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

Who will be affected by this proposal?

For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff

Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) disproportionately represented?

For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?

What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned?

- How has/will equality considerations be taken into account?
- Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?

What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment?

Please consult the Equalities Evidence Grid for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document.

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state 'Not Applicable'

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the Guidance document.

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age			
Disability			
Sex			
Race, ethnicity and religion			
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment			
Pregnancy and maternity			
Marriage and civil partnership			
Armed forces community			
Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty			
Children in care/Care leavers			

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it?

For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group

Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this?

- For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.

How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the future?

See guidance document for examples of appropriate stages to review an EQIA.

6. Sign Off

Completed by: Oran Norris-Browne	Date: 08.04.24
Approved by:	Date:

If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

Reviewed by:	Date:
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Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment Council Plan 2024-28

Background Information

Service area:	Council-wide
Directorate:	Council-wide
Completed by: Clare Walsha Date: 15/03/2024	Approved by: Date

Introduction

This EQIA is for the Council Plan, 2024-28, which sets out the council's strategic aims and priorities for the next four years. The Council Plan includes a Technical Appendix, which includes key deliverables for 2024-25 and a revised set of performance metrics, by which to monitor performance and progress against the Plan. The Council Plan provides a framework for all council decision-making, including resource allocation. The Strategic Aims and Priorities were shared in draft as part of the November and February Cabinet reports on the 2024-25 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy and were developed in consultation with staff, Members, parishes and key stakeholders.

The five aims of the Council Plan are:

- Aim 1: Put the council on a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively
- Aim 2: A cleaner, greener, safer and prosperous borough
- Aim 3: Children and young people have a good start in life and opportunities through to adulthood
- Aim 4: People live healthy and independent lives in supportive communities
- Aim 5: A high-performing council that delivers for the borough

The Council Plan makes it clear that setting the council on to a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively, must be the primary focus. The current financial position constrains the organisation's ability to pursue wider priorities until it achieves a more stable financial position. However, the council remains ambitious for the borough. The council will spend almost £100m next year in delivering essential services, in addition to capital investment of £13m in the borough's critical infrastructure. The council is also undertaking an ambitious transformation programme to change the ways in which we deliver services, and to enable more efficient and effective delivery of our priorities.

The Council is committed to protecting the most vulnerable members of our community, whilst pursuing cost-effective solutions to support the enablement and empowerment of those with a lower level of need alongside a longer-term approach of prevention and early intervention. Under each of the five aims of the Council Plan there are a number of strategic priorities some of which are linked to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act. These strategic priorities are set out by the aims below.

Aim 1: Put the council on a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively
EQIA for the budget has been carried out separately and was published as part of the papers for Budget Council Thursday 29 February, Agenda Reports Pack p.169.

Aim 2: A cleaner, greener, safer and prosperous borough

- Ensure availability of housing, that meets our local housing needs, with a focus on social housing and tackling homelessness.

Aim 3: Children and young people have a good start in life and opportunities through to adulthood

- Support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives.
- Support children and young people in our care and meet their needs safely.
- Support all children and young people from birth into adulthood, enabling them to live, learn and thrive locally and access opportunities.
- opportunities Support young people and families to develop resilience and independence.

Aim 4: People live healthy and independent lives in supportive communities

- A council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing and reducing the impact of inequalities.
- Provide access to the right support to residents at the right time, in the right place, with a focus on early help and prevention, to maintain and extend independent living.
- Deliver quality adult social care with suitable homes for those who need life-long support.

Aim 5: A high-performing council that delivers for the borough

- Strengthen how we work to serve the borough better - placing the borough at the heart of communities; listening to people and involving them in decision-making.
- Strengthen partnerships with charities, the voluntary sector, businesses, parishes, health and education partners, statutory bodies, faith groups and others to enable better outcomes for residents.

The EQIA sets out the deliverables under the priorities which will impact on the key groups.

Consultation

The Council Plan has been informed by engagement sessions with key stakeholder groups including: young people, older people, people with disabilities, the voluntary and community sector, Members, parishes and staff. A total of 224 people participated in the sessions, with more contributing to responses submitted via email or the online survey. There was support for the general direction of the council's emerging aims and priorities, with feedback contributing to their shaping and definition in a number of key areas, such as partnership working. The early community engagement highlighted priority concerns for residents and the VCS and the later sessions fed into the definition of the aims and priorities.

Equality Impact Analysis

	<p>How do the protected characteristics influence the needs of individuals within this proposal?</p> <p>How might these characteristics affect the impact of the proposal?</p> <p>(If no influence on impact, state 'N/A')</p>	<p>Overall impact</p> <p>(Tick where relevant)</p>
<p>Age</p>	<p><u>Older people</u> A deliverable under aim 4 focuses on improving accessibility and inclusivity for older people (amongst under groups) Aim 4: Priority: provide access to the right support to residents at the right time Deliverable: Develop effective service pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p><u>Children and younger people</u> Aim 3 focuses on children and young people and a number of deliverables will positively impact the experience of children and young people including through targeted out-reach, new 'Think Families' approach, development of services for children in need and those with mental health difficulties. Priority: Support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives Deliverable: Build on our multi-disciplinary teams to provide early support to children and young people as part of a "Think Families" approach, so that their needs do not escalate to requiring statutory support. Deliverable: Build on our targeted outreach support for young people and their families so that their needs can be safely met at home or in their communities, when appropriate. Deliverable: Provide effective early help support to children and young people experiencing difficulties with their wellbeing and/or mental health.</p> <p>Priority: Support young people and families to develop resilience and independence</p>	<p>The overall approach of the Council Plan is designed to improve outcomes in the medium term, to mitigate impacts to the most vulnerable and to strengthen preventative services, and will therefore have an ultimately positive impact. Due to budget constraints, priorities and deliverables under Aim 1 in some cases have a negative impact which is covered by a separate EQIA.</p>

	<p>Deliverable: Develop a Participation Strategy to strengthen engagement with children and young people and ensure their views are heard and included in decisions that impact their lives.</p> <p>Deliverable: Create a new child and family help service that supports children in need (CIN) and families needing targeted support.</p> <p>A deliverable under Aim 4 specifically references intervention with regards to weight for children.</p> <p>Priority: A Council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing</p> <p>Develop and deliver a whole systems approach to healthy weight for children and families, focusing in areas with higher rates of overweight and obesity, including steps to improve the food environment.</p> <p>A deliverable under Aim 5 specifically references improving engagement with young people.</p> <p>Priority: Strengthen how we work to serve the borough better</p> <p>Deliverable: Strengthen our approach to public consultation to better promote engagement with any under-represented groups including young people and continue to embed the council's engagement framework.</p>	
<p>Disability</p>	<p>Two deliverables under Aim 3 are focused on improving care and interventions for children with mental health and SEND.</p> <p>Priority: support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives</p> <p>Deliverable: Provide effective early help support to children and young people experiencing difficulties with their wellbeing and/or mental health.</p> <p>Priority: Support all children and young people from birth into adulthood, enabling them to live, learn and thrive locally and access opportunities</p> <p>Deliverable: Work with Adult Social Care and housing providers to improve pathway and transition planning for young people with SEND.</p> <p>Two deliverables under Aim 4 specifically refer to those with disability and improving support for those living in their own homes</p>	

	<p>and also increasing provision for those unable to live independently.</p> <p>Priority: Provide access to the right support to residents at the right time Review and revise the Disabled Facilities Grant Policy to enable wider use of the funding in supporting residents to live a safe and full life in their own homes.</p> <p>Priority: Deliver quality adult social care with suitable homes for those who need life-long support Deliverable: Develop more “lifetime homes” in Windsor and up to 18 “Shared Lives” arrangements across the borough to enable more people with learning disabilities to live in their own homes or with families, reducing the number of out-of-borough residential placements and further increasing service value for money.</p> <p>A deliverable under aim 4 includes a focus on improving pathways and access to services for those with disability.</p> <p>Priority: provide access to the right support to residents at the right time Deliverable: Develop effective service pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p>A deliverable under Aim 5 includes a reference to under-represented groups which includes people with disability.</p> <p>Priority: strengthen how we work to serve the borough better Deliverable: Continue to embed the council’s engagement framework, including development of specific guidance to better engage with young people, and strengthen our approach to public consultation to better promote engagement with any under-represented groups.</p>	
Sex	The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.	
Race, Ethnicity and Religion/Belief	<p>A deliverable under Aim 5 includes reference to improving engagement with under-represented groups which includes minority ethnic groups and religious groups.</p> <p>Priority: strengthen how we work to serve the borough better Deliverable: Continue to embed the council’s engagement framework, including</p>	

	<p>development of specific guidance to better engage with young people, and strengthen our approach to public consultation to better promote engagement with any under-represented groups.</p> <p>The following priority includes specific reference to strengthening partnerships with faith groups.</p> <p>Priority: Strengthen partnerships with charities, the voluntary sector, businesses, and parishes, health and education partners, statutory bodies, faith groups and others to enable better outcomes for residents</p>	
Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment	<p>Under Aim 4, there are plans to improve the provision of services to the LGBTQ+ community through partner working.</p> <p>Priority: A Council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop effective pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity to drug and alcohol services.</p>	
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.</p>	
Care experience (children in care and care leavers)	<p>A number of deliverables under Aim 3 are focused on improving the experience of children in care and care leavers.</p> <p>Priority: support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives</p> <p>Deliverable: Improve the timeliness of initial and annual health assessments for children in care and care leavers.</p> <p>Priority: support children and young people in our care</p> <p>Deliverables: Develop an in-house registered children's home provision and supported accommodation model for Care Leavers to meet care needs safely and locally.</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop a Care Leavers' guarantor scheme and improve the range of support available to Care Leavers to enable them to move into their own housing with appropriate support.</p>	
Socio-economic disadvantage (e.g., low income, poverty)	<p>A deliverable under Aim 2 will benefit areas of high deprivation who are more likely to have higher levels of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Priority: Keep our neighbourhoods green and safe' sets out a deliverable</p>	

	<p>Deliverable: Work in partnership to deliver key priorities for public protection in the reduction of serious violence, crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and enabling community resilience through community warden engagement.</p> <p>Two deliverables under the Aim 2 are focused on improving people with socio-economic disadvantage who are homeless or at the risk of becoming homeless. Priority: Ensure availability of housing that meets our local housing needs, with a focus on social housing and tackling homelessness</p> <p>Deliverable: Review and revise Housing policies, practice and procurement to provide improved service and accommodation solutions to those who are homeless or seeking provision of social housing.</p> <p>Deliverable: Identify opportunities and explore partnerships to increase availability of permanent housing/temporary accommodation and reduce the cost of temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Mutiple priorities and deliverables under Aim 3 are focused on improving outcomes of those in poverty and/or socio-economic disadvantage. Priority: support children and families to live safe, happy and healthy lives.</p> <p>Deliverable: Build on our multi-disciplinary teams to provide early support to children and young people as part of a "Think Families" approach, so that their needs do not escalate to requiring statutory support. Priority: Support all children and young people from birth into adulthood, enabling them to live, learn and thrive locally and access opportunities</p> <p>Deliverable: Work to reduce gaps in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics between children in receipt of the Pupil Premium grant and their peers. Priority: Support young people and families</p> <p>Deliverable: Create a new child and family help service that supports children in need (CIN) and families needing targeted support.</p>	
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	<p>Multiple deliverables under Aim 4 will benefit those with socio-economic disadvantage because children who in poverty are more likely to be obese, people with socio-economic disadvantage are more likely to require access to drug and alcohol treatment services, people with socio-economic disadvantage are more likely to be adversely effected and more profoundly affected by increasing cost-of-living and therefore more likely to benefit from these interventions</p> <p>Priority: A Council-wide focus on increasing healthy life expectancy, improving wellbeing</p> <p>Deliverable: Deliverable: Help to reduce the impact of cost of living rises on our residents, with a focus on those most at risk, through targeted financial and practical support e.g. Here to Help, Household Support Fund, Warm Spaces, Multiply.</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop and deliver a whole systems approach to healthy weight for children and families, focusing in areas with higher rates of overweight and obesity, including steps to improve the food environment.</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop effective pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity to drug and alcohol services.</p> <p>Priority: Provide access to the right support to residents at the right time</p> <p>Deliverable: Develop effective service pathways to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</p>	
Marriage and Civil Partnership (in respect of employment discrimination only)	The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.	
Armed Forces Community (in respect of access to public services)	The Council Plan is not anticipated to disproportionately or differentially impact individuals based upon this protected characteristic.	

Where a potential negative impact has been identified, what measures would be put in place to mitigate or minimise it?

The Council Plan is not anticipated to have a negative impact on any of the groups within the EQIA, excluding those groups already identified through the Budget 2024/25. The Council Plan aims at explicitly improving services including accessibility and inclusivity for those who have protected characteristics.

Report Title:	Unit 4 Agresso Finance System – Upgrade and Transition to Cloud Version
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Jones, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
Meeting and Date:	Council – 16 April 2024
Responsible Officer(s):	Elizabeth Griffiths, Executive Director of Resources
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

This report recommends the continued use of an updated Unit 4 Agresso Finance system and its transition to a Cloud based version.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Council notes the report and:

- i) Approves the continued use of the upgraded cloud-based version of Unit 4 Agresso.**
- ii) Approves an addition of £197k to the 2025/26 Capital Programme.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report.

Option	Comments
Transition to an upgraded cloud-based version of Unit4 Agresso for a five (5) year term. This is the recommended option	Ensures a stable Finance System for the Council, Partner Organisations and Key Applications to enable delivery of Services to Residents and complete its Transformation Program.
Go out to tender. Not recommended	The Provider has given insufficient notice of the cessation of server-based support to conduct a full competitive procurement exercise.
Do Nothing. Not recommended	The Council must move from the server-based Unit 4 Finance System as support ceases on 31/12/24. The Council cannot have an unsupported Finance System.

- 2.1 The recommendations above will ensure that the Council has a stable Finance System to enable major projects that integrate with Unit 4 Agresso to be completed, and for the Transformation Programme to run and efficiencies to be achieved from it.
- 2.2 Continued use of Unit 4 Agresso will mean that the mobilisation and implementation of the new Adults Social Care Case Management system which depends on the continuity of a Finance System will not be impacted. A change in provider would result in delays and additional costs.
- 2.3 Partner Organisations e.g. Optalis, the Property Company, Berkshire Pension Fund and the majority of maintained schools use Unit 4 Agresso on a chargeable basis. A change of Finance System would impact on service continuity and the Council's income stream.
- 2.4 The Council's Revenue and Benefits system integrates with the Unit 4 Agresso Finance System, the Council needs to ensure there is no disruption to this critical function.
- 2.5 Moving to a Cloud version of Unit 4 Agresso for most users will be seamless, with screens etc being the same.
- 2.6 Recent completed implementations that interact with the Finance System e.g. HR & Payroll will be impacted and require additional integration work. These projects could not have been planned as they would not have been known about until the notice of moving to the Cloud was given by Unit 4.
- 2.7 The Council must comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015) when considering continued use of Unit4 Agresso as this requirement exceeds the Services threshold. Discussions with the Procurement Manager has identified two potential options to secure a new contract with Unit4 for the Council's Finance System. When both options have been thoroughly investigated for compliancy, risk, and suitability for the Council a decision will be made as to which option to use.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council has used the Agresso finance system supplied by Unit 4 since 2001, and currently have perpetual licenses which gives them the ongoing right to use the software. We pay an annual fee for support and maintenance and access to upgrades when they are made available.
- 3.2 The Agresso system includes key financial models such as the General Ledger as well as other functionality such as Purchase Ordering, Budgeting, invoice payment workflow approvals and Customer Billing.
- 3.3 The Council currently operates version 7.4 of Agresso, and this is an on premise server based version of the system.
- 3.4 Unit 4 have approached all their server-based clients, informing them that support for this application software will be withdrawn after 31st December 2024. Clients are required to agree to transfer to a cloud-based version of the software (version 7.12).

- 3.5 An agreement must be signed with Unit 4 prior to 31st December 2024, the date of RBWMs transition is not yet known as the supplier of Agresso (Unit 4) will have many clients in the same position, and discussions with the provider will need to happen. It is anticipated that the transition will occur in the 2025/26 financial year. We will need to avoid key dates in the financial year to avoid the risk of system failure.
- 3.6 The limited notice period the supplier has given precludes a full competitive procurement exercise which would need to include market research/engagement, document preparation, tendering, evaluation, approvals/award, project implementation and finally mobilisation/transition.
- 3.7 RBWM has limited capacity to transition to a different financial system. It is important that the limited resources in Finance and IT are focussed on current projects and the upcoming Transformation Programme.
- 3.8 The transformation work will review current financial processes and make recommendations to change/improve our existing finance processes and possible system configuration changes. If the use of the current system cannot be extended, this piece of work, and the benefits of it, would need to be postponed by more than a year which would remove the ability for it to be funded by the flexible use of capital receipts.
- 3.9 Officers are recommending the use of PCR Regulations 72 (1) (b) (i) & (ii) and PCR Regulations 72 (1) (c) (i) (ii) & (iii) Modifications of contracts during the term to secure a contract with Unit4. These Regulations allow for additional services where a change of contractor cannot be made for economic and/or technical reasons for reasons of interchangeability and/or interoperability with existing services. Also that it would cause significant inconvenience or substantial duplication of costs, but not exceed 50% of the original contract. The need for the modification cannot be one that the Council could have foreseen, nor can it alter the overall nature of the contract.
- 3.10 Officers are also investigating the use of a direct award option under the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) G-Cloud Framework. Guidance on the Framework is unclear, and we are seeking further advice from CCS and contacting other authorities that have chosen this route. We are checking for compliancy and doing a risk assessment.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 RBWM currently pays £110k per annum for support for the existing server-based version of Unit 4 Agresso. It owns a 'perpetual licence' for the server-based version, but this will be of no value to the Council when we transition to Software as a Service (SaaS) on the Cloud. Whilst we would still have access to and be able to use our perpetual licenses, without support the risk to the Council's Finance System and the applications it supports is too great. We are effectively forced to move onto the Cloud version of the software.
- 4.2 Unit 4 is proposing an enforced move to their Cloud version of the Application, this will mean an increase to the annual support and licensing costs for all its

client base. The Council's fee will be £187k per annum, effective from the date of signing the new agreement. This is anticipated to be in December 2024.

- 4.3 Additional project resources will be incurred as a result of the transition to Unit 4 Cloud. This is estimated to be £100k-£150k. These costs would be required to support the project implementation, training and development of enhancements that the new version will offer.
- 4.4 Implementation costs for an alternative providers Finance System implementation would greatly exceed this and is estimated to be £500k-£1m.
- 4.5 There would be an additional full year cost of £77k per annum for Unit 4 support. In addition there would be a one-off transition cost of £47k to Unit 4.

Table 2: Financial impact of report's recommendations

REVENUE COSTS	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Additional total	£19,250	£77,000	£77,000
Reduction	£0	£0	£0
Net Impact	£19,250	£77,000	£77,000

CAPITAL COSTS	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Additional total	£0	£197,000	£0
Reduction	£0	£0	£0
Net Impact	£0	£197,000	£0

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has the option of two legally compliant routes to secure the continued use of Unit 4 Agresso system. One has been confirmed and the other is being reviewed.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 If the rules of the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) G-Cloud Framework are followed a direct award to Unit4 is a compliant route to secure a new contract and the risk of a successful challenge minimal.
- 6.2 The Council have sufficient compelling reasons to evidence that we can comply with the relevant requirements of 'PCR Regulations 72 (1) (b) (a) & (ii) and PCR Regulations 72 (1) (c) (in) (ii) & (iii) Modifications of contracts during the term' to secure an extended contract.

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Equalities. Not applicable
- 7.2 Climate change/sustainability. No impact.

7.3 Data Protection/GDPR. Consultation will be carried out with the Information Governance team.

8. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 As per the table below:

Table 3: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
By 31.12.2024	Need to confirm upgrade to Unit 4 to ensure continued support
2025/26	Transition to Cloud based system (date tbc)

9. APPENDICES

None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.

11. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>	
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources & S151 Officer		8/4/23
Elaine Browne	Deputy Director of Law & Governance & Monitoring Officer		8/4/23
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Julian McGowan	Deputy S151 Officer		
Jane Cryer	Principal Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer		
Helena Stevenson	Principal Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>	
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		8/4/23
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>	
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer		

Mandatory:	<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on Equal, or agree an equal is not required</i>		
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer		
Mandatory:	<i>Assistant Director HR – to advise if report has potential staffing or workforce implications</i>		
Nikki Craig	Assistant Director of HR, Corporate Projects and IT		

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Key decision First entered into the Cabinet Forward Plan: xxxxx	No	No

Report Author: Elizabeth Griffiths, S151 officer
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