

NOTICE OF MEETING

CABINET MEMBER SIGNING

Thursday, 14th September, 2023, 3.00 pm - George Meehan House,
294 High Rod, N22 8JZ (watch the live meeting [here](#))

Members: Councillors Dana Carlin

1. **FILMING AT MEETINGS**

Please note that this meeting may be filmed or recorded by the Council for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site or by anyone attending the meeting using any communication method. Although we ask members of the public recording, filming or reporting on the meeting not to include the public seating areas, members of the public attending the meeting should be aware that we cannot guarantee that they will not be filmed or recorded by others attending the meeting. Members of the public participating in the meeting (e.g. making deputations, asking questions, making oral protests) should be aware that they are likely to be filmed, recorded or reported on. By entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings.

The chair of the meeting has the discretion to terminate or suspend filming or recording, if in his or her opinion continuation of the filming, recording or reporting would disrupt or prejudice the proceedings, infringe the rights of any individual or may lead to the breach of a legal obligation by the Council.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

3. **URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair will consider the admission of any late items of Urgent Business. (Late items of Urgent Business will be considered under the agenda item where they appear. New items of Urgent Business will be dealt with under agenda item 8).

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest or a prejudicial interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered:

(i) must disclose the interest at the start of the meeting or when the interest becomes apparent, and

(ii) may not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must withdraw from the meeting room.

A member who discloses at a meeting a disclosable pecuniary interest which is not registered in the Register of Members' Interests or the subject of a pending notification must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days of the disclosure.

Disclosable pecuniary interests, personal interests and prejudicial interests are defined at Paragraphs 5-7 and Appendix A of the Members' Code of Conduct

5. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

To consider any requests received in accordance with Part 4, Section B, paragraph 29 of the Council's constitution.

6. TO AWARD A CONTRACT FOR THE SUPPLY AND SUPPORT OF A CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP PLATFORM (PAGES 1 - 10)

7. SECTION 13A AMENDMENTS (PAGES 11 - 24)

8. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Felicity Foley, Committees Manager
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Fiona Alderman
Head of Legal & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
George Meehan House, 294 High Road, Wood Green, N22 8JZ

Wednesday, 06 September 2023

Report for: Cabinet Member Signing

Title: To award a contract for the supply and support of a Customer Relationship Platform

Report authorised by: Jess Crowe, Director of Culture, strategy and Engagement

Lead Officer: Andy Briggs (Assistant Director Resident Experience) and Nathan Pierce (Assistant Director Digital and Change)

Ward(s) affected: All wards

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. This report seeks Cabinet Member signing on the 21st of September 2023 approval to award a contract for the Granicus Digital Customer Relationship Platform (CRM), providing CRM and online MyAccount continuity and improved services as part of Corporate Delivery Plan, Think Haringey First and the Resident Experience Programme.
- 1.2. This contract will be for a period of 2 years with options to extend for up to 1 further year at a total cost for the 3 years not exceeding £931,497.
- 1.3 For the agreed draw down options the Director Culture, Strategy and Engagement or Director accountable for the line of services at that time will have the delegated authority to authorise contractual draw down options without lead member sign off.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1 This Customer Relationship Platform (CRM) enables easier access to service, enables improved first-time resolution, promotes self-service, frees up the capacity to have better conversations with those that most need our help, and provides better insight to our residents through improved data and resident history which enhances resident experience.
- 2.2 Haringey Customer Services receives over 350,000 phone calls and 60,000 in person visits per annum. To now we have been a very transactional focused service due to the absence of a CRM and ability to understand the history of contact with our residents. As we move forward, we want to move away from being a transactional service to a more relational focused service supporting our residents with multifaceted enquiries; the CRM will enable this to happen.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Cabinet Member **approves**, the award of a contract for the supply and support of Granicus Customer Platform software for a period of 2 years from 1st November 2023 to 31st October 2025 at the value of £519,498 with the option to extend by a further 1 year to 31st October 2026 at the value of £411,999. The total contract value including draw down options is £931,497 over the 3-year period.
- 3.2 The contractually committed cost for the baseline product in year 1 is £171,499 and for year 2 and 3 it is £133,999 per annum making a total baseline product cost of £439,497
- 3.3 In addition to the baseline product cost the contract will allow for draw down options. The value of these options is £214,000 for year 2, and £278,000 for year 3 giving a total over 3 years of £492,000. This is required now so spend is approved when the draw down options are required, and their individual business cases and budget have been approved. The options are available but not mandatory or authorised at point of contract award.
- 3.4 For the agreed draw down options the Director Culture, Strategy and Engagement or Director accountable for the line of services at that time will have the delegated authority to authorise contractual draw down options without lead member sign off.
- 4. Reasons for decision**
- 4.1 The current contract for Granicus expires in November 2023. We have already expedited our 2 years plus 2 x 1-year extensions under GCloud 11. The new contract would be under GCloud 13 for 2 years plus 1.
- 4.2 The new contract will enable business continuity of the newly implemented resident digital provisions plus provide the means to significantly enhance the digital service offer to residents, businesses, agencies and services making it easier to access, transact and receive updates on Council services.
- 4.3 Agreeing this new contract under the GCloud13 for 2 years plus 1 will allow the council to do market engagement, peer review with other councils and define the long-term strategic aspirations for a modern council in terms of how it manages customer data and develops its online service offer.
- 4.4 Procurement of the solution allows the Council to maintain the improvement to resident journeys developed as part of Phase 1 of the project, including:
- Housing
 - Council Tax and Benefits
 - Environment & Resident Experience
 - Parking
 - Financial Support/Connected Communities
- 4.5 Continued development of the Customer Service Hub (CRM) will improve resident self-service and digital transactions, increase channel shift and improve assisted services for residents who are not digitally enabled

- 4.6 Residents will see benefits from an improved service offering.
- Better utilisation of automation, auto population and smart forms so that residents do not have to repeat information already submitted (shorter call times).
 - Increase in customer satisfaction markers.
 - Reduction in complaints.
 - Haringey branding will remain consistent between the forms and CRM.
 - Smooth and easier digital journeys will encourage residents to adopt other digital journeys within Haringey.
 - More engaged residents in the digital journey that works for them.
 - Reduction in demand failure
 - Increased first time resolution.
 - Improved single interactions for multiple queries.
 - Improved resident journey histories
 - Improved case management and history for complex resident service requests.
 - Reduction in member escalations.
- 4.7 There will be an increase in online transactions and self-serve.
- Assisted channel shift.
 - Integrated payment process
 - Increased adoption of customers using digital channels.
 - Increased adoption of self service across Council service provisions.
- 4.9 Employee Engagement will improve.
- Creating better resident journeys and visibilities will create more trust with our residents which will reduce conflict on calls with our staff.
 - Staff will feel they have more purpose by being able to help residents better, improved communication and resolutions. By reducing fewer complex enquiries staff will be able to provide more support on complex cases for resident's wellbeing
 - Staff will be more confident to deal with queries
 - Staff will be more confident to deal with escalations
 - Improved staff retention.
 - Staff will care more which will improve the quality of service to our residents

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 Do Nothing

- If the Council does not re-procure the customer platform, we will see severe disruption to resident experience due to the removal of the newly implemented CRM in the contact centre and housing and the withdrawal of the new resident online digital offering.

- The inability to digitally transact centrally,
- The inability to have conversations with Customer Service using case history (e.g., every time they call, they will have to start from the beginning as no case history is available)
- The end of single sign-on functionality resulting in a fractured digital experience with the Council

This will result in residents having a poor experience and interactions with the Council due to increased voice traffic, increased complaints and increased failure demand impacting on the resident journeys.

By removal of online digital centralised platform and CRM capability in customer service the resident future adoption of digital would be impacted whilst regressing the resident promise to increase trust in Haringey.

5.2 Go to open market to procure another CRM.

If the Council were to stop and procure another product in November 2023, we would regress 1 ½ to 2 years whilst we re-initiate a new programme, impacting on residents' wellbeing, present online adoption and digital capability.

If we need run two simultaneously, we will have to pay for 2 contracts at the same time for a year and ½ for the period above. (250k plus new contract value).

Significant investment has been made on the Granicus platform and development which could not be recuperated if we moved to another platform at this time. This would impact future digital adoption by creating a fractured journey, which could delay benefit realisation in the future.

At present we have a team of experienced Granicus developers and delivery, there is a risk dependent on acquiring a new product requiring additional or more expensive resources based on skill set and delivery requirements.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The contract for the current Granicus Digital Platform will expire November 2023 and, as a result, Haringey Council needs to put in place arrangements to ensure continuity of service.
- 6.2 The project team completed a due diligence exercise for requirements for the new CRM.
- 6.3 Based on the above review it was determined that GCloud13 was the most appropriate route to market. Using the GCloud 13 search and filter process Granicus were returned as the single result.
- 6.4 The future modelling of the product will give the council the option to procure to buy a like for like service with additional 50 licences (year one only) with a cost of £439,497. This would at a minimum level allow the continued development of the product across other services in CRM and online transactions.

6.5 Within the contract there is also the ability to expand the enablement and offering for residents for improved functionality and resident journeys. This contractual draw down options are of a value of £492,000. This would allow and enable the strategic digital aspirations for Granicus for Haringey residents.

- Social Media Authentication
- 200 additional licences
- 100 Licences shared services portal for external partners
- Members Portal
- Business Portal
- Shared Services Portal
- 25 Offline Licences for mobile working
- Support packages for development team
- System polling functionality for systems that can't use Api's
- Additional single sign on

6.6 The Council currently uses Granicus System to manage its online My accounts and CRM. As part of the Digital Customer Service Programme the platform this year will be enhanced to provide improved digital functionality for housing, financial support, parking, libraries and E&N. Residents will have improved digital journeys, accounts for rents, housing, council tax and benefits, improved access to online services and improved end to end resident journeys within Haringey. This will enable residents to manage payments, view transactions, and report transactions and request service support.

The platform provides Customer Service, a CRM for Residents and staff to transact with a full contact history of transactions. The CRM will also provide workflow for identified resident journeys into services providing a full end to end Residents Experience.

By collecting data in a systematic way, we will be able to automate service delivery and create an improved resident experience.

A new contract post November 2023 will focus on optimising the solution to provide a single-entry point through My Account on the new website and a single view of customer interactions via the CRM. The project will, additionally, improve current high traffic and workflow by utilising smart workflows and automations.

The emphasis will be on improving the resolution of enquiries/transactions which is essential to a good resident experience across the Council.

A procured platform will enable us to optimise new functionality which will support, the enablement of any future resident access strategy and position the council well for any future strategic resident engagement decisions.

Any ongoing platform enhancements will enable improvements across council services and external agency relationships whilst capitalising on benefits. These efficiencies are expected to release resources which can then be re-invested back into further service improvement or captured as financial savings. However,

it is key to note that any financial savings are not in scope as the platform's key function is to deliver a great resident experience.

The aim of procuring Granicus on the G-Cloud framework is to provide the capability and enablement of any agreed strategy that supports the manifesto and corporate delivery plan. This decision report does not define the strategy but has been developed to ensure enablement of the strategy through providing a baseline product and additional options that can be added to meet future council strategic options around access to services.

- 6.7 The Granicus Customer Platform procurement under Crown Commercial Service's (CCS) G-Cloud 13 Framework will provide Residents, Businesses, Landlords and other groups' access to a range of Council services. It will deepen and broaden the digital services available, managing and tracking customer enquiries, service requests and 'one and done' transactions.

This will support the strategic vision of Think Haringey First and commitments we have made to our residents in the manifesto and corporate delivery plan, under the resident experience programme.

- 6.8 The Platform will deliver significant financial and non-financial benefits to the Council and customer groups including:

- Savings in Corporate & Customer Services and other Council services
- Improving the digital offer for customers, making more Council services accessible online, providing customers better access to services and updates at their convenience
- Providing a simple, intuitive and personalised system to use which becomes the desired channel for accessing Council services. Improving the overall experience of using digital services
- Managing and tracking customer enquiries, service requests and end to end transactions, regardless of if the customer is transacting through a customer account
- Generating easy to understand management information to support service development.
- Improving resident online journeys and streamlining processes to provide a better and more efficient end to end resident journey.
- Reducing repeated demand failure by better integrated journeys for residents with service. Improving first time resolution and voice traffic into contact centre and services.

7. Procurement Process

- 7.1 The programme identified the G-cloud 13 framework as the most expedient method for procuring a new Customer Platform. G-Cloud provides access to a wide range of suppliers.
- 7.2 One supplier was identified on G-Cloud 13 using a keyword search based on a requirements specification produced by the project team.

7.3 The single supplier offer was evaluated, and it was concluded that the Granicus offer met the council's requirement specification which formed the basis of the search criteria used.

8. Contribution to strategic outcomes

The procurement of a new Customer Platform contributes to the Corporate Delivery Plan, Values and Think Haringey First.

Resident experience will be improved.

- Building trust in the community - Using positive online interactions to build positive relationships through a resident –centric approach
- Easy Community Access – Getting our customer service offer right so it can open a range of new community access points
- Public Service Ethos – Creating a workforce culture of customer service excellence across all touch points and supporting, equipping and training employees to undertake their roles well
- Place Leadership – Demonstrate great customer service that helps to build positive relationships with residents, communities, businesses and partners with accountability that is defined and understood
- Commitment to Inclusion – Create consistency in service standards across all channels and access points

9. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Digital Services, Equalities

9.1 Finance Comments

9.1.1 The maximum cost of this three-year contract award being an initial two years plus the option to extend by one further year is £931,497. This is split between the core solution costing £439,497 and the optional functionality and services costing £492,000.

9.1.2 The total core solution (£439,497) costs are made up of the like-for-like service in the existing GCloud 11 contract and the addition of 50 licences (in year one).

9.1.3 The cost of the core product and associated year one licence costs is £386,497 which will be funded from existing provision within the Capital Programme (Scheme 605: Customer Services: Digital Transformation). Licence costs of £26,500 per annum in years 2 and 3 will be funded from existing provision in the Digital Services contracts budget.

9.1.4 Currently there is no identified funding for the additional functionality options. However, a separate funding bid is being worked up for submission into the MTFS planning process. Until this source of funding has been confirmed the Council cannot proceed to draw down on these options.

9.2 Strategic Procurement Comments

9.2.1 The report recommends awarding a contract for the provision of a Customer Relationship Platform (CRM) by selecting a contractor from the GCloud 13

framework. The GCloud 13 framework is a suitable framework under the terms of CSO 7.01 b) having been established by a public sector body.

- 9.2.2 The contractor was selected in accordance with the rules of the GCloud 13 framework by undertaking a search of contractor offerings available on the framework by use of keywords and phrases taken from the council's requirements. The offering resulting from the keyword search was then evaluated to ensure that it met the needs of the council.
- 9.2.3 The process undertaken is compliant with the selection rules of the GCloud 13 framework.
- 9.2.4 The Cabinet member is permitted under CSO 9.07.1d) to award a contract valued at more than £500,000.
- 9.2.5 Strategic Procurement support the recommendations in section 3 of this report.

9.3 Legal Comments

- 9.3.1 This report is proposing the award of a contract from the Crown Commercial Service' G-Cloud 13 framework agreement.
- 9.3.2 Pursuant to Contract Standing Order (CSO) 7.01(b) and Regulation 33 of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 the Council may award contracts called off under a framework established by another public sector body.
- 9.3.3 Strategic Procurement have advised that the call off process complies with the call off rules of the G-Cloud 13 Framework
- 9.3.4 Pursuant to CSO 9.07.1(d) contracts valued at £500,000 or more must normally be awarded by Cabinet.
- 9.3.5 The Head of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) is not aware of any legal reasons preventing Cabinet approving the recommendations in this report.

9.4 Equality Comments

The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

Ensuring the platform is fully accessible to support all customers was an important part of the procurement process. Requirements included ensuring the Platform:

- Is compliant (to WCAG 2.1 AA standards) so that users with visual impairments and other accessibility issues can navigate and interact
- Includes features that enable users for whom English is a second language to navigate and interact with it in order to complete desired transactions

Overall implementation of a new Customer Platform will enhance the digital services available making it easier for all services users to contact and transact with the Council.

However, as some customers will be unable to or have more difficulty accessing digital channels or would prefer to use traditional channels such as telephone and face to face, the Council will continue to ensure that customers are fully able to access Council services while encouraging and supporting customers to use the new digital offering.

10. Additional comments

Digital Services Comments

Digital Services has been a core part of the project team throughout this process and can confirm their support of this decision. G-Cloud ensures a level of pre-evaluated standards such that suppliers' credibility is sound.

11. Use of Appendices

N/a

12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

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Report for: Cabinet Member Signing

Title: Section 13A amendments

Report authorised by: Jon Warlow, Director of Finance

Lead Officer: David Graaff, Head of Service Delivery

Ward(s) affected: All wards

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Key Decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1. This report summarises the proposed changes to the Haringey Council Tax Discretionary Relief Policy for the Award of Discretionary Reductions in Council Tax Liability under Section 13A(1)(c) Local Government Finance Act 1992 to be introduced from 1st November 2023. The report recommends options to improve the applicant's experience.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Local Investment is asked to agree the new Discretionary Relief Policy as set out in Appendix 1 and that it will come into force on 1st November 2023.

3. Reasons for decision

3.1. The Discretionary Relief Policy is a way the Council can redistribute the financial burden on Council Taxpayers and provide additional support to those in exceptional financial hardship due to extenuating circumstances.

3.2. The reasons for proposing the key changes are as follows.

Including homeowners

3.3. The key change in the policy is to extend the discretion to include homeowners where previously they were automatically excluded. This means that every request can be considered on its individual merit regardless of tenure type. The previous limitation on the policy that it can only be awarded to non-homeowners has also been removed in order to maximise the Council's discretion to help residents facing hardship. There may be situations where there is little or no value, or even negative value, in a home, or where it might be inappropriate to sell or borrow against a home. This change allows the Council to consider such factors in making a decision on hardship.

Clarifying that a council officer may make an application behalf of the council taxpayer.

- 3.4. This will allow officers to support residents through the process and ensure that the most vulnerable residents are adequately represented.

Providing an email address for applications

- 3.5. This will allow applications to be directed to the decision-maker more quickly

Appending the income and expenditure form and ensuring that applicants provide details of any savings or other assets

- 3.6. This clarifies the information requirements and provides for a structured submission of supporting evidence in the event that a Single Financial Statement is not available.

Amending the scheme to seek to make it easier to understand

- 3.7. The policy has been re-drafted to clarify the criteria and to emphasise the support and assistance with the application process that is available for applicants.

4. Alternative options considered

4.1. No change to the existing Discretionary Relief Policy

This is not recommended because amending the scheme will help council tax payers to access the support on offer and improve their experience.

5. Background Information

- 5.1. Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 provides two routes for further reducing council tax liability:

5.1.1.1. The mandatory CTRS for persons whom the authority considers to be in financial need, or classes of persons whom the authority considers to be, in general, in financial need (section 13A(1)(a); section 13A(2)) (the CTRS")

5.1.1.2. A discretionary reduction as the authority thinks fit, for particular cases or classes of cases (section 13A(1)(c); 13A(6)-(7)) ("the Discretionary Power").

- 5.2. In accordance with section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council is able to exercise its discretion to award further relief from council tax liability, outside the scope of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). This may be in addition to, or separate from, any relief awarded firstly under the CTRS.

5.3. The Council has two policies in place for these purposes which are kept under review, particularly in light of Covid-19 and cost of living crisis and the impact these have had on our communities:

5.3.1. The Care Leavers (Council Tax) Relief Scheme Policy, approved by the Cabinet in October 2017, whereby the Council exercises its discretion to award full relief from council tax liability to all care leavers until their 25th birthday.

5.3.2. The discretionary relief policy that is the subject of this report. The Council last updated its Discretionary Relief Policy in 2017 and is now seeking to improve accessibility to the scheme.

5.4. The discretionary power is funded by Haringey council taxpayers as it is income the Council would otherwise receive but forgoes. Accordingly, it is used sparingly to help people in exceptional circumstances.

6 Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes

6.1 These changes contribute to a positive resident experience as they improve the process and broaden the existing discretion to allow the Council to support residents in the most challenging circumstances

7 Carbon and Climate Change

7.1 The proposed decision has no impact on carbon emissions, energy usage or climate change adaptation.

8. Statutory Officer Comments

a. Finance

b. The proposed review suggested in this report is not anticipated to materially increase the cost of s13A support and so can be accommodated within the Council's current MTFS assumptions.

c. Procurement

d. Strategic Procurement notes the contents of this report and recommendations in section 3 which are not procurement related.

e. Legal

Section 13(A)(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 gives the Council the power to reduce liability for council tax as it thinks fit, including reducing liability to nil.

The power may be exercised in relation to particular cases or by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced. This policy concerns the exercise of the power in particular cases and extends its ambit so as not to automatically exclude persons who own their own home. The Council's existing *Care Leavers Relief Scheme* adopted in 2017 applies to a class of case, namely care leavers.

Approval of the Recommendation in this Report is an Executive function of the Council, which may be taken by Cabinet, the Leader or (as in this case) the Lead Member. There are no legal reasons as to why the Recommendation in this Report should not be approved.

f. Equalities

The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

The proposal is likely to improve awareness of, and access to, s13a awards.

These changes will specifically support those in financial hardship (as applicable to the local protected characteristic of socioeconomic status) and other vulnerable groups.

The proposed changes to the policy will have no detrimental impact on groups that share the protected characteristics or other disadvantaged groups.

10. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1: Discretionary Relief Policy

11. Background papers

[2017 Discretionary Policy](#)

[Cabinet Report: Care Leavers \(Council Tax\) Relief Scheme \(October 2017\)](#)

[Care Leavers Relief Scheme Policy](#)

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Policy for the Award of Discretionary Reductions in Council Tax Liability under Section 13A(1)(c) Local Government Finance Act 1992

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 13a(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 allows the Council to reduce the amount of council tax that a person is liable to pay to such an extent as it thinks fit, or if the amount has already been reduced under the Haringey Council Tax Reduction Scheme, by such further extent as it thinks fit. This includes the power to reduce the amount to nil.
- 1.2 This relief is discretionary. The Council has specified a class of cases for Care Leavers. Additionally it will consider requests on an individual basis.

2. Scope and Definition

- 2.1 A reduction under section 13A(1)(c) may be awarded to council taxpayers who are experiencing financial hardship due to extenuating circumstances. As a discretionary reduction each situation will be assessed on its individual merits.
- 2.2 The cost of section 13A(1)(c) reductions are met entirely by Haringey Council and therefore Haringey council tax payers. The granting of such reductions must therefore be considered against their financial impact to residents and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

3. How to apply for a discretionary reduction

- 3.1 A request must be received in writing by either:
 - a) The council taxpayer(s)
 - b) A representative of the council taxpayer
 - c) A Council Officer assisting either of the above
- 3.2 Where a request for reduction is submitted by the council taxpayer(s) or a representative of the council taxpayers, this must be submitted via application. Our application form can be found in appendix 1 of this document. Once completed, the application should be sent to counciltax@haringey.gov.uk and clearly marked **Council Tax Discretionary Reduction**.
- 3.3 Where an appropriate officer of the council has identified that a Taxpayer is a potentially suitable candidate for Discretionary Relief, the appropriate officer must submit the request via a decision report to the decision maker.
- 3.4 All requests must be supported by evidence. The maximum award that may be applied is the annual Council Tax relevant to the address for which the request is made. The Council can only assess an application based on the information before it. If the information is insufficient, it is likely that an application will be refused.

4. How claims for a discretionary reduction will be assessed

- 4.1 The Council will consider each application for a discretionary reduction on its merits and the Council will make a decision taking into account:
- Information about the financial hardship and/or exceptional personal circumstances.
 - Details of any attempts the council taxpayer(s) has made to meet council tax payments prior to application.
 - Whether an application for the Haringey Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been made and assessed.
 - Whether all other eligible reductions, discounts, and relief in respect of council tax have been considered and awarded.
 - The council tax payer(s) could not reasonably access other assets that could be used to pay council tax.
 - Whether the Council can meet the financial cost of the award.
 - Whether the amount outstanding is the result of wilful refusal or culpable neglect.
- 4.2 Requests will be assessed together with all supporting evidence. A reduction may only be applied in respect of the financial year(s) in which the request is made or to which it relates. Any reduction awarded may meet part or all of the council tax liability for that financial year.
- 4.3 Applications will be considered by the Revenues Team Lead, and recommendations submitted to the Revenues Manager for authorisation within one calendar month of receipt of all information. Once a decision is made, the council taxpayer(s) will be notified. An application submitted is not an entitlement to withhold payment of council tax.

5. Review of Decision

- 5.1 The Council will accept a written request for a further review of its decision if it is supported by further information or evidence and is made within one calendar month of the decision.
- 5.2 Any review will be carried out by a different person from the person who made the decision to which the review relates and shall normally be completed within 30 days from the date the written request for a review is received by the Council.
- 5.3 If after a further review the applicant remains unhappy with the Council's decision and wish to appeal the matter further, they may consider an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal Service (VTS). Further information can be found at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk

6. Ending or Cancelling the Reduction

- 6.1 In all cases the reduction will end either; at the end of the financial year or; on the same day as the closing of the council tax payer's account or, where information indicates the council tax payer's circumstances have changed, on the date of the change.

- 6.2 Where it transpires that a reduction has been awarded based on false information or evidence the decision will be revoked and the Council reserves the right to recover any council tax outstanding.

7. Decision Making

- 7.1 The levels of decision making are outlined in the table below. In addition the annual audit of council tax will encompass the application and award of reductions.

Task	Responsibility
To review and consider cases submitted in accordance with the policy.	Revenues Team Lead
To submit a decision report to the Revenues Manager Recommending either Award or Refusal of the case submitted.	Revenues Team Lead
To monitor and ensure compliance with policy.	Revenues Manager
To authorise or reject cases where a decision report has been received.	Revenues Manager
To review and control expenditure.	Revenues Manager
To review any re-applications	Revenues Team Lead (different person from the person who made the original decision)

8. Equalities and Diversity

- 8.1 This policy is discretionary and therefore all council taxpayers will be eligible to apply for reductions. The policy has been written with due regard to the public sector equality duty.

9. Review of Policy

- 9.1 This policy will be monitored and any revisions necessary will be brought back to Cabinet at a future date.

Appendix 1 – Application Form

Council Tax Discretionary Reduction: Application Form**Your personal details**

Name of Council Taxpayer/s:

Council Tax Account Number:

Property Address:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Your financial circumstances:

1. Do you own or rent this property?	
2. Have you ever owned a property? Please give details.	
3. Do you have any savings or other assets (for example, shares in a company?)	
4. Please provide details of the circumstances causing hardship?	
5. Please advise what steps you are taking to improve your circumstances outside	

of this application.	
6. Are you receiving financial help from any other source? If yes, please provide details.	
5. Please provide any additional information in support of your claim	

In addition to completing the form above, you must include evidence to support your claim. As a minimum, the following is required:

- Completed Standard Financial Statement or income and expenditure form (Appendix 2)
- Evidence of all household income & expenditure in the form of bank statements for at least the past two months

Your application will be considered in line with the policy and the evidence provided. Once a decision has been made you will be notified within 14 days.

Please note that any existing repayment plans remain in place and therefore you should continue to pay your council tax as set out in your bill or notification of repayment plan.

Appendix 2 – Expenditure Form

Please note: You MUST supply supporting evidence for any items marked with a * and your last 2 months bank statements.

Income	How much (£)	How often	Outgoings	How much (£)	How often	Office use only
Net Wages (for you)			Mortgage / Rent*			
Net Wages (for your partner)			Rent Arrears*			
Self Employed Earnings			Council Tax			
Working Tax Credit			Council Tax arrears			
Child Tax Credit			Electricity*			
Child Benefit			Gas*			
JSA (IB)			Arrears of fuel bills*			
Income Support			Water rates			
Pension Credit (Guarantee)			Child Minding*			
Pension Credit (Savings)			Food			
State Retirement Pension			School Meals			
Occupational / Private Pension			Housekeeping			
Maintenance received (for children)			Clothing			
Maintenance received (for self or partner)			Laundry			
Incapacity benefit			Telephone/ Internet			
Employment Support Allowance			Satellite / cable tv			
Disability Living Allowance			Travelling Expenses			
Personal Independence Payment			Road Tax / Car Insurance			
Carers Allowance			Vehicle fuel / servicing			
Housing Benefit			Court fines*			
Universal Credit			Prescriptions			
Contributions from children living at home			Maintenance Paid*			
Contributions from any other resident			Credit Card*			
Any Other Income			Loans / Hire Purchase			

Vouchers or token in lieu of payment			Deduction for social fund			
			Other deductions from benefit			
			Catalogue			
			Endowment / Life Insurance*			
			Mortgage Protection*			
			Home Insurance*			
			Medical / disability related outgoing (please specify)			
			Any other Outgoings			
Total Income (monthly)			Total Outgoings (monthly)			

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