



In
Partnership
with

LA Directories
Limited

MALG
Network



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Revenues and Benefits Discussion Group

5 January 2026

Happy New Year
from the Panel



HB Subsidy Audit 2024/25: No More CAKE, and the Slice Just Got Smaller

There are now only **two firms** willing to audit Housing Benefit subsidy claims — and both face tougher conditions. The 2024/25 audit brings:

- The **end of CAKE**, meaning no more easy reconciliations
- A **£50 de minimis** (a penny used to be an error)
- **Increased scrutiny** and fewer people who still understand the process

For many councils, that means **more risk, more rework, and higher costs.**

Our **subsidy support service** helps you stay audit-ready and compliant without the stress.

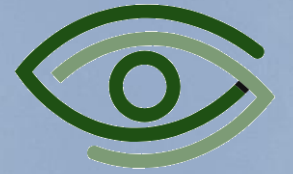
We'll:

- Review your subsidy claim before submission (or even complete it for you)
- Identify and resolve problem areas early
- Liaise with your auditors to minimise queries
- Provide targeted advice from experienced subsidy specialists

Don't go hungry without CAKE.

Let us take the weight of the subsidy audit off your plate.

Contact us to discuss a fixed-fee support package tailored to your authority. [**info@visionarynetwork.co.uk**](mailto:info@visionarynetwork.co.uk)



VISIONARY NETWORK
The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

AI IMPACT

Practical sessions for Revenues and Benefit Teams in February

CLARITY

Writing clearer reports and papers enhances understanding and decision-making quality across all services involved.



EFFICIENCY

Managing workload effectively allows teams to handle inquiries faster and improve stakeholder communication through AI integration.



GOVERNANCE

Ensuring governance and information security builds trust while utilizing AI tools safely and responsibly in services.



REGISTER NOW

Secure your spot for this transformative series today!



Arriving in February 2026 Using AI in Revenues and Benefits Services

A practical series of 60-to-90-minute online sessions designed for council Revenues and Benefits teams who want to use AI safely and effectively to save time, improve consistency, and strengthen resident support, without losing professional judgement or accountability.

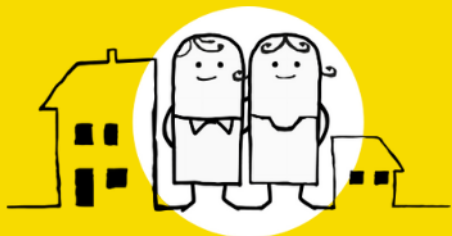
We will cover practical use cases such as:

- writing clearer reports, briefings, and committee papers in plain English
- drafting letters, emails, and decision notices that are accurate, consistent, and tone appropriate
- managing staff workload, task prioritisation, and quality checking
- handling enquiries faster, including scripts for contact centres and casework prompts for officers
- improving communication with stakeholders, preceptors, advice agencies, landlords, and internal teams
- designing take up campaigns and targeted messaging, including segmentation ideas
- analysing data, spotting patterns, and turning caseload information into insights
- reducing avoidable revisions, appeals risk, and repeat contact
- governance, information security, and practical guardrails for day-to-day use

Ideal for heads of service, team leaders, system administrators, performance and policy leads, and front-line officers.

Register your interest at info@visionarynetwork.co.uk

Redesign your CTR scheme with ease



Opportunity

The Inbest CTR Design Tool is an online application to help Revenues & Benefits teams design Council Tax Reduction Schemes.

Upload your anonymised CTRS caseload and use our analytics and modelling features to design schemes that meet the council's budget requirements, simplify administration, and protect vulnerable households.

This tool provides the following features to support you through every step of the CTRS design process.

Resident Insights

Get a clear understanding of your caseload by analysing your residents' circumstances and financial situation.

Use these insights—such as the number of residents with capital above certain thresholds or those out of work—to identify opportunities for savings while ensuring continued support for those in need.

CTRS Modelling

Set up different CTRS options and assess their impact using your caseload data.

Then, you can use our analytics dashboard to view potential savings, see how changes affect different segments of residents, and assess the risk of arrears.

Each simulation takes only a few seconds, and you can run as many as needed, refining them until you find the perfect fit for your council.

Automatic Reporting

The tool generates a detailed impact report and the information you need for your Equality Impact Analysis.

This report presents clear, data-driven insights to elected members, supports internal reviews, and informs consultations for confident decision-making.

Our dashboard provides the insights you need to make informed decisions

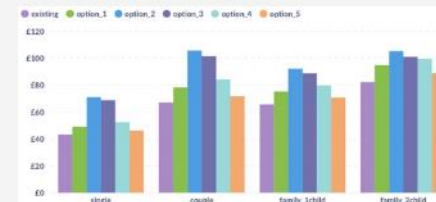
Total annual cost options



Detailed analysis per CTR band

ctr_discount	number_residents	percentage_residents	single
100%	127	0.7%	119
70%	11,032	60.91%	6,002
50%	767	4.23%	258
40%	1,352	7.46%	359
25%	3,382	18.67%	672
12%	1,452	8.02%	283

Average CT payment by households



Identification of impacted residents

householdType	decreased_number	decreased_pct
single	2,763	35.92%
partnerChildren	1,579	44.73%
singleChildren	2,178	36.85%
partner	773	79.04%
total	7,293	40.27%

"Working with Inbest has completely transformed the way we understand our CTR data. Inbest has helped us extract meaningful insights that enabled us to make informed decisions when modelling and designing the best possible scheme for our residents."

Inbest is always working on innovative solutions to support the streamlining of our processes and enhancing our services. As well as the work modelling the CTR Schemes, this year they have also supported us with our Pension Credit caseload and a Data Mismatches report."

Penny Mitchell, Council Tax Service Manager at Salford Council

"We asked Inbest to model different CTS schemes for us at short notice. We had our results in the dashboard within a few days and this enabled us to review the data which reflected each scheme option. This included areas such as cost and savings and how each scheme would affect our residents."

"When we required tweaks to the results Inbest ensured these were made instantly. An excellent service for a reasonable rate."

Nick Houlton, Finance Manager (Revenues and Benefits) at London Borough of Barnet

"Modelling a new Council Tax Reduction scheme can be challenging. However, working with Visionary Network and Inbest on the 2025/2026 scheme was a resounding success due to their support, knowledge, and technology."

"The service provided under tight deadlines was exceptional. Appreciation is extended to Manu, Malcolm, and Paul for their time and patience."

Lucie White, Operational Finance Manager at Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

End



VISIONARY NETWORK
The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

MALG
MEMBER

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Book a meeting with Malcolm: [Book Time with MG](#)



VISIONARY NETWORK
The independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

Join the discussion

Each Monday lunchtime, a panel of professionals leads a discussion on revenue and benefits administration issues. The panel consists of council & housing officers, policy advisors, and analysts.

It is a free service that is well attended. Attendees make good contributions; everyone gets a chance to speak. Attendees includes senior managers, team leaders, suppliers, and support staff

You can join in the discussion during the week (and start some new ones) by joining our WhatsApp group: <https://bit.ly/3Qjrkqe>

Links to the recordings and the slide packs plus other relevant documents will be posted into both the WhatsApp group and in the Teams Channel and emailed to those who attended and subscribers to the group.

To sign up just email malcolm@visionarynetwork.co.uk with your name, organisation and email address. We are inclusive because sharing information and good practice is essential. You don't have to attend every session; recordings will be available.



VISIONARY NETWORK
The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

Welcome to a
new era of
council tax
deduction
schemes

Bristol City
Council Case
Study



In
Partnership
with

LA Directories
Limited

“
**COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION
CLEAR & CONCISE**
Let us make it simple for you
”

Save money, improve efficiency,,
help your vulnerable citizens,
build trust.

<http://www.visionarynetwork.co.uk>



Finding the
right
information
has never been
easier with



The law and practice relating to Welfare Benefits is complex, detailed, open to interpretation and endlessly dynamic

LA Directories Ltd is here to help professionals across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland correctly and efficiently identify and understand the ever-changing law and guidance that governs the calculation of entitlement to Housing Benefit, Rates (Northern Ireland), Universal Credit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment.

LA Directories Ltd takes the law and guidance relating to Housing Benefit, Rates, Universal Credit, Council Tax Reduction and Discretionary Housing Payment then interprets and consolidates it into three product ranges...

- The Benefits Directory a web-based knowledge management solution
- The Training Directory provision of open and in-house training courses at all levels
- Consultancy services

Local authorities across England, Wales and Scotland are using our services as well as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

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Ferret Information Systems Ltd



Ferret Information Systems was established in 1987 and is the largest company in Europe in the field of law dealing with welfare benefits and similar areas of determinative, compliance, and regulatory law.



our training services:

Ferret is well placed to provide training services and its team of specialists have wide experience of benefits and housing grant legislation. We also provide consultancy to organisations, companies and government on the impact of legislative and policy changes.



our products:

Ferret produces a wide variety of systems, designed to provide support tools for advice workers, and also to provide information and advice directly to the public. Ferret specialises in a holistic assessment of financial circumstances relating to welfare benefits and tax credits entitlement, coupled with software development methodology which offers a high level of flexibility and rapid updating to reflect rule changes.



our platforms:

Systems supported include network, desktop, laptop, mobile devices, Internet and Intranet systems, and a public access system in multi-lingual, multi-media form for touch screen kiosks and public access PC's.



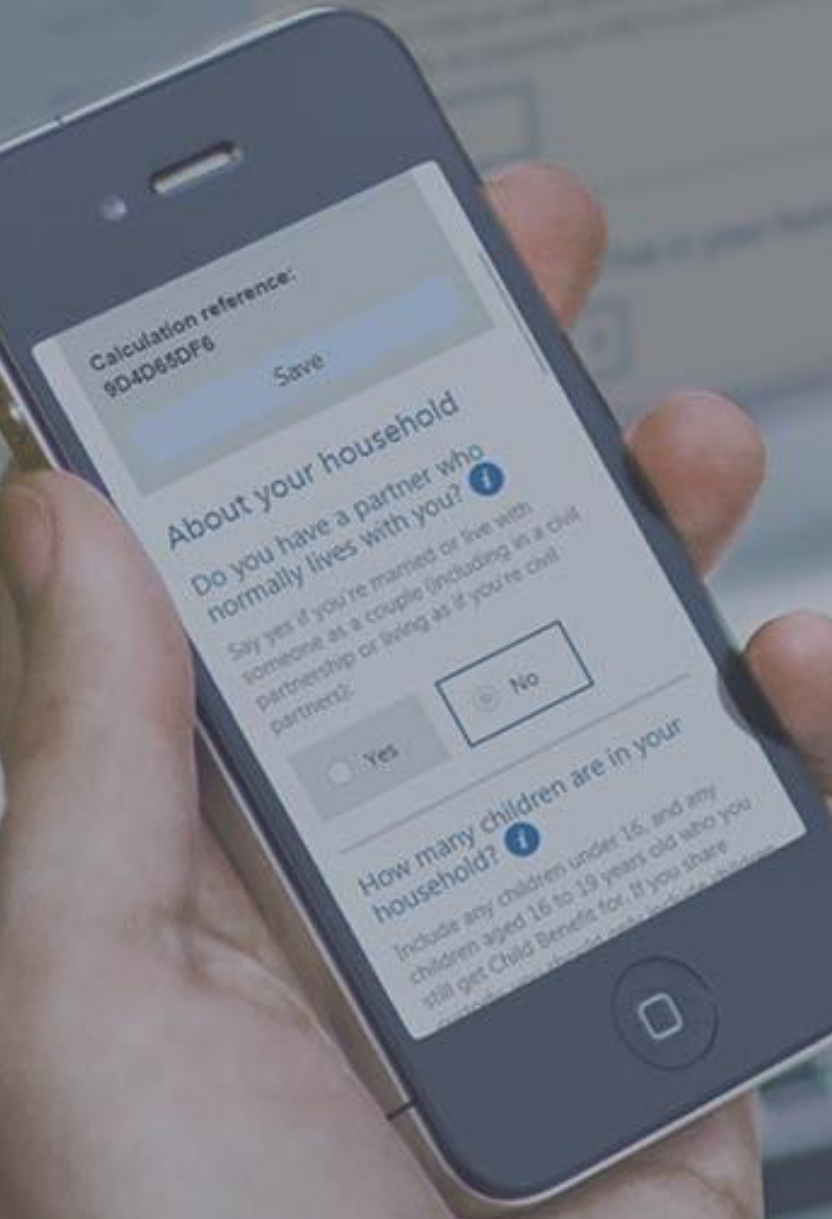
our customers:

Users of Ferret systems include government departments, local authorities, housing associations, CABx, HIA's and other advice agencies, universities, social welfare organisations, libraries, solicitors and financial advisers.

<https://www.ferret.co.uk/>

entitledto

independent | accurate | reliable



Our mission is to help everyone to access the benefits they're entitled to.

Since 2000 we have used our in-depth knowledge of the UK's social security system to build a range of authoritative and accurate calculators to help you and your clients understand their legitimate benefits entitlement.

Our tools are designed to be quick, simple and easy to use, so your staff and clients feel empowered to deal with the benefits system with confidence.

In response to evolving business needs and ongoing local and national policy changes, we will continue to work with and for our clients to develop new features and functionality.

Our goal is to assist your teams in adapting to legislative changes and welfare reform so you can help more people find out what benefits they are entitled to, thereby improving their circumstances and those of their families.



Ascendant Solutions
data management

Barnet Council has become the first local authority to launch the Ascendant apply4.online application form, designed to support residents with the rise in cost of living.

The InBest benefits calculator has been integrated into Ascendant's apply4.online support application, to make it easier for people who are experiencing financial difficulties to find out what support is available to them.

It includes information on benefits such as Universal Credit, Pensions Credit, Attendance Allowance and Personal Independence Payment, as well as local financial support initiatives including council tax support and the residents support fund.

Barnet Council Leader, Cllr Barry Rawlings said: "The cost-of-living crisis is affecting us all, and we want to ensure Barnet residents know what financial support is available to them and how they can access these services.

"It is very positive to see Barnet is the first local authority to launch this free tool, and we hope to see many other local councils doing the same to help their residents."

To find out what financial support is available to help with the cost-of-living visit [Barnet Council Benefits Calculator](#)



Apply4.Online®



In the news

Exempt supported housing: delayed regulation and resident safety

What is happening and why it matters

- The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 was passed to tackle poor quality “exempt” supported accommodation, where providers can claim higher Housing Benefit while offering little or no support.
- More than two years on, key parts of the Act are still not in force because regulations and guidance have not been finalised; local authorities are left to improvise their own approaches.
- Charities, and the Act’s sponsor (Bob Blackman MP), warn that delays are leaving vulnerable people exposed to unsafe homes, exploitation, intimidation, and neighbourhood harm, while rogue operators continue to expand.
- Government says implementation will begin in January 2026, alongside wider homelessness measures, including new supported housing funding.

Exempt supported housing: delayed regulation and resident safety

Impacts on administration of services

- Council licensing and enforcement: councils will need to design and run licensing schemes, assess compliance with national standards, inspect providers, take enforcement action, and manage appeals and legal challenge risk.
- Housing Benefit and assurance: revenues and benefits teams face ongoing pressure to verify “exempt” status, manage provider disputes, and reduce overpayment and abuse risk, while the national framework remains incomplete.
- Safeguarding and multi-agency demand: poor placements can worsen addiction and mental health, increase antisocial behaviour and violence, and add strain to police, NHS, probation, homelessness services, and adult safeguarding.
- Data and oversight gaps: campaigners highlight inconsistent local data collection on provision, residents, and deaths, limiting councils’ ability to target action and demonstrate outcomes.

JobsPlus: hyperlocal employment support on social housing estates

Key facts from Stockton on Tees (Teesside)

- JobsPlus is a place-based pilot on social housing estates, using local hubs and community champions to saturate a small area with tailored employment support.
- Stockton on Tees pilot covers Primrose Hill and Newtown; residents get practical help with CVs, applications, confidence, and links to local employers and training.
- Caseworkers stay connected after someone starts work, offering in work support, not just a one-off referral.
- The model includes direct, targeted help to remove barriers, for example travel support (a bike), interview clothing vouchers, and help to navigate childcare and jobcentre processes.
- The pilots are overseen and evaluated nationally; the intention is to test whether a community led, hyperlocal approach produces sustained employment outcomes.

JobsPlus: hyperlocal employment support on social housing estates

Impacts on administration of services

- Delivery model: requires close partnership working between housing associations, DWP and jobcentres, councils, local employers, skills providers, and community organisations; this adds coordination overhead but reduces duplication if joined up well.
- Casework intensity: staff time is front loaded (regular appointments, confidence building, follow up in work); caseload management and continuity become operational priorities.
- Financial support administration: schemes need clear rules, audit trail, and payment processes for incentives and small grants or vouchers, including fraud risk controls and consistent decision making.
- Universal Credit transition issues: support is needed to manage the cash flow gap and complexity when people move from benefits into earnings; this creates demand for benefits advice integrated with employability.
- Monitoring and evaluation: sites must capture management information consistently (engagement, job outcomes, sustainment milestones); this is essential for funding decisions and any future scaling.

Council equal pay claims: settlements, liabilities, and service impact

- Equal pay settlements for female council workers have passed £1bn, driven by claims that female dominated roles (for example cleaners, carers) were paid less, or had worse terms, than male dominated roles assessed as equal value.
- GMB says it has secured £1.1bn in out of court settlements across six councils; almost 30,000 claims settled so far, with more expected in 2026.
- Birmingham is highlighted as a major case: a settlement reported at about £250m after a multi year campaign, with individual payments reported up to £55,000; equal pay liabilities were cited when the council issued a Section 114 notice in 2023.
- Glasgow is cited as the largest single settlement: £770m (agreed in 2022), with ongoing concern about fixing the underlying pay and grading arrangements.

Council equal pay claims: settlements, liabilities, and service impact

Impacts on administration of services

- Financial management: large back pay liabilities affect reserves, borrowing, and the ability to sustain front line budgets; councils may need exceptional financial support planning and tighter medium term financial strategies.
- HR and pay structure reform: to prevent repeat claims, councils must complete robust job evaluation, redesign pay and grading and maintain governance and equal pay audits; this is complex, politically sensitive work.
- Legal and claims administration: high volume claims require coordinated case management, disclosure, negotiation, settlement processing, and communications with current and former staff, often over many years.
- Payroll and data workload: calculating arrears, pension impacts, tax treatment, and individualised settlement values increases pressure on payroll, finance, and records management, especially where historic data is incomplete.
- Workforce relations and continuity: prolonged disputes can increase industrial relations risk and distract management capacity, affecting retention and service resilience, particularly in care and frontline roles.

Carer's Allowance overpayments: systemic failure, debt recovery, and trust

- An independent review led by Liz Sayce found systemic failings in how Carer's Allowance earnings related overpayments were handled; many unpaid carers built up debts over long periods, often without timely warning.
- Senior DWP official Neil Couling was criticised after suggesting carers were at fault; advisers to the review and Carers UK said this misrepresents the scale and nature of the problem.
- The scheme rules create a sharp cliff edge: if weekly earnings exceed the limit even by 1p, the entire week's allowance is repayable; DWP had access to near real time earnings data but often did not alert carers quickly.
- Ministers have said they accepted most of the review's recommendations, but advisers state that a material share were only partially accepted and some rejected, raising doubts about pace and seriousness of reform.

Carer's Allowance overpayments: systemic failure, debt recovery, and trust

Impacts on administration of services

- Reassessment workload: large scale review of historic cases requires case triage, recalculation, decision making, quality assurance, and customer communications, plus complaint and appeal handling.
- Debt management changes: more proactive prevention is needed, including earlier alerts, clearer letters, and faster intervention when earnings fluctuate; this means new processes, training, and performance measures that prioritise prevention over recovery.
- Data and systems: better use of earnings data and more frequent checks increase operational demand on digital, data, and service teams; implementation must reduce false positives while still protecting public funds.
- Trust and culture: the review and expert commentary emphasise management and culture reform, including how carers are treated, how errors are owned, and how accountability is enforced; this affects staff guidance, leadership behaviours, and external stakeholder relationships.

SEND places in mainstream schools: £3bn capital shift and local delivery

- Government will provide at least £3bn over the next three years for councils to expand specialist provision within mainstream schools in England, with the aim of creating around 50,000 additional places.
- Funding is intended to support adaptations such as calm rooms, resourced provision units, breakout spaces, and other specialist facilities so more children can be supported locally, reducing long journeys.
- The Department for Education says this underpins wider SEND reforms due in the Schools White Paper early in 2026.
- Part of the funding is being found by cancelling 28 mainstream free school projects, with 16 further sites under review, reflecting falling rolls in some areas and growing SEND demand.
- Councils and sector bodies welcome capital investment but stress that the right provision must be in the right places, and that workforce capacity and specialist expertise will be critical to making the spaces work

**SEND places in
mainstream schools:
£3bn capital shift and
local delivery**

Impacts on administration of services

- Capital programme delivery: councils will need to plan allocations, commission works, manage timelines and procurement, and coordinate with trusts, dioceses and school leaders to convert capital into usable places quickly.
- Place planning and transport: better local provision should reduce expensive home to school transport, but only if councils target investment at the actual drivers of travel and placement pressure.
- Workforce and operating model: creating rooms is not enough; councils and schools will need recruitment, training and ongoing specialist input (for example autism, ADHD, speech and language support) to deliver consistent quality.
- EHCP and dispute workload: if provision expands and early support improves, this could reduce tribunal appeals over time; in the short term, councils may still face high EHCP assessment, review and disagreement volumes while reforms bed in.
- Financial risk management: NAO has warned the SEND system is not delivering better outcomes and creates significant financial risk for local authorities; councils will need strong governance to ensure capital spend links to measurable demand and outcomes.

County Durham
Council Tax
Reduction:
minimum payments
and a move to
banded support

- Durham County Council has approved changes to its working age Council Tax Reduction scheme, to take effect from 1 April 2026; pension age support remains under nationally set rules.
- The council will move from a “Council Tax Benefit style” means tested calculation to an income banded scheme, with the stated aim of simplification and fewer frequent bill reissues as Universal Credit changes earnings month to month.
- Maximum support for most working age claimants will reduce from 100% to 90%, meaning all working age residents who are liable for council tax will have something to pay; there is an exception retaining uncapped support (up to 100%) for claimants who are terminally ill and provide the required evidence.
- The package also removes Second Adult Rebate for working age residents, introduces a flat £10 per week nondependent deduction, and reduces the capital limit from £16,000 to £10,000.

County Durham
Council Tax
Reduction:
minimum payments
and a move to
banded support

Impacts on administration of services

- Billing and change control: banding reduces constant recalculations and re-billing triggered by small monthly Universal Credit changes, cutting printing and postage, and reducing confusion around instalments.
- Collections and arrears risk: introducing minimum payments for households previously paying nothing increases the volume of low value balances to bill, collect, and recover; this can raise demand for early intervention, vulnerability support, and payment plan handling.
- Customer contact and support: more residents will need explanations of new bands, minimum contributions, and deductions, increasing enquiries and complaints during transition, plus ongoing support where incomes fluctuate.
- Policy governance: the council report explicitly links the redesign to administrative burden and the changing welfare landscape, including managed migration to Universal Credit; the scheme rules and website content must be updated and maintained.



Benefit cuts and disability claims: spillover effects on PIP and other health related support

- The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) finds that cuts to non health related benefits can lead to more people claiming disability benefits, shifting pressure rather than removing it.
- The IFS studied four reforms from 2010 to 2019 that reduced non health related support and found each was associated with higher disability benefit claims.
- In a “back of the envelope” estimate, the IFS suggests that changes to non health related benefits and direct taxes between 2010 and 2019 increased disability benefit spending by about £900 million.
- The report argues that this spillover means the fiscal savings from cutting non health benefits are smaller than they appear, and the legacy effect can be long lasting because people often remain on disability benefits for years.
- The IFS also suggests that the post pandemic rise in disability benefit claims is more likely linked to cost of living pressures since 2022, rather than further major net benefit cuts after 2019.



Benefit cuts and disability claims: spillover effects on PIP and other health related support

Impacts on administration of services

- Caseload shift and capacity: tightening non health support can increase demand for disability benefits, which are more assessment heavy; this raises workload for decision making, evidence gathering, reviews, appeals, and case progression.
- System design risk: reforms in one part of welfare can create knock on effects elsewhere; operational planning needs to model interactions across Housing Benefit and Universal Credit, disability benefits, conditionality, and work support.
- Customer contact and debt pressures: if people move towards health-related benefits because other support is reduced, it can increase hardship related contact, complaints, and the need for discretionary support, including through local welfare and advice services.
- Health and work interface: greater reliance on health-related benefits increases the importance of coordinated pathways with NHS and employment support, including mental health support, fit note processes, and reasonable adjustments, to avoid people becoming long term claimants by default.
- Policy communications: the findings underline the need for clear public messaging about why disability caseloads rise, and for credible evaluation, because “cutting welfare” can simply reallocate spend and risk undermining trust.

Rent Repayment Orders and Universal Credit data sharing: expanding action against rogue landlords

- DWP is expanding a scheme that helps councils tackle poor housing and protect public funds by supporting Rent Repayment Orders (RROs) where landlords break housing rules.
- The expansion is expected to better protect around 400,000 households receiving housing support, by extending the approach from a three-area trial to a total of 41 local authorities across England.
- The scheme targets landlords who operate without required licences, ignore improvement notices, or leave properties in unsafe conditions; councils can pursue RROs to recover housing support that has been paid in these situations.
- A key operational change is streamlined access for councils to relevant Universal Credit data to support RRO applications, which DWP says is crucial for completing cases.
- The press notice highlights Camden, where data sharing is being used to recover nearly £100,000 in housing support and to make a fraud referral.

Rent Repayment Orders and Universal Credit data sharing: expanding action against rogue landlords

Impacts on administration of services

- Faster, more evidence led enforcement: easier access to UC data should reduce time spent confirming housing support payments and tenant details, improving the quality and pace of RRO casework.
- More joined up teams: housing enforcement, fraud, revenues and benefits, and legal services will need clear handoffs, shared templates, and agreed thresholds for when to pursue RROs and when to make fraud referrals.
- Increased case volumes and recovery tracking: expanding to 41 councils is likely to increase investigations, tribunal applications, and repayment monitoring, including how recovered sums are accounted for and reinvested in enforcement.
- Governance, privacy, and assurance: handling DWP data requires secure processes, audit trails, staff training, and clear lawful basis to avoid delays and challenges to evidence handling.
- Better targeting should reduce downstream costs: the policy intent is that improved standards reduce harm, including pressures on homelessness services, health services, and crisis support linked to unsafe housing.

Housing Benefit processing speed: Q1 FYE 2026 performance and workloads

Key facts (Great Britain, April to June 2025)

- Average processing time for new Housing Benefit claims was 21 calendar days, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier.
- Average processing time for changes of circumstance to existing Housing Benefit claims was 7 days, down from 8 days a year earlier.
- Volumes processed in the quarter were 100,000 new claims, and 1 million changes of circumstance.
- The bulletin highlights longer term trends: new claim processing times fell to Q1 FYE 2021, then rose to a peak around Q3 FYE 2023, with recent rolling averages increasing again towards that level.
- In quarter-month detail, new claims were steady at 21 days for April, May and June; change of circumstance times rose through the quarter, from 6 days in April to 9 days in June.

Housing Benefit processing speed: Q1 FYE 2026 performance and workloads

Impacts on administration of services

- Work profile is dominated by changes, not new claims: around nine in ten processed items are changes of circumstance, so capacity planning should focus on churn management and workflow efficiency.
- Seasonal resourcing pattern: the bulletin notes Q4 typically brings a spike in change volumes linked to rent uprating; councils often redeploy staff to keep turnaround down, which affects other work.
- Universal Credit has changed what HB teams now do: fewer new claims overall, but more complex residual groups remain (for example pensioners and working age households in specified or temporary accommodation), which can increase handling time and evidence needs.
- Performance variation is large at local authority level, especially for new claims; the range in Q1 FYE 2026 is 6 to 93 days, so benchmarking and targeted support remain important.
- Process and system change risk matters: the bulletin flags that IT conversions, mergers and operational changes can drive short-term spikes, with data quality exclusions sometimes applied.

The Benefit Cap: how it works, who is exempt, and what the statistics show

Policy overview and how the cap is applied

- The benefit cap limits the total amount of benefit most working age households can receive; it reduces benefit so total income from in scope benefits does not exceed the cap level.
- It can be applied through Universal Credit or Housing Benefit; under Universal Credit the cap is applied to the full award, not only to housing costs, because UC is assessed monthly on household circumstances.
- In scope benefits include (among others) Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, Child Benefit, Child Tax Credit, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance (except where Support Component is in payment), and certain legacy benefits.
- Main exemptions include households where someone is: over Pension Credit age; has limited capability for work- and work-related activity; is a carer for someone with a disability; or where the household earns above the monthly earnings threshold; plus, exemptions where someone receives an exempt disability or carer related benefit such as PIP, DLA, Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance, and others.
- Grace periods apply for people recently in work: 39 weeks for Housing Benefit capped cases (where the claimant or partner worked for 50 of the previous 52 weeks), and 9 months for Universal Credit capped cases (where the household met the earnings condition in the previous 12 months).

The Benefit Cap: how it works, who is exempt, and what the statistics show

Administrative impacts and what the statistics are designed to support

- Operational complexity is split across two systems: councils still administer Housing Benefit for residual groups, while DWP administers Universal Credit; the cap can move with households as they transition from HB to UC, which complicates tracking and explaining outcomes.
- The cap interacts with earnings and exemptions, so case handling often depends on timely information about work, disability status, caring responsibilities, and household composition; this drives verification workload and customer contact.
- Discretionary Housing Payments are an important local safety valve for households facing shortfalls in housing costs; the policy framing links DHP funding to helping local authorities manage impacts of reforms including the cap.
- The statistics support both local and national management: they are used to understand the scale and characteristics of capped households, to track on flows and off flows, and to answer Parliamentary Questions and FOI requests.
- Data management and interpretation issues matter: UC figures are subject to retrospection and revision; HB data has known disruption for specific councils; geography definitions differ between administrative and residential areas; and disclosure control means small cell values and percentages should be treated with care.



Business rates relief delivery for the 2026 revaluation

What BRIL 6/2025 says is now in play

- Government issued Business Rates Information Letter (6/2025) covering delivery instructions for billing authorities on reliefs and regulations ahead of the 2026 rating list.
- Transitional Relief for the 2026 revaluation: the implementing regulations were laid on 15 December 2025 and remain in draft until confirmed by Parliament.
- Supporting Small Business relief: government has now finalised and published local authority guidance for the 2026 scheme.
- Film studio relief: guidance has been clarified for 2026, including how the Transitional Relief Supplement interacts with “gross rates bill” calculations.
- Retail, Hospitality and Leisure multipliers: confirms previously issued material and notes additional FAQs will follow to support delivery.

Administration impacts

- Councils need to align billing, relief awards, testing and communications to the 2026 revaluation timetable, while working with regulations that are not yet confirmed.
- Likely requirement for service updates: staff briefings, system configuration for 2026 relief rules, quality assurance, and customer contact planning for bill changes.



Business rates relief delivery for the 2026 revaluation

Practical delivery implications for councils

Transitional Relief and Supporting Small Business relief

- Prepare to implement the 2026 Transitional Relief scheme once regulations are confirmed, including updating calculation logic and bill messaging.
- Apply the 2026 Supporting Small Business scheme as set out in the published guidance, focusing on businesses losing eligibility for certain reliefs at revaluation and managing enquiries and appeals linked to bill movements.

Film studio relief clarification

- Film studio relief continues into the 2026 list; councils must reflect the clarified position that the gross rates bill for the relevant calculation includes the 1p Transitional Relief Supplement. [GOV.UK+1](#)
- Eligibility assurance: VOA notifies billing authorities where a hereditament meets the conditions, so councils need a clear operational handoff between VOA notifications, award processing and audit trail.

RHL multipliers delivery

- Councils remain responsible for deciding whether a hereditament meets the statutory definition for RHL multipliers, supported by published guidance; this is likely to increase front line decision making, evidence handling and dispute resolution workload. [GOV.UK+1](#)
- Additional FAQs are expected, implying a need to keep processes flexible and update local guidance quickly when new central material arrives.



Budget 2025: fiscal drag from frozen personal tax thresholds

What is changing, and who is most affected

- The Budget did not raise the headline rates of income tax, employee National Insurance, or VAT; instead it extended the freeze on key personal tax thresholds through to 2031.
- Freezing thresholds means “fiscal drag”; as wages rise, more people are pulled into paying tax, and into higher bands, even if tax rates do not change.
- The Treasury position is that this approach is fair and necessary and is intended to help fund priorities such as cutting NHS waiting lists and reducing debt.
- Distributional message highlighted in the analysis: working age earners are hit hardest; pensioners and some benefit recipients are protected, or see increases, through uprating policies.



Budget 2025: fiscal drag from frozen personal tax thresholds

Likely impacts on administration of services

- Increased contact volumes for payroll and HR teams as staff move tax bands; more queries about take home pay, payslips, and tax codes.
- Higher demand for guidance and support from advice services (including council welfare support, debt advice, and customer contact centres) from households who feel worse off despite pay rises.
- Benefits administration remains under pressure from uprating changes; communications need to be clear about what is automatic (uprating) versus what requires claimant action.
- More complex internal budgeting for public bodies as pay settlements interact with frozen thresholds; employees may seek higher gross pay to offset net pay impacts, which can affect recruitment and retention discussions.
- Communications workload increases; teams need plain language explanations to prevent confusion between “no tax rise” and “higher tax paid”.

North Lincolnshire: proposed changes to social housing eligibility and priority

- North Lincolnshire Council says it will consult in January 2026 on changes to who can join the housing list and how priority is awarded.
- Main proposal: applicants would need to have lived in North Lincolnshire for at least five years before joining the housing list.
- Priority would be weighted towards people who work, volunteer or provide unpaid care, alongside strengthened protections for care leavers, veterans and survivors of domestic abuse.
- Financial thresholds would be introduced so applicants with high incomes or substantial savings are excluded from accessing social housing.
- The council also refers to a clearer banding approach and removing outdated restrictions affecting veterans.

North Lincolnshire: proposed changes to social housing eligibility and priority

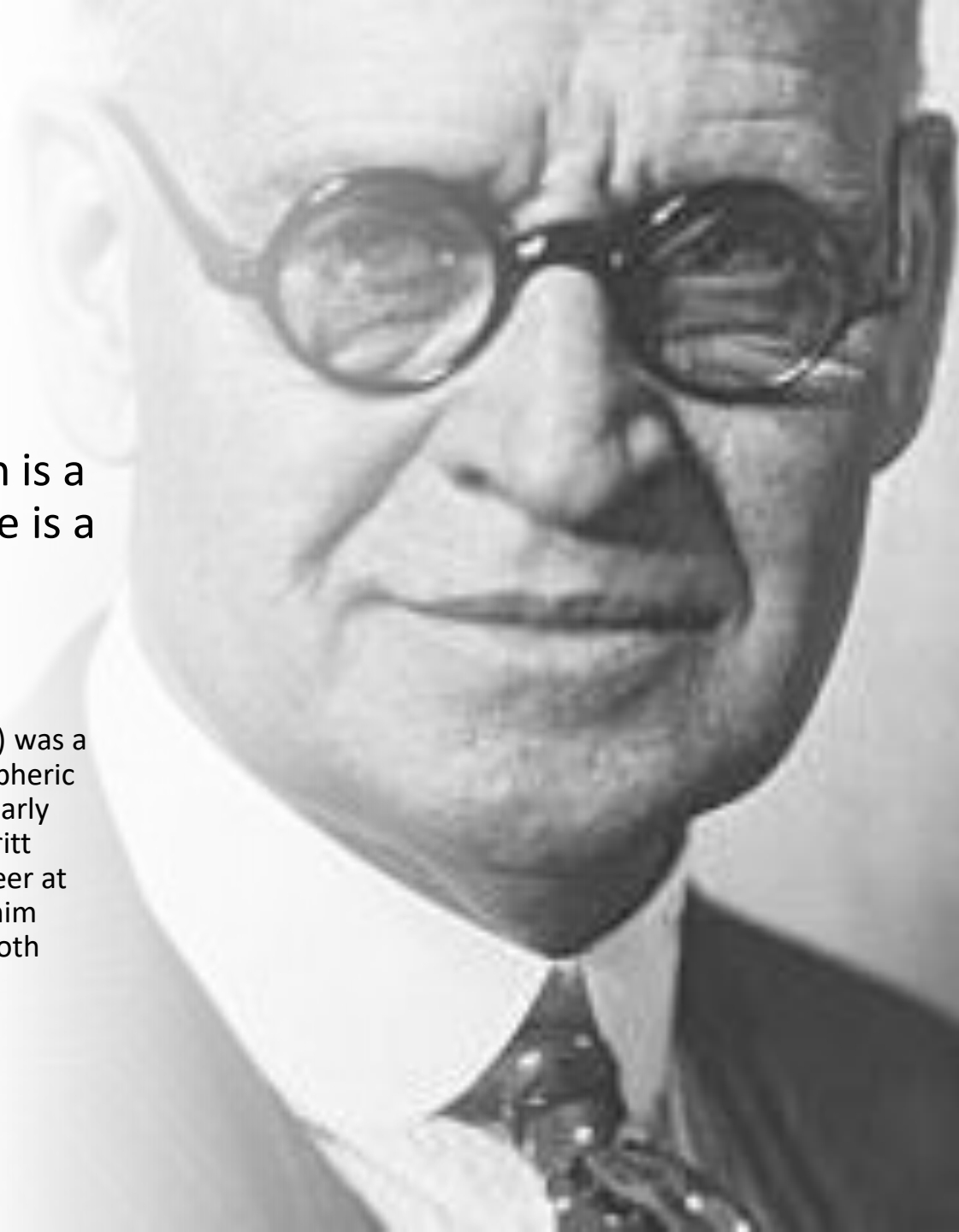
Impacts on administration of services

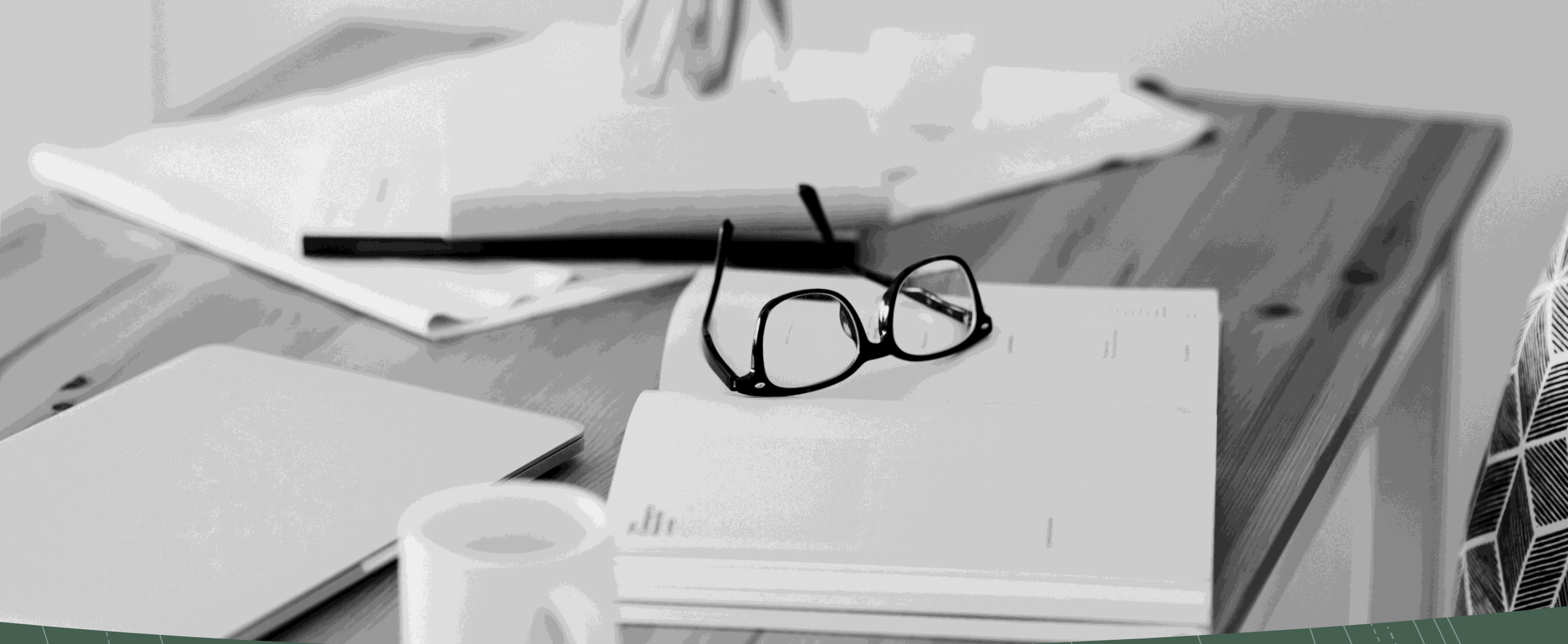
- Eligibility verification workload increases: residence history checks, evidence collection, fraud prevention, and more complex decision making at application and review stages.
- Systems and process change: banding rules, assessment templates, letters, and choice-based lettings workflows need reconfiguration; staff and partner training will be required.
- More disputes and reviews: higher likelihood of challenges about residence, contribution to local life, and financial thresholds, leading to more reconsiderations, appeals, and complaint handling.
- Compliance and exemptions must be carefully designed: national changes mean care leavers under 25 and domestic abuse survivors must be exempt from local connection tests, and veterans have also had local connection barriers removed in national policy; local rules will need to align.
- Demand management and signposting: tighter access to the housing list can increase enquiries to homelessness prevention, housing advice, and customer contact, especially for people who fail new tests.

Quote of the Week

“He who breaks a resolution is a weakling; he who makes one is a fool.”- *Farquhar McGillivray Knowles*

Farquhar McGillivray Knowles (1859–1932) was a Canadian painter celebrated for his atmospheric seascapes and marine scenes, shaped by early training under artists such as William Merritt Chase. Originally headed for a military career at West Point, a serious accident redirected him toward art, leading to a prolific career in both Canada and the United States





Sideway View



US Social Security: service deterioration from staffing cuts, reorganisation, and tighter fraud controls

- The Social Security Administration (SSA) is described as ending 2025 with major operational disruption; internal data cited in the reporting points to record backlogs in both processing centres and field offices, with delays affecting routine services.
- The reported drivers include workforce reductions and churn, rapid reorganisations, and policy changes introduced at pace, including tighter anti fraud requirements that shift more activity to online or in person channels.
- Customer service measures are described as worsening in several areas, including longer waits for appointments for disability related activity and wider reliance on call centres and field offices as digital journeys prove hard for some users.
- The agency response in the reporting is that it has made improvements, including use of overtime and a digital first approach; separate watchdog work supports that some telephone line measures improved, while also highlighting limitations in how performance is presented publicly.



US Social Security: service deterioration from staffing cuts, reorganisation, and tighter fraud controls

Impacts on administration of services

- Channel shift and capacity strain: moving transactions from phone to online or in person increases footfall, appointment demand, and queuing; this particularly affects users with limited digital access or confidence.
- Backlog management: higher volumes of unfinished work create operational risk, including slower case progression, higher rework, and increased error correction load; overtime becomes a recurring mitigation rather than a short-term fix.
- Workforce deployment and training: large scale reassignment of staff to customer facing roles, with constrained training time, can reduce first contact resolution and increase repeat contact, complaints, and escalations.
- Performance and reporting: reliance on single headline metrics can misstate the lived experience of waiting, particularly where callbacks are excluded from published measures; this increases scrutiny, audit activity, and ministerial or congressional handling time.
- Equality and accessibility: stricter identity and fraud controls can create barriers for older people, disabled people, and some migrants, with knock on impacts for safeguarding, hardship, and partner agencies that end up supporting residents to navigate processes.



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LGR & S114 Watch

Reform led councils and the limits of local tax cutting promises



What has happened in Warwickshire

- Warwickshire County Council's senior officers have advised that a council tax increase at the maximum 4.99% is needed for financial viability; anything lower is described as a riskier strategy that could threaten medium term sustainability.
- The same advice notes that once a permitted increase is not taken, it cannot be caught up in later years, which pushes officers towards using the full flexibility each year.
- Reform UK holds the largest number of seats in Warwickshire but does not have an overall majority; the officer advice records that the administration has said it wants to avoid the maximum rise, but the modelling assumes 4.99% unless extra resources appear or further reductions are found.
- Warwickshire's leader, George Finch, characterised the recommendation as a starting assumption to support financial resilience, with decisions still pending political discussion and the government funding picture.

Reform led councils and the limits of local tax cutting promises



Administrative impacts on services and budgeting

- Budget setting becomes a scenario exercise: officers are presenting multiple funding options (council tax, business rates, grants) and linking each option to impacts on reserves and the scale of reductions required.
- If councillors choose a lower rise, the pressure shifts immediately into service reduction planning, contract re negotiation, workforce controls, and delivery risk for statutory services (especially social care and children's services).
- Communications workload increases: councils must explain why headline promises collide with statutory duties and funding constraints, while managing consultation feedback and reputational risk around service impacts.
- Political management is harder in no overall control settings: budgets need cross party agreement, and financial decisions are more exposed to challenge when pre-election messaging emphasised immediate cost cutting.

Leeds budget 2026 to 2027: extra funding, reduced savings target, and ongoing demand pressures



- Leeds City Council says an additional £43m of government funding, plus £29.9m from additional funding streams, has reduced the savings requirement for 2026 to 2027 from £101.5m to £39.5m.
- The council still expects a council tax increase of 4.99%, including a 2% adult social care element; for Band D this is stated as about £90 a year, or £1.74 a week.
- Council leadership says the extra funding means there are no current plans to cut front line services in 2026 to 2027, while continuing to focus on value for money.
- Budget proposals are due to be considered by the executive board on 17 December 2025, then go to public consultation, with final decisions expected in February 2026.

Leeds budget 2026 to 2027: extra funding, reduced savings target, and ongoing demand pressures



Impacts on administration of services

- Budget management and delivery: a smaller savings target reduces immediate service change pressure, but the council still needs to deliver £39.5m of measures, requiring strong programme governance, monitoring, and benefits realisation.
- Digital and workforce change: proposals include adopting new technologies and different ways of working; this implies redesigning processes, training staff, and managing service transition without increasing failure demand.
- Demand led overspends remain: the current year has a projected overspend of about £40m, driven largely by children's services and looked after children costs, with adult social care also contributing; this points to ongoing operational and commissioning pressures.
- Staffing stability: the council leader said he did not foresee reductions in job numbers, but that workforce levels are always under review; this still implies a need for vacancy control and productivity management

Warrington's budget crisis: seeking Exceptional Financial Support and a higher council tax rise



- Warrington Council says it is facing its most challenging budget and is considering asking government for permission to increase council tax above the usual 5% limit.
- The council says it will apply for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS); it warns that if EFS is not granted it would need to issue a Section 114 notice, which stops new spending and forces a new budget within 21 days.
- The council reports a funding gap of about £90m over the next four years and an in year overspend of about £39m, driven by demand and inflation pressures in adult social care, children's social care, SEND, and homelessness.
- A cabinet report sets out that the council has reached a point where it cannot find recurring savings to balance the budget sustainably and will need to make difficult decisions over the medium term.

Warrington's budget crisis: seeking Exceptional Financial Support and a higher council tax rise



Impacts on administration of services

- EFS application and assurance: seeking EFS typically requires extensive financial evidence, scenario planning, and often additional scrutiny and reporting, adding substantial finance leadership and governance workload.
- Capitalisation mechanics: EFS can allow “capitalisation”, meaning some day-to-day costs are treated as capital, which increases accounting, audit, and monitoring demands and can shift cost and risk into future years.
- Tax setting complexity: a request to raise council tax above the limit introduces extra negotiation with government, stronger consultation and communications needs, and sharper focus on equality impacts and affordability, especially if paired with service reductions.
- Demand led services remain the pressure point: the drivers named by the council, particularly social care, SEND and homelessness, are areas where workloads rise quickly and savings are hardest to deliver without service change and risk



Legal Issues of Note

Business rates avoidance schemes: Court of Appeal backs Sheffield in Emeraldshaw case

Key facts

- The Court of Appeal dismissed as “wholly unarguable” Emeraldshaw’s attempt to challenge business rates liability for two unoccupied commercial hereditaments, upholding refusal of permission to apply for judicial review.
- Emeraldshaw had bought the property in June 2021 and granted two tenancies at will to Space to Help (Yorkshire) on a nominal rent, then argued the tenant was the party “entitled to possession” and therefore liable for empty property rates.
- Sheffield City Council rejected that position, billed Emeraldshaw, and pursued enforcement through the magistrates’ court when payment was not made.
- The Court of Appeal held Emeraldshaw’s case relied on a misreading of *Rosendale Borough Council v Hurstwood Properties*, confirming there is no need for “unusual” circumstances before applying the *Rosendale* test to rate mitigation arrangements.
- The court endorsed the lower court’s finding that the agreements had no real-world purpose beyond avoiding nondomestic rates, and that the tenant had no real and practical ability to take physical possession or bring the property back into use.

Business rates avoidance schemes: Court of Appeal backs Sheffield in Emeraldshaw case

Impacts on administration of services

- Stronger footing for countering avoidance: supports councils in challenging “paper” occupations and short form lettings used to shift empty rates liability, reducing exposure to schemes that depress the taxbase.
- Evidence and case building: reinforces the need for practical evidence (actual control, access, keys, use, ability to occupy and re let) rather than simply relying on lease wording; this increases investigative work for business rates teams.
- Litigation and recovery workflow: contested liability orders and JR threats add legal costs, officer time, and document management; councils need clear governance on when to litigate, settle, or pursue alternative enforcement routes.
- Supplier and agent management: requires consistent approaches to dealing with specialist rates mitigation firms and landlords, including communications that explain the Rossendale “real and practical possession” test in plain English to avoid repeat disputes

Planning appeal costs, council debt payments, and governance

What happened, and why it matters

- An enforcement agent (bailiff) visited Forest of Dean District Council offices in Coleford in November 2025, seeking payment of a debt owed by the council to a resident.
- The debt related to costs awarded against the council following a planning or enforcement appeal.
- A councillor raised the issue at Full Council on 11 December 2025, arguing the council should treat its own debts at least as seriously as it treats council tax non payment.
- The council leader said the enforcement agent visited, spoke with legal services, then took no action against the council; the council said some cost claims were disputed and under negotiation.
- The councillor disputed this account, alleging repeat visits and that payment had been taken, and called for an urgent investigation.

Planning appeal costs, council debt payments, and governance

Impacts on administration of services

- **Financial controls and creditor management:** exposes risk around tracking, validating, and paying costs awards promptly, including clear ownership between finance and legal services.
- **Legal and governance workload:** disputed claims and potential enforcement action increase legal services time, member scrutiny, and complaint handling.
- **Planning and enforcement process assurance:** repeated appeal losses and cost awards can trigger internal review of decision quality, enforcement practice, and how the council learns from inspectorate outcomes.
- **Reputational and trust impact:** the contrast between resident council tax enforcement and the council's own debt position risks undermining confidence in fairness and proportionality.
- **Audit and scrutiny escalation:** the chief executive indicated an investigation could be a matter for the audit committee, creating formal governance actions and reporting requirements.



Stats & references

Exempt supported housing: delayed regulation and resident safety

Key numbers and stats

- Birmingham: around 30,000 exempt accommodation places reported.
- Deaths: research cited 36 deaths in exempt accommodation during 2024 across 10 local authorities; the true figure may be higher due to limited council data collection.
- Funding announced: £124 million supported housing programme, described as reaching more than 2,500 people.
- Consultation timing: government consultation on implementing the Act published 20 February 2025.

References and links

- The Guardian, “Vulnerable people still living in unsafe supported housing...” (28 Dec 2025).
- GOV.UK, Supported Housing regulation: consultation (20 Feb 2025).
- UK Parliament, written statement: update on the supported housing regulation consultation (10 Jul 2025).
- GOV.UK, A National Plan to End Homelessness (11 Dec 2025).

JobsPlus: hyperlocal employment support on social housing estates

Key numbers and stats

- Scale: 10 pilot sites across England, including Stockton on Tees.
- Participation and jobs: since launch in summer 2024, more than 1,000 people have signed up; more than 270 have found work.
- Incentive: £400 “into work” bonus after sustained work; the interim evaluation describes eligibility as staying in work for at least two months and earning at least £677 per month.
- Sustainment: interim reporting cited around three fifths reaching the relevant sustainment milestone that triggers the bonus.
- Funding: article reports £2 million DWP support, with part funding from the Youth Futures Foundation; government funding is due to run out in March 2026 unless extended.
- Context: UK unemployment reported at 5.1%, a four-year high (at time of publication).

References and links

- The Guardian (Heather Stewart), “They can open doors”: the community-based project helping people into work in Teesside (27 Dec 2025).
- Institute for Employment Studies, JobsPlus Pilot: Interim evaluation findings (5 Nov 2025).
- Institute for Employment Studies, JobsPlus Pilot Implementation and Process Evaluation: Interim Report (2025).
- Learning and Work Institute, JobsPlus overview and background.

Council equal pay claims: settlements, liabilities, and service impact

Key numbers and stats

- Total reported settlements secured by GMB across six councils: £1.1bn.
- Claims settled so far: almost 30,000; average settlement: about £30,000; some Birmingham cases reported up to £55,000.
- Birmingham settlement reported at about £250m; earlier potential liability cited at about £750m.
- Largest single council settlement cited: Glasgow £770m (agreed 2022).
- Outstanding volume: GMB cited around 40,000 claims still outstanding across 26 local authorities, potentially hundreds of millions more.

References and links

- The Guardian, Equal pay settlements for female council workers pass £1bn (27 Dec 2025).
- Equality and Human Rights Commission, Equal pay guidance.
- ACAS, Equal pay and the law.
- Glasgow City Council, Equal Pay Claims: Latest News (re £770m settlement).
- Unite the Union statement on Glasgow settlement (Nov 2022).

Carer's Allowance overpayments: systemic failure, debt recovery, and trust

Key numbers and stats

- Eligibility rules cited: at least 35 hours of care a week; £83.30 a week allowance; earnings limit £196 a week; over the limit by 1p triggers repayment of the full week.
- Debt scale: debts can exceed £20,000; DWP recovery action may come years later and can involve fraud investigation and prosecution risk.
- Government response: about £75m pledged; about 200,000 historic cases to be reassessed; DWP estimate about 26,000 carers will have debts cancelled or reduced, with experts arguing the number should be higher.
- Recommendations: government response says 38 of 40 recommendations were accepted or partially accepted.

References and links

- The Guardian, Pressure grows on DWP over 'misleading' response to carer's allowance scandal (20 Dec 2025).
- GOV.UK, Independent Review of Carer's Allowance Overpayments (25 Nov 2025).
- GOV.UK, Government response to the Independent Review (PDF, 24 Nov 2025). UK Parliament Hansard, Review of Carer's Allowance Overpayments debate (8 Dec 2025).
- The Guardian, 'Outdated and ever less fit for purpose': five takeaways from the report (25 Nov 2025).

SEND places in mainstream schools: £3bn capital shift and local delivery

Key numbers and stats

- New capacity: around 50,000 specialist places to be created in mainstream schools via £3bn investment.
- Scale of need: around 1.7 million pupils identified with SEND, with growth since 2020 highlighted by government.
- Free schools changes: 28 mainstream free school projects cancelled, with 16 further sites under review.
- Tribunal pressure: 25,000 registered SEN appeals in academic year 2024 to 2025, up 18% on the previous year; 20,000 disposed, up 19%.
- Transport cost driver: LGA research estimates about £1.5bn spent on pre 16 SEND home to school transport in 2023 to 24, within total SEND transport spend of about £1.73bn.
- Wider transport context: NAO reports total home to school transport spend rose to £2.32bn in 2023 to 24 (all pupils, not just SEND).

References and links

- Department for Education press release: £3bn investment to end postcode lottery for children with SEND (11 Dec 2025).
- HMCTS Tribunal Statistics Quarterly, July to September 2025 (published 11 Dec 2025), including annual SEND appeal figures for 2024 to 2025.
- National Audit Office: Support for children and young people with special educational needs (24 Oct 2024).
- Local Government Association: Council spending on SEND home to school transport soars (2 Jul 2025) and accompanying report (27 Jun 2025).
- National Audit Office: Home to school transport (31 Oct 2025)

County Durham Council Tax Reduction: minimum payments and a move to banded support

- Key numbers and stats
- Caseload and cost: about 31,200 working age claimants (at 1 October 2025); estimated annual cost £41.3 million.
- Current position: 84% of claimants receive 100% support and therefore pay no council tax under the existing scheme.
- Consultation: 1,856 responses (18 July to 26 September 2025).
- Consultation results (headline): 65.8% supported introducing an income banded model; on the cap level, 36.2% preferred a 75% cap while 30.2% preferred keeping 100% support.
- Approved policy changes from 1 April 2026: cap at 90% (with a terminal illness protection), end Second Adult Rebate for working age, set nondependent deduction at £10 per week, reduce capital limit to £10,000.

References and links

- Durham County Council, County Council report: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27 (10 Dec 2025).
- Durham County Council, "Let's talk" consultation folder: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age people.
- Durham County Council meeting page, agenda item: Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27 (County Council, 10 Dec 2025).

Benefit cuts and disability claims: spillover effects on PIP and other health related support

Key numbers and stats

- IFS estimated spillover cost: around £900 million higher disability benefit spending due to 2010 to 2019 changes to non-health related benefits and direct taxes.
- Evidence base: four reforms analysed, each associated with increased disability benefit claims.
- Context on recent trends: IFS notes the post 2019 period did not include significant net benefit cuts, and points to cost of living pressures since 2022 as a plausible contributor to the post pandemic rise in claims.

References and links

- IFS report, Do disability benefit claims rise when other benefits are cut? (12 Dec 2025).
- IFS press release, Cuts to non-health related benefits shift claimants onto disability benefits (12 Dec 2025).
- LBC, Disability benefits surged due to austerity cuts, leading think tank says (12 Dec 2025).
- The Guardian, Mental ill health is behind soaring disability benefits bill, report says (12 Mar 2025), for wider context on claim growth drivers.

Rent Repayment Orders and Universal Credit data sharing: expanding action against rogue landlords

Key numbers and stats

- Scale: around 400,000 households receiving housing support are cited as benefiting from the expanded scheme.
- Coverage: 41 local authorities in England (three trial areas plus a further 38).
- Recovery power: councils can seek RROs for up to 24 months of rent, double the previous 12-month limit, linked to the Renters' Rights Act.
- Example recovery: Camden reported nearly £100,000 being recovered in housing support, plus a fraud referral.
- Example scale: Enfield cited as having nearly 30,000 households receiving housing support who will be better protected under the expanded approach.
- Implementation note: central government guidance for local authorities says the new rules apply on and after 1 May 2026.

References and links

- DWP, Taxpayer cash protected as crackdown on rogue landlords expands (20 Dec 2025).
- GOV.UK, Rent repayment orders: guidance for local authorities (13 Nov 2025), includes implementation timing.
- Shelter Legal, Rent repayment orders, for the previous 12-month cap position.
- Local Government Lawyer, Pilot tackling poor quality housing expanded to a further 38 local authorities (22 Dec 2025), summary and context.

Housing Benefit processing speed: Q1 FYE 2026 performance and workloads

Key numbers and stats (Q1 FYE 2026)

- Average processing times:
 - New claims: 21 days
 - Changes of circumstance: 7 days
- Monthly averages in the quarter:
 - New claims: 21 days (Apr), 21 (May), 21 (Jun)
 - Changes: 6 days (Apr), 8 (May), 9 (Jun)
- Volumes and mix: 1.1 million processed in total; 100,000 new claims (9%), 1.0 million changes (91%).
- Compared with the same quarter a year earlier: changes processed fell from 1.4 million to 1.0 million.
- Local authority distribution, new claims:
 - 45% processed in 6 to 18 days; 38% in 19 to 26 days; 17% in 27 to 93 days.
- Local authority distribution, changes:
 - 46% processed in 1 to 6 days; 47% in 7 to 14 days; 6% in 15 to 31 days.
- By age group:
 - New claims, average time: working age 20 days; pension age 25 days.
 - Changes, average time: working age 7 days; pension age 9 days.
 - New claim volumes: 73,000 working age (70%); 31,000 pension age (30%).
 - Change volumes: 660,000 working age (65%); 350,000 pension age (35%).

References and links

- DWP, Housing Benefit speed of processing statistics, Q1 FYE 2026 (April 2025 to June 2025), Official Statistics, ISBN 978-1-78659-886-8
- Collection page: GOV.UK, Housing Benefit speed of processing (Right Time Indicator) statistics
- Background methodology note: GOV.UK, Average time taken to process Housing Benefit claims (methodology and FAQs)
- Related series (context):
 - - DWP Housing Benefit caseload statistics (Stat-Xplore)
 - - DWP Housing Benefit debt recovery statistics

The Benefit Cap: how it works, who is exempt, and what the statistics show

Key numbers and thresholds mentioned in the methodology text

- Current annual cap levels (uprated by 10.1% from April 2023):
 - £22,020 per year nationally, £14,753 for single adults with no children
 - £25,323 per year in Greater London, £16,967 for single adults with no children
- Monthly earnings exemption threshold: households are not capped if they earn more than £722 per month after tax and National Insurance (as referenced in the exemption criteria).
- Earnings thresholds for the UC off flow measure (earnings per assessment period, after tax and NI) rise over time; for example £722 in 2023 to 2024, £793 in 2024 to 2025, £846 in 2025 to 2026.
- Policy timeline:
 - Introduced from April 2013 with national roll out via Housing Benefit by end of September 2013
 - Lower cap levels introduced from November 2016, with staged roll out to newly affected households to January 2017
- DHP funding context: government contribution described as over £1 billion since 2011 to support households affected by key Housing Benefit changes including the cap.
- Geography update: from December 2025, residential data for UC in the accompanying tables and Stat Xplore is presented on 2021 Census Output Area geographies; HB residential data remains on 2011 COA for now.
- Data limitation example: disruption in HB data supply from Gloucester City Council affects HB statistics from December 2021; Gloucester represents about 0.2% of all GB HB claims and about 2.5% of Southwest claims.

References and links

- Benefit cap statistics collection (latest release, tables, and previous releases) <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/benefit-cap-statistics>
- Stat-Xplore (for building tables and breakdowns) <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>
- Policy overview: Benefit cap <https://www.gov.uk/benefit-cap>
- Discretionary Housing Payments <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/discretionary-housing-payments-statistics>
- Housing Benefit caseload statistics <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-benefit-caseload-statistics>
- Universal Credit official statistics <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>

Business rates relief delivery for the 2026 revaluation

Key numbers and dates

- BRIL 6/2025 published: 17 December 2025.
- Transitional Relief regulations for the 2026 revaluation laid: 15 December 2025 (draft affirmative).
- Supporting Small Business relief guidance published: 22 December 2025.
- Film studio relief: eligible studios pay a maximum of 60% of their gross rates bill; guidance notes VOA notification to billing authorities on qualifying hereditaments.
- RHL multipliers: statutory definition set in SI 2025/1093; councils determine qualification using the published guidance.

References and links (as separate slide)

- MHCLG, Business Rates Information Letter 6/2025: Business rates relief guidance and regulations (17 December 2025).
- GOV.UK, Business Rates Relief: 2026 Supporting Small Business Relief, local authority guidance (22 December 2025).
- Business rates: Film studio relief, local authority guidance (with clarified interaction for 2026). [GOV.UK](#)
- Legislation, The Non-Domestic Rating (Chargeable Amounts) (England) Regulations 2026 (draft instrument details).
- GOV.UK, Business Rates Multipliers: Qualifying Retail, Hospitality or Leisure guidance (England).
- Legislation, The Non-Domestic Rating (Definition of Qualifying Retail, Hospitality or Leisure Hereditament) Regulations 2025 (SI 2025/1093).

Budget 2025: fiscal drag from frozen personal tax thresholds

Key numbers and stats to quote

- Threshold freeze extended to 2031; expected to raise around £23bn by 2030 to 2031.
- Thinktank example used in the reporting: a worker earning £50,000 “today” is estimated to be about £505 worse off in real terms by 2031, despite pay rising by more than £6,000.
- Pensioners: triple lock uprating is estimated to leave a pensioner at least £306 better off in real terms by 2030 to 2031; if the state pension is kept outside income tax even when it exceeds the personal allowance, the gain could be about £537.
- Universal Credit: increases to the standard rate are estimated to mean someone on out of work benefits is about £290 better off.

References and links

- Sky News analysis, Workers being “hammered” while pensioners benefit (published 2 January 2026).
- House of Commons Library briefing, Autumn Budget 2025: summary, including personal tax threshold freeze and OBR estimate of revenue impact (published 27 November 2025).
- Office for Budget Responsibility, Economic and fiscal outlook, November 2025 (forecast context referenced in the reporting).
- House of Lords Library note, Budget 2025 summary including annual profile of revenues from freezing thresholds (published 1 December 2025).

North Lincolnshire: proposed changes to social housing eligibility and priority

Key numbers and stats

- Proposed local residence requirement: at least five years in North Lincolnshire to join the housing list.
- Population: 169,700; tenure mix (2021 Census): 67.5% owner occupied, 17.2% private rented, 15% social rented.
- Housing pressures cited by the council: over 75 population expected to increase by 50% by 2030; 25% of the housing register are residents over 65 needing adapted properties.
- Supply and stock indicators: 1,980 new homes planned for delivery 2023 to 2028; 2,213 empty properties in 2022; average house price £189,600.
- Supported housing and care leavers: 51 supported housing units housing 54 care leavers delivered; planned delivery of 410 additional homes for older people by 2028; 113 adaptable properties by 2028.

References and links

- North Lincolnshire Council, Residents first: new housing rules will put North Lincolnshire folk back at the front of the queue (31 December 2025).
- GOV.UK, Barrier to social housing now lifted for vulnerable people (10 July 2025).
- North Lincolnshire Council, Housing Plan 2023 to 2028 (North Lincolnshire in Numbers section).

US Social Security: service deterioration from staffing cuts, reorganisation, and tighter fraud controls

Key numbers and stats to quote

- Scale of SSA service: around 74 million people receive retirement, disability, or survivor benefits (as framed in the reporting).
- Backlogs cited: up to 6 million pending cases in processing centres and 12 million transactions in field offices.
- Call demand: 93 million calls as of late September 2025, described as a six-year high.
- Workforce change: around 7,000 staff, described as 12 percent of the workforce, squeezed out earlier in the year.
- Disability appointments: 66 percent scheduled within 28 days as of December, down from nearly 90 percent earlier in the year (as cited in the reporting).
- Telephone metrics, watchdog view: average speed of answer improved to 7 minutes by September 2025, but the Inspector General report notes average callback waits remained material and that many calls still ended without service.
- Field office staffing pressure: Strategic Organizing Center analysis reports a median of about 3,976 beneficiaries per field office worker as of August 2025.
- Forward plan reported elsewhere: internal planning documents shared with AP indicate a target of no more than 15 million field office visits in FY 2026, down from more than 31 million in FY 2025.

References and links

- The Washington Post, How Social Security has gotten worse under Trump (29 December 2025, updated 30 December 2025).
- SSA Office of Inspector General, Social Security Administration's Telephone Metrics (22 December 2025).
- SSA, press release on OIG report and service updates (22 December 2025).
- Associated Press, SSA plan to cut field office visits by 50 percent in FY 2026 (December 2025).
- Reuters, SSA delays or rolls back proposed service changes after complaints (March and April 2025).
- Strategic Organizing Center, Doing Less with Less / field office staffing analysis and supporting report (December 2025).

Reform led councils and the limits of local tax cutting promises

Key numbers and stats

- Proposed Warwickshire rise: 4.99%; modelled as a weekly increase of £1.75 for a Band D household on the county council element, and £90.97 per year (to £1,913.92).
- Warwickshire modelling states that reducing resources by 1% requires about £4.2m of compensating resource, implying a direct link between a lower tax rise and additional cuts.
- Adult social care pressure in the Warwickshire report: even with a 2% adult social care levy (£8.4m in 2026/27), it does not fully cover the net additional social care pressures (£23.1m) for 2026/27.
- National context: Reform won 677 council seats in the May 2025 local elections and took control of 10 councils.

References and links

- The Guardian, 11 Dec 2025: Reform councillors accused of “rash promises” as council tax rises loom.
- Warwickshire County Council, Cabinet papers (11 Dec 2025): 2026/27 Budget and 2026 to 2031 Medium Term Financial Strategy, Background Information and Options (PDF).
- Financial Times, Nov 2025: Stephen Atkinson on council tax rises not being ruled out.
- House of Commons Library, Local elections 2025: results and analysis.

Leeds budget 2026 to 2027: extra funding, reduced savings target, and ongoing demand pressures

Key numbers and stats

- Additional resources cited: £43m extra government funding, plus £29.9m from additional funding streams.
- Savings requirement change: £101.5m reduced to £39.5m for 2026 to 2027.
- Council tax proposal: 4.99% including 2% adult social care; Band D increase stated as about £90 a year, or £1.74 a week.
- In year position: projected overspend about £40m; children and families budget reported as up £12.8m since August.

References and links

- Leeds City Council Newsroom, initial 2026/27 budget proposals and funding uplift (9 Dec 2025). BBC report republished by AOL, Cuts due to shrink amid £43m council funding boost (10 Dec 2025).

Warrington's budget crisis: seeking Exceptional Financial Support and a higher council tax rise

Key numbers and stats

- Reported medium term shortfall: £89.3m over four years; potentially reducible to £48.2m if additional savings are approved through budget setting
- Current year overspend about £39m.
- Council tax position: the council states it is the 37th lowest Band D council tax among 99 unitary and metropolitan authorities.
- Process dates: cabinet discussion scheduled for 8 December 2025; government decisions on EFS expected in February 2026 (per the report).

References and links

- BBC, via AOL, Council may ask for tax rise and financial support (1 Dec 2025).
- Warrington Borough Council, Council faces unprecedented financial challenge (28 Nov 2025).
- GOV.UK, Exceptional Financial Support for local authorities' collection and guidance.

Business rates avoidance schemes: Court of Appeal backs Sheffield in Emeraldshaw case

Key numbers and case milestones

- Two hereditaments; two tenancies at will, granted after purchase in June 2021, on nominal rent.
- Liability orders in the magistrates' court remained in force (the Court of Appeal upheld refusal of JR permission).
- Court of Appeal decision date: 11 December 2025 (reported as [2025] EWCA Civ 1601).

References and links

- Local Government Lawyer report (11 Dec 2025): City council defeats appeal in business rates case.
- Emeraldshaw Ltd v Sheffield Magistrates' Court [2025] EWCA Civ 1601 (case summaries and commentary).
- Rossendale Borough Council v Hurstwood Properties (A) Ltd [2021] UKSC 16 (Supreme Court case page).
- Background on Rossendale and empty rates mitigation (practitioner commentary).

Planning appeal costs, council debt payments, and governance

Key numbers and stats

- 318 planning or enforcement appeals over the last seven years.
- 93 appeals successful for the appellant (the council lost).
- 13 cases where costs were awarded to appellants.
- 7 cost claims said to remain outstanding, with the council stating it disputes the amounts and negotiations are ongoing.
- Some claims reportedly submitted more than two years after the planning inspectorate decision.

References and links

- Gloucester News Centre, Bailiff turns up at council seeking debt owed to resident (12 Dec 2025).
- Forest of Dean District Council committee papers, Full Council, 11 December 2025 (agenda and papers page).



Job Adverts From Business Smart Solutions



BUSINESS SMART

SOLUTIONS LTD

Your Revenues and Benefits Recruitment Partner





Meet The Team



**Ben
Moreton**
CEO



**Mark
Thomas**
Operations



**Chris
Sharratt**
Talent Partner



"Best decision I've made in years was to join BSS. Ben has been fantastic at every stage during the past 10 months, and is already putting me forward for more senior roles where I had struggled to past few years.

Very personal approach from day one, reassuring and highly knowledgeable! Would highly recommend for anyone wanting to progress their career or just looking for a change!"





Generic Revenues & Benefits Officer (Civica OpenRevenues)

Permanent | Circa £30,000.00 per annum | Hybrid

Our good client in the East of England is seeking multiple Revenues & Benefits Officers, on a permanent, full-time basis.

Roles are offered on a remote basis with the understanding you may be asked to work from the office once every 2-3 days, and initially for the first few days for training & set-up.

- Assessment of HB & CTR claims
- To determine Council Tax liability in accordance with relevant primary legislation and case law
- To have and maintain a working knowledge of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and case law
- Determine and award discounts and exemptions in
- Gather information, explain decisions, and provide advice to the public and their representatives by email, letter, and

What we're looking for:

main skills/knowledge:

- A minimum of 3 years Revenues or Benefits experience
- Be a skilled Civica OpenRevenues user

To find out more or to apply

>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Trainee Enforcement Agent



Permanent | £25,000 basic salary | London or Nationwide

Salary: £25,000 basic salary increasing to £28,500 once your earnings are uncapped. (We pay fees on a pro-rata basis).

Core responsibilities of the role include:

- Undertaking field based/Classroom training to learn the necessary skills to become a Certificated Enforcement Agent.
- Travelling to various addresses, observing and job
- Completion of training course resulting in Level 2
- Completion of the Level 2 Taking Control of Goods examination.
- Attending the County Court, either in person or virtually to demonstrate that you are a fit and proper person to be

What we're looking for:

main skills/knowledge:

- No experience is required as all training will be supplied.
- Ideal candidates will have worked in relevant roles including Civil Enforcement, Armed Forces, Security, Police, Parking/traffic Management, and jobs where Customer Service is a key element of the role.
- Full clean UK driving license is required (minimum of 2 years).

To find out more or to apply

[>> Click here to view the full advert <<](#)

Benefits Team Leader (NEC/Northgate)



3 months | £35 per hour (umbrella) | Remote

Our good client in the North West is seeking a Benefits Team Leader on a fully remote basis.

The successful candidate must have strong Housing skills, be an large team.

What we're looking for:

main skills/knowledge:

- Strong Housing Benefit/Council Tax Reduction assessment skills
- The ability to lead and motivate a Benefits team
- Knowledge & understanding of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 and Decisions & Appeals Regulations 2001
- An advanced NEC (Northgate) user

To find out more or to apply

>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Senior NDR Officer (NEC) 16hrs per week



8 weeks initially | £30 per hour (umbrella) | Remote

The role requires an experienced Interim Senior NDR/Business Rates Officer on a short-term basis who can help the team with complex queries, writing procedures & training.

The role is offered on a fully remote basis, laptop will be couriered.

What we're looking for:

main skills/knowledge:

- Strong Senior Revenues/NDR skills
- Experience of NEC(Northgate)
- IRRV qualified or relevant experience
- Able to deal with complex queries and support new members of staff
- Write procedures and support with training

To find out more or to apply

>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Revenues Manager (Academy)



3 months initially | £450 per day (umbrella) | Hybrid

Location: Hybrid – 2-3 days in the office per week

Purpose and impact:

high-quality Council Tax and Business Rates (NDR) billing and service in line with customer requirements and and performance.

As part of the Management Team the role holder will deputise for the AD and provide strong professional leadership and for the Revenues service for West

What we're looking for:

main skills/knowledge:

- IRRV qualified to current Level 7
- Extensive knowledge of Council Tax and Business Rates legislation
- Up to date knowledge of current best practice in both Council Tax and Business Rates
- Management experience is essential as this role will be managing 7 direct reports

To find out more or to apply

>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Business Analyst Revenues & Benefits



Until 31 May 2026 | £450 per day (umbrella) | Hybrid

Hours per week: 18.50 -- 2.5 days per week (Tuesday & Thursday full days, half-day at candidate discretion)

We are looking for an experienced Business Analyst to support moving our NEC Revenues & Benefits System to the cloud (Software As A Service). We will be pursuing the following lines of enquiry:

- Reviewing existing processes for the “as is” solution - to determine our baseline
- Reviewing, with IT specialists, the function of existing standard processes
- Reviewing new modules that will be implemented as part of the project and producing new process flow maps for end users
- Identifying if this move present any opportunities for beneficial changes

What we're looking for:

main skills/knowledge:

- Experience with NEC Revenues & Benefits (Previously known as Northgate i-world)
- Experience with cloud migrations
- Experiencing in producing process documentation, process maps and flow charts
- Must be skilled in working proactively, methodically and collaboratively with a project team
- Domain knowledge of Local Authority highly desirable

To find out more or to apply

>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Are you ready to take the next step in your career?

As an experienced Revenues or Benefits professional, the new year is the perfect time to explore exciting interim/contract opportunities in the public sector. Whether you're looking for a fresh challenge, greater flexibility, or a role where you can make a real impact – we're here to help.

[✨ Start your journey today – register now!](#)

Want to learn more about increasing your earning potential and fast track your career progression? Reach out and we'll be more than happy to help

[Contact us here](#)



Payroll Solutions

At BSS, we are dedicated to simplifying your contractor journey by providing you with efficient, tailored payroll solutions.



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Our partnership with Umbrella.co.uk solidifies our commitment to ensuring you maximise your take-home pay, get paid on time and keep things stress free.

Umbrella.co.uk is one of the UK's leading umbrella companies.

Managed by qualified accountants and being FCSA accredited, it assures you of its high standards.



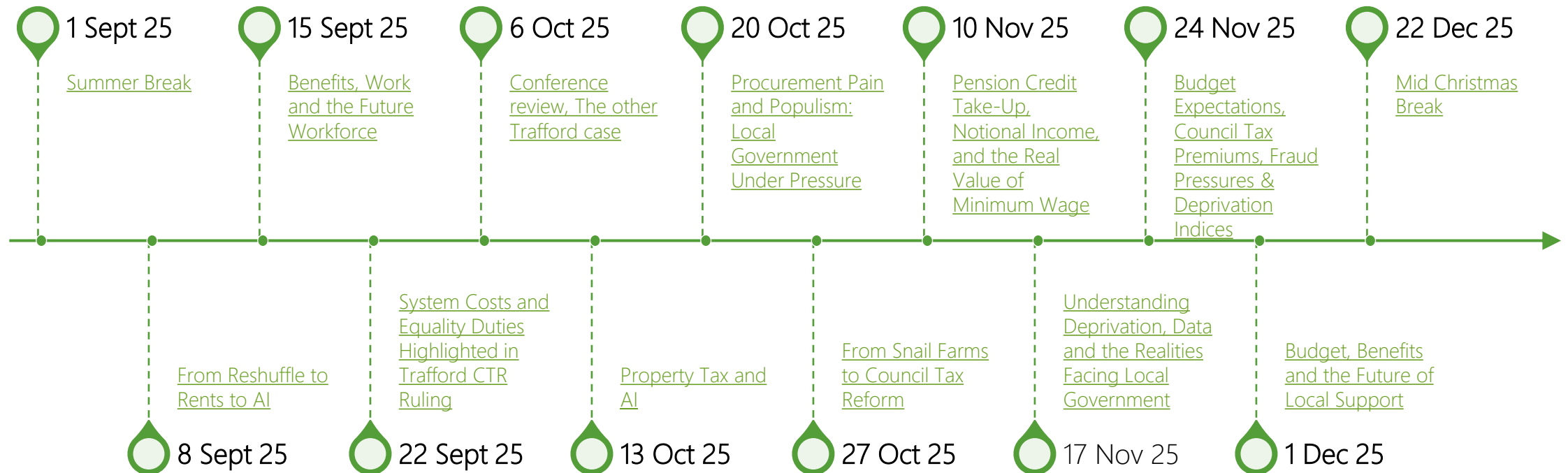
"BSS has provided us with excellent support since 2022. The range of expertise they have on their books is second to none, and they are without doubt my first choice when looking for staff.

What I particularly like is how well they support everyone, and they really look after their people, which is unlike any other agency I have worked with in 30 years.

Congratulations to Ben and the team !"
#TeamBSS Client - Simon Rosser

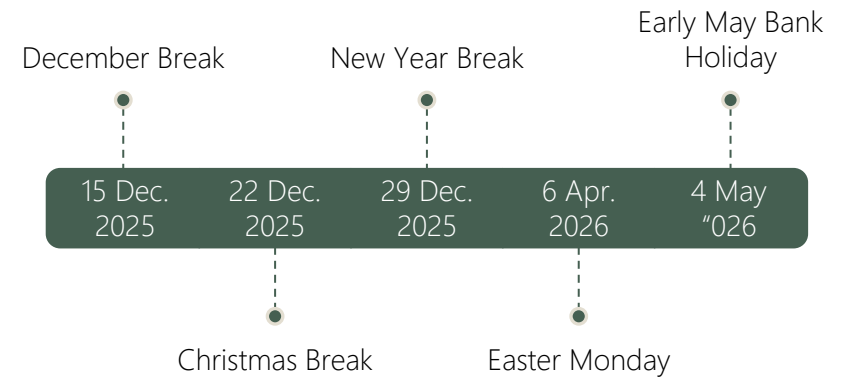


Previous Recordings





Dates where there will be no sessions





Other Workshops



Thursday 29th January 2026

2026: Reorganisation, Reform & Results: Shaping the Future of Local Government

Leeds Civic Hall, Calverley
Street, LS1 1UR



Reorganisation, Reform & Results: Shaping the Future of Local Government

Event by [Ascendant Solutions Ltd](#)

Thu, Jan 29, 2026, 9:30 AM (your
local time)

Live and Online

Event

link<https://preview.mailerlite.io/forms/657684/168311692752585951/share>



WELFARE TOGETHER

Vulnerability & Debt Advice Skills Training



Welfare
Together

Join Tracey Stone & Fiona Monk in Leeds 26th January 2026

Improve your teams key support skills

Focus areas for the day:

Spot vulnerability indicators and adapt support accordingly
Identify and prioritise debts effectively

Tackle difficult money conversations without judgement
Connect people with the right debt advice services

What attendees have said:



“It’s not often you attend a course and find that you’re totally engaged from start to finish, and the time seemed to go by very quickly.” – FK



“I really enjoyed the session.”- LP





“REACHING, HELPING, AND EMPOWERING”

We're excited to offer **in-person training** - on 26th January 2026,
@1 Park Lane, Leeds LS3 1EP.

Registration from 9:30am
Start 10am - 3pm

details to be confirmed.

Special offer: £99 + vat per person – **only £79 + vat** if booked
st December 2025.

Guest Speakers – Greg Flewitt & Deborah Nigh

Book now to secure your team's place - Spaces are limited, so please book early.

Email Tracey.stone@welfaretogether.co.uk





VISIONARY NETWORK
The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

Replay: Public Finance x Visionary Network 2 April 12:00

Title: Crisis, Cuts & Community: Rethinking Local Tax & Support in the 114 Era

Link: <https://view6.workcast.net/register?cpak=6070531364001666>

Access the recording





Blogs

Thoughts from the panel

Blogs



Budget 2025: Impacts on Revenues & Benefits Administration, Housing and Local Government Finance by Malcolm Gardner

[Budget 2025: Impacts on Revenues & Benefits Administration, Housing and Local Government Finance – Visionary Network](#)

Why We Should Not Be Surprised That Reform UK's Councils Are Struggling by Malcolm Gardner

[Why We Should Not Be Surprised That Reform UK's Councils Are Struggling – Visionary Network](#)

The Appointment of McFadden to DWPS by Malcolm Gardner

<https://visionarynetwork.co.uk/2025/09/06/the-implications-of-pat-mcfaddens-appointment-to-work-pensions-and-skills/>

The Case for Plain English Council Tax Reduction Schemes by Paul Howarth

<https://visionarynetwork.co.uk/2025/06/19/the-case-for-plain-english-council-tax-reduction-schemes/>

Reform UK's "Department of National Efficiency": A High-Stakes Gamble in Local Government Reform By Malcolm Gardner

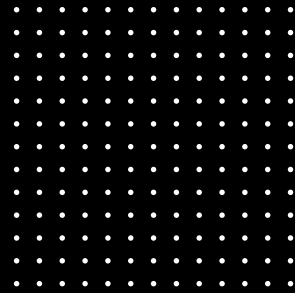
<https://visionarynetwork.co.uk/2025/06/09/reform-uks-department-of-national-efficiency-a-high-stakes-gamble-in-local-government-reform/>

<https://benefitsinthefuture.com/>



Benefits in the Future

Blogs



- ['tis the season to be jolly... misleading, in the Daily Mail](#)
- [Lies, Damned Lies and the Telegraph](#)
- Big differences in Pension Credit take-up revealed
 - [Big differences in Pension Credit take-up revealed – Benefits in the Future](#)

Blogs

- [Benefit take-up may be getting worse, but it's hard to know](#) by Phil Agulnik
- Move to UC - Stats Update 12 August 25 by Phil Agulnik
 - [Move to UC - Stats Update 12 August 25](#)
- Could settling disputes through back-pay put benefits at risk? By Phil Agulnik
 - <https://www.entitledto.co.uk/blog/2023/january/could-settling-disputes-through-back-pay-put-benefits-at-risk>

entitledto
independent | accurate | reliable

[Stairway to headroom](#) Putting the Autumn Budget 2025 decisions on tax, spending and borrowing into context

by [Hannah Aldridge](#) and [Mike Brewer](#) and [Elliott Christensen](#) and [Tom Clark](#) and [Alex Clegg](#) and [Nye Cominetti](#) and [Adam Corlett](#) and [Ruth Curtice](#) and [Julia Diniz](#) and [Sophie Hale](#) and [Lindsay Judge](#) and [Zachary Leather](#) and [Jonathan Marshall](#) and [Charlie McCurdy](#) and [Louise Murphy](#) and [Simon Pittaway](#) and [Hannah Slaughter](#) and [James Smith](#) and [Imogen Stone](#) and [Greg Thwaites](#) and [Lalitha Try](#)

[The localisation era](#) Assessing the post-2013 rise of localised social security by [Alex Clegg](#)

This report is part of the project [Safety Nets: social security for families in a devolved UK](#), funded by the Nuffield Foundation. It examines the growth of *localised social security* in the UK from 2013, focusing on how responsibilities for discretionary support and Council Tax Reduction (CTR) have shifted from the UK government to local authorities. Localised support makes up only a small share of overall social security spending, but it has expanded significantly, driven first by the 2013 localism reforms and later by the Covid-19 pandemic. The report evaluates when local delivery works well, where it falls short, and what principles should guide any future reform.

What the latest Universal Credit Health data tells us about benefit claims across Britain by Louise Murphy

[What the latest Universal Credit Health data tells us about benefit claims across Britain • Resolution Foundation](#)

A healthy State? Putting the 2025 Spending Review into context by RF Staff

[A healthhttps://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/healthy-state/hy State? • Resolution Foundation](https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/healthy-state/hy State?)



VISIONARY NETWORK

About Visionary Network

Visionary Network



VISIONARY NETWORK
The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

- Visionary Network is a not-for-profit organisation, whose objective is to encourage thought leadership and good practice in the field of public service.
- We are independent and will draw on views, ideas and practices from any practitioner and/or organisation committed to public service.
- We encourage debate, and the fair exchange of ideas, viewpoints and philosophies.
- Any products we do produce will be for the betterment of society, public sector led and if costed will reflect our not-for-profit values.
- Our focus is on improving the knowledge, health, environment and lives of our citizens through better administration and access to services.

A nonprofit organisation is a type of organisation that is formed for a specific social or charitable purpose rather than for profit. Its primary goal is to serve the needs of a particular community, cause, or interest, and any profits or revenue generated are reinvested back into the organisation to further its mission, rather than being distributed as profits to owners or shareholders.



Visionary Network Partnership



A dynamic consortium of private sector companies is uniting to transform public service delivery across the nation. By harnessing cutting-edge technologies and innovative methodologies, this partnership is dedicated to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector performance. Their focus is on optimising the use of resources and budgets, ensuring that every pound of public funds is directed towards improving citizens' lives. This group is at the forefront of digital transformation, leveraging data analytics and advanced technological solutions to streamline operations and reduce waste, ultimately supporting a more responsive and agile public sector.

Working closely with public sector organisations and collaborating amongst themselves, the partnership fosters a culture of innovation and disruption. By pooling their diverse expertise, the companies involved can tackle longstanding challenges with fresh, inventive approaches that deliver measurable improvements in service delivery. Their cooperative efforts not only drive substantial cost savings but also set a new benchmark for how the public sector can benefit from private sector ingenuity. In doing so, they reaffirm their commitment to ensuring that public funds are utilised to create a tangible, positive impact on the community.

