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Revenues and Benefits Discussion Group

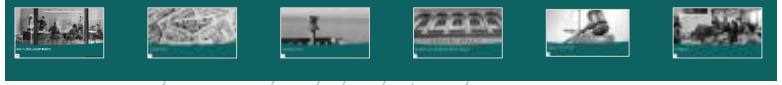
16 November 2026

Meeting Link

VISIONARY NETWORK

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Meet the panel

(not everyone is available every week)

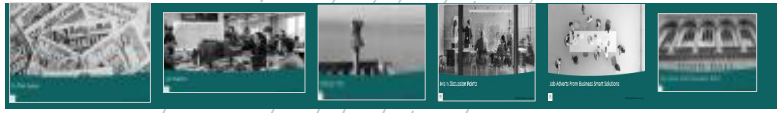
Any comments made by panellists are their own personal views and do not necessarily reflect the positions of their organisations.



- Naomi Armstrong, Benefits Cambridge City Council
- Laura Bessell, Benefits Manager, Oxford City Council
- Kirsty Brooksmith, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
- Tom Clark, Liverpool City Council
- Alex Clegg, Resolution Foundation
- Nicki Duckworth, EntitledTo, Marshalling
- Michael Fisher, St Helens Council
- Robert Fox, Swindon Council
- Malcolm Gardner, Visionary Network
- Paul Howarth, Visionary Network
- Gareth Morgan, Dangos Training & CEO Ferret Information Systems
- Sean O'Sullivan, Visionary Network
- Julie Smethurst, Tameside Council
- Ian Savigar, Reading Council
- Kevin Stewart, Visionary Network
- Rachael Walker, Visionary Network & Better Policy
- Bob Wagstaff, Visionary Network
- Liz Whitehead-Davis, Hexagon Housing

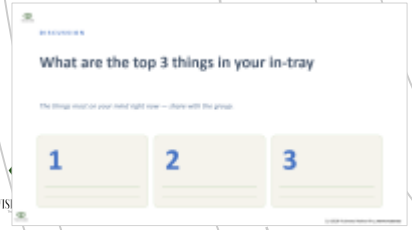
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Discussion Points

Top Three Things In Your In-tray



BSS

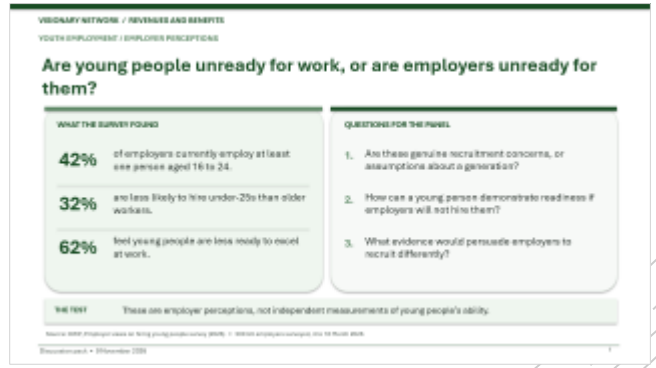
R(Mitchell) v Somerset Council



Milburn Proposals







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Malcolm Gardner, Visionary Network Director

07946800171
mg@malcolmgardner.com
Book a meeting with Malcolm: Book Time with MG

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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.

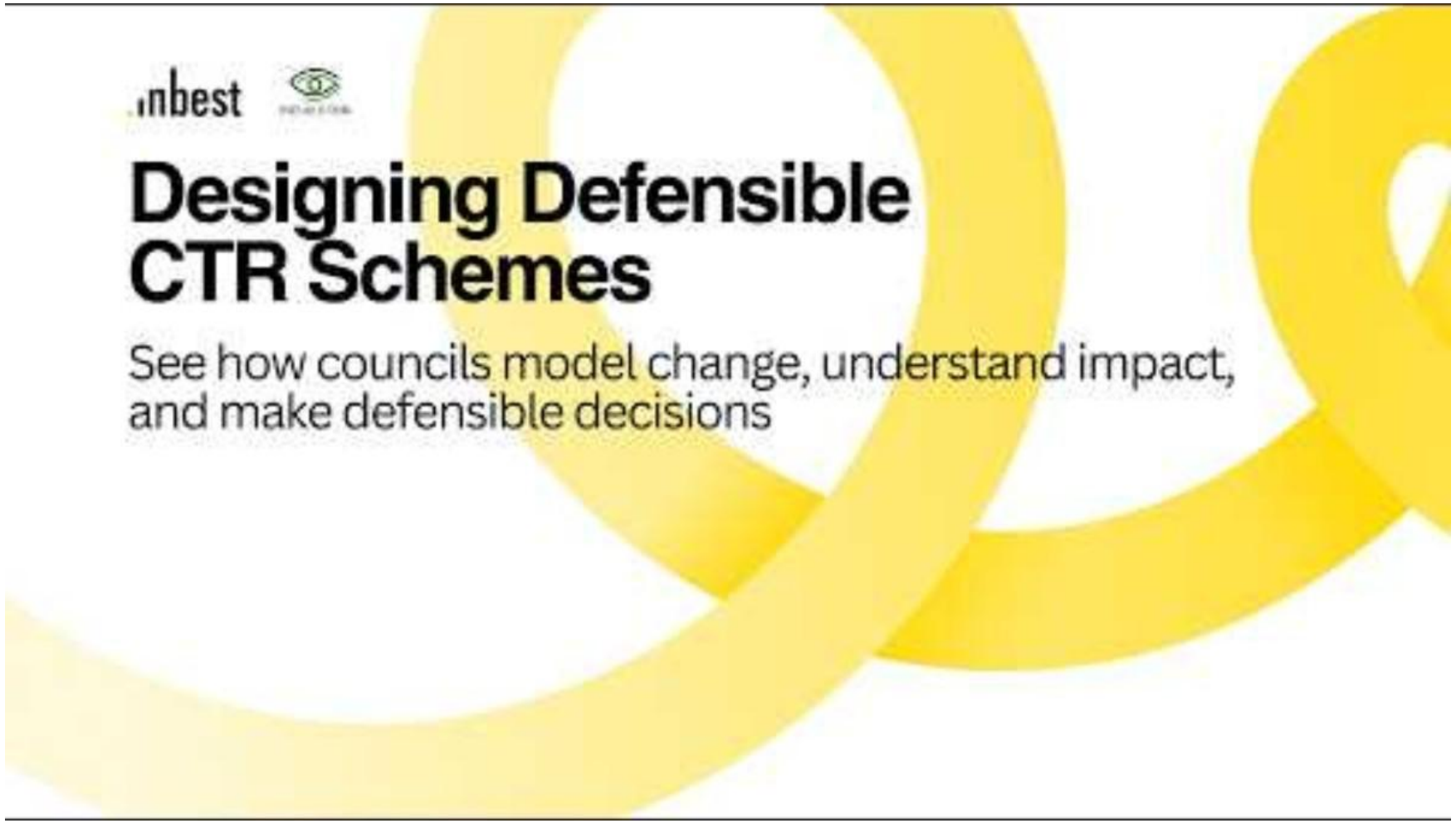
It is a free service that is well attended. Attendees make good contributions; everyone gets a chance to speak. Attendees includes senior managers, team leaders, suppliers, and support staff

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 Info@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.

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Main Discussion Points

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R (Mitchell) v Somerset Council [2026] EWHC 2930 (Admin)

Would you have signed off this scheme?

Andy Mitchell was moved from income-related ESA to Universal Credit under managed migration.

Weekly income changed by 10p. His Council Tax Reduction fell from 100% to 10%. Somerset billed him £785.98 for the rest of 2025/26.

OVER TO THE PANEL

Vote first. Would you have approved it, sent it back or voted against? What would have decided it for you?

Should disability-related UC count as income?

Somerset gave full CTR to people on income-related ESA. For UC claimants it counted the disability-related element as income.

The High Court found unlawful discrimination in applying the rules to Mr Mitchell and quashed his individual decision.

OVER TO THE PANEL

Pick a rule. Would you disregard the disability-related element, protect households through migration, or take another route? Who would still lose?

Would you vote to keep last year’s rules?

A consultation response flagged the migration impact. The equality assessment focused on proposed changes, while members adopted the whole scheme.

The court found a breach of the public sector equality duty in adopting the 2025/26 scheme.

OVER TO THE PANEL

Would you vote to adopt the scheme on that evidence? Name one piece of analysis you would require before voting.

When is a hardship application fair?

The court found that discretionary help did not justify the foreseeable disadvantage in this case. Mr Mitchell still had a liability after receiving an award.

Suppose your modelling finds the same sharp loss for a group of disabled residents and your scheme budget is already stretched.

OVER TO THE PANEL

Would you build in automatic protection or rely on discretionary awards? Defend your choice to both the resident and the finance director.

What would you change before next year’s bills?

The court required Somerset to determine Mr Mitchell’s 2025/26 liability afresh. The panel’s task is to decide what it would put to members for the next scheme year.

Choose your priority: rewrite the income rule, add transitional protection, or propose a different change.

OVER TO THE PANEL

Finish the sentence. “I would change ___, pay for it by ___, and check it worked by ___.” Then challenge one other panelist’s answer.

The Millburn Reforms



What is keeping young people out of work?

MAY INTERIM FINDINGS · FINAL REPORT EXPECTED 17 NOVEMBER

Around one million young people aged 16 to 24 are outside education, employment or training. In the May review, 84% said they wanted a job or training.

PANEL QUESTION

Where would you spend the first extra pound?

Choose between early intervention in schools, health support and creating more entry-level jobs. What local evidence backs your choice?

Should under-25s have a separate benefit system?

PRE-PUBLICATION BRIEFING

Milburn has previewed a youth allowance at the Universal Credit standard allowance rate. The proposal would replace access to the UC health element and PIP for 18 to 24-year-olds.

PANEL QUESTION

Would you vote for this change in principle?

What would persuade you that a separate system would help young people into work? Which existing claimants would you protect, and for how long?

Financial Times, 13 November · Guardian, 12 November

Who should get help with disability costs?

PRE-PUBLICATION BRIEFING

A non-means-tested allowance would cover significant ongoing costs. A higher payment is proposed for the most severe lifelong disabilities, with a local fund for short-term costs and equipment.

PANEL QUESTION

Where would you draw the eligibility line?

Take a young person with a fluctuating condition and recurring travel costs. What should they receive, who should decide, and how could they challenge a decision?

What would make a job or training guarantee real?

PRE-PUBLICATION BRIEFING

Reports point to more one-to-one support and vocational places. The EU Youth Guarantee offers a useful comparison: a good-quality job, education, apprenticeship or traineeship offer within four months.

PANEL QUESTION

What would count as a suitable offer?

Would you attach benefit conditions if the only place available was hard to reach or lacked disability support? Who should find a suitable alternative?

Sky News, 15 November and European Commission Youth Guarantee

Could Denmark’s Fleksjob work here?

DENMARK’S FLEKSJOB

Denmark’s municipalities assess people with substantial, permanent limits on work capacity. Employers pay for effective work and municipalities top up pay. A separate allowance can support people waiting for a job.

PANEL QUESTION

What would you borrow from Denmark?

Milburn’s reported model is for disabled or chronically ill 16 to 24-year-olds and may start at four hours a week. Who should qualify if their condition fluctuates?

Danish guidance (VEJ 9116, 2026) and The Guardian, 5 November

What has Denmark achieved?

DENMARK'S FLEKSJOB

An early matched study estimated a 33-percentage point employment gain. After reform, eligible people moved into jobs faster. By December 2016, 83% of jobs under the new rules were under 15 hours a week.

PANEL QUESTION

Would six hours a week count as success?

In July 2024, 22% of workers under the new rules had increased their hours since their first three months. Would you judge a UK scheme on sustained work, more hours or household income?

VIVE working paper (2010) and Danish Employment Ministry (2018, 2024)

Who pays while someone waits for a job?

DENMARK'S FLEKSJOB

Denmark provides a waiting allowance. The early study found no detectable reduction in exits into disability pension. The evidence is stronger on access to paid work than on benefit savings.

PANEL QUESTION

Would you fund the top-up for as long as it's needed?

Who should protect income while a suitable job is found? Could councils assess capacity and find placements, and how should the top-up interact with Council Tax Reduction?

Danish Employment Ministry (2018) and VIVE working paper (2010)

Should councils have youth hiring targets?

PRE-PUBLICATION BRIEFING

Sky News reports proposed targets for local government, the NHS and the Civil Service. The reported Civil Service goal is to raise the under-25 share from about 5% to 11% by 2032.

PANEL QUESTION

Would you back a target in your own council?

Name one role your council could open up to young people. Where would you find the budget and supervision, and how would you judge whether the recruit had a lasting route into work?

What happens to the household budget?

PANEL SCENARIO

If national entitlements change, councils will need to understand how new payments interact with local Council Tax Reduction rules. A short-term grant may leave recurring costs uncovered.

PANEL QUESTION

Who should bridge a drop in income?

A 23-year-old loses regular disability income while waiting for an accessible placement. Would you adjust Council Tax Reduction, provide temporary help or require DWP to protect their income?

Panel scenario based on reported proposals

What should ministers do first?

PRE-PUBLICATION BRIEFING

Pat McFadden says support should come before benefit changes. The final report is expected on Tuesday 17 November and ministers have yet to set out which recommendations they will adopt.

PANEL QUESTION

What would you accept, amend or reject?

Each panellist picks one proposal and sets one condition. What evidence should ministers publish before they change anyone’s entitlement?

Sky News, 15 November · The Independent, 13 November

80% employment: ambition or achievable policy?

The White Paper benchmark is 2024, not a forecast for 2026.

75.0%

Employment rate, 2024

80.0%

Government ambition



31.8m people employed → 34.0m at 80% | around 2.1m additional jobs

PANEL CHALLENGE **What must change locally to get 2.1 million more people into work, and who pays?**

Source: DWP Get Britain Working White Paper analytical annex (2024; updated 2025). Charts redrawn.

Work: a route out of Universal Credit or a revolving door?

Six-month outcomes for those entering the UC “Searching for work” regime, 2023–24.



64%

remained in the same employment status over six months

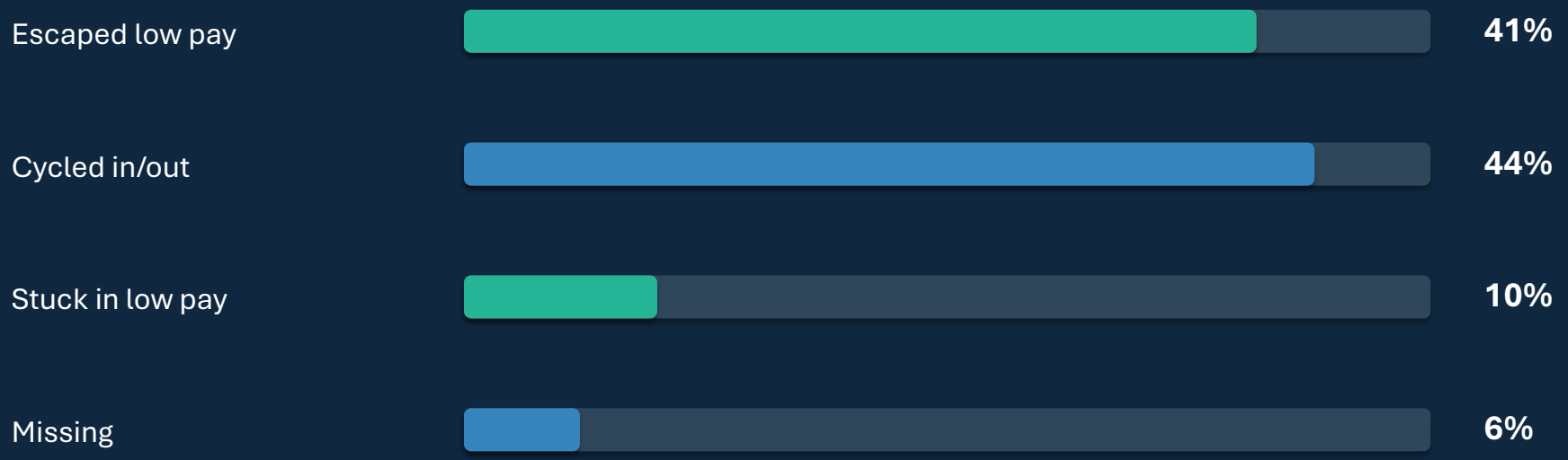
A single job start does not necessarily signal a lasting change in household finances.

PANEL CHALLENGE Should success be measured by job starts, sustained earnings, or reduced household hardship?

Source: DWP Get Britain Working White Paper analytical annex (2024; updated 2025). Charts redrawn.

Low pay: progression or a trap?

Of people low paid in 2017, earnings outcomes by 2023. Rounded totals may exceed 100%.



44%

experienced a cycle of low pay

Low pay = below two-thirds of median hourly pay. Longitudinal sample, not the whole workforce.

PANEL CHALLENGE **Does moving into work count as success if low pay, UC and council tax debt persist?**

Source: DWP Get Britain Working White Paper analytical annex (2024; updated 2025). Charts redrawn.

Young people: one nation, very different prospects

NEET rates, ages 16–24, year to April–June 2024. Regional estimates are uncertain.



786k

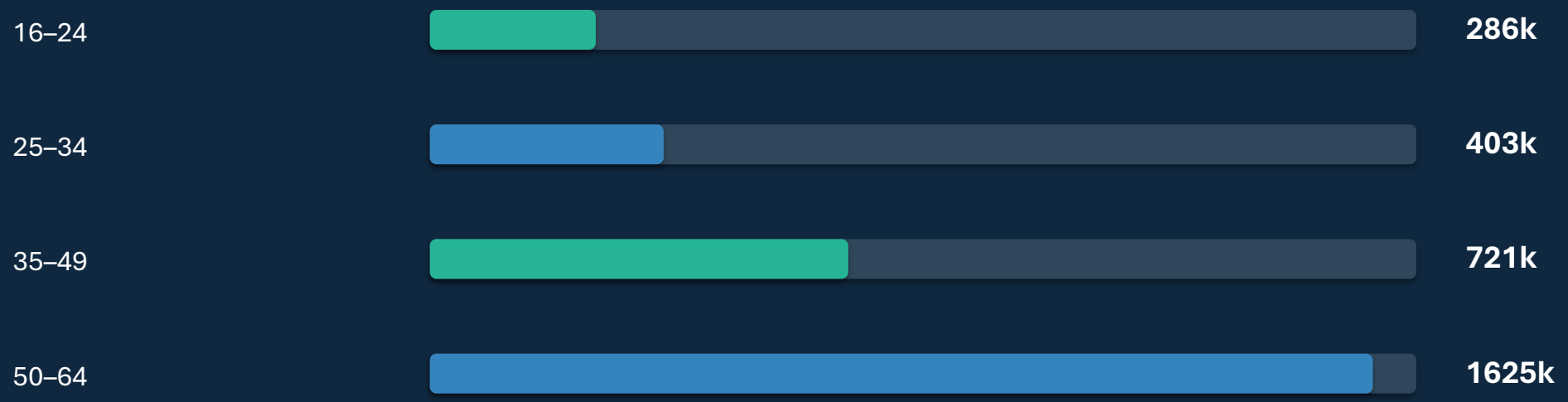
NEET young people in England

PANEL CHALLENGE **Who owns prevention: schools, councils, employers, DWP or combined authorities?**

Source: DWP Get Britain Working White Paper analytical annex (2024; updated 2025). Charts redrawn.

Health and work: welfare problem or public-service failure?

People economically inactive because of sickness/disability by age, April–June 2024.



3.04m

inactive due to sickness or disability, all ages 16–64

The 50–64 age group represents over half of sickness/disability inactivity.

PANEL CHALLENGE **What joint action on NHS access, skills, social care and income support would actually work?**

Source: DWP Get Britain Working White Paper analytical annex (2024; updated 2025). Charts redrawn.

Are young people unready for work, or are employers unready for them?

WHAT THE SURVEY FOUND

42% of employers currently employ at least one person aged 16 to 24.

32% are less likely to hire under-25s than older workers.

62% feel young people are less ready to excel at work.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL

1. Are these genuine recruitment concerns, or assumptions about a generation?
2. How can a young person demonstrate readiness if employers will not hire them?
3. What evidence would persuade employers to recruit differently?

THE TEST These are employer perceptions, not independent measurements of young people's ability.

Source: DWP, Employer views on hiring young people survey (2026) • 500 UK employers surveyed, 4 to 18 March 2026

“Work-ready”: a real skills gap, or a convenient excuse?

WHAT THE SURVEY FOUND

95% say motivation is important when hiring.

93% say good time management is important.

41% find soft skills or work readiness a challenge.

40% find applicants’ level of work experience challenging.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL

1. Should employers expect first-time workers to arrive with experience they cannot yet have?
2. Who should teach work habits: schools, employers, government or families?
3. Would our own councils employ a promising young person without traditional credentials?

R&B LENS Employment support needs to consider confidence, workplace induction and sustained earnings.

Source: DWP, Employer views on hiring young people survey (2026) • 500 UK employers surveyed, 4 to 18 March 2026

Does education need fixing, or does employer engagement?

WHAT THE SURVEY FOUND

91%	want more vocational pathways for young people.
76%	say the curriculum does not adequately prepare for work.
55%	engage with education or employment support providers.
41%	of those engaging identify staff time as a challenge.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL

1. Can employers criticise schools while leaving the cost of preparation to others?
2. Do unpaid placements open doors, or exclude young people who cannot afford to work for nothing?
3. What should councils do with colleges, Jobcentre Plus and local employers?

THE TENSION Among engaged employers, 49% offered unpaid experience; 36% offered paid experience.

Source: DWP, Employer views on hiring young people survey (2026) • 500 UK employers surveyed, 4 to 18 March 2026

Wage subsidies: creating opportunities, or paying for hiring anyway?

WHAT THE SURVEY FOUND

72% say financial support or subsidies would be beneficial.

47% say a wage subsidy would make no difference to hiring.

17% say a wage subsidy would lead them to hire more young people.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL

1. Should public money support employers who would recruit anyway?
2. Would a subsidy change behaviour more than mentoring, recruitment support or reduced bureaucracy?
3. What proof of additional jobs and retention should be required before funding?

KEY CAUTION The results come from distinct survey questions; perceived benefit is not evidence of extra jobs.

Source: DWP, Employer views on hiring young people survey (2026) • 500 UK employers surveyed, 4 to 18 March 2026

From benefits to a payslip: what would we actually change?

POSSIBLE LOCAL RESPONSES

FIRST CHANCE

Paid placements, apprenticeships and simpler entry routes.

STAYING IN WORK

Induction, mentoring, earnings advice and progression.

LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Link employers, colleges, Jobcentre Plus and council teams.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL

1. If you controlled a local youth employment budget, where would you put the first pound?
2. What one recruitment or employment practice should your own council change?
3. Would you judge success by job starts, six-month retention, higher income, or something else?

PANEL DECISION Each panellist: one practical action, one accountable organisation and one measurable result.

Source: DWP, Employer views on hiring young people survey (2026) • 500 UK employers surveyed, 4 to 18 March 2026

DISCUSSION

What are the top 3 things in your in-tray

The things most on your mind right now — share with the group.

1

2

3

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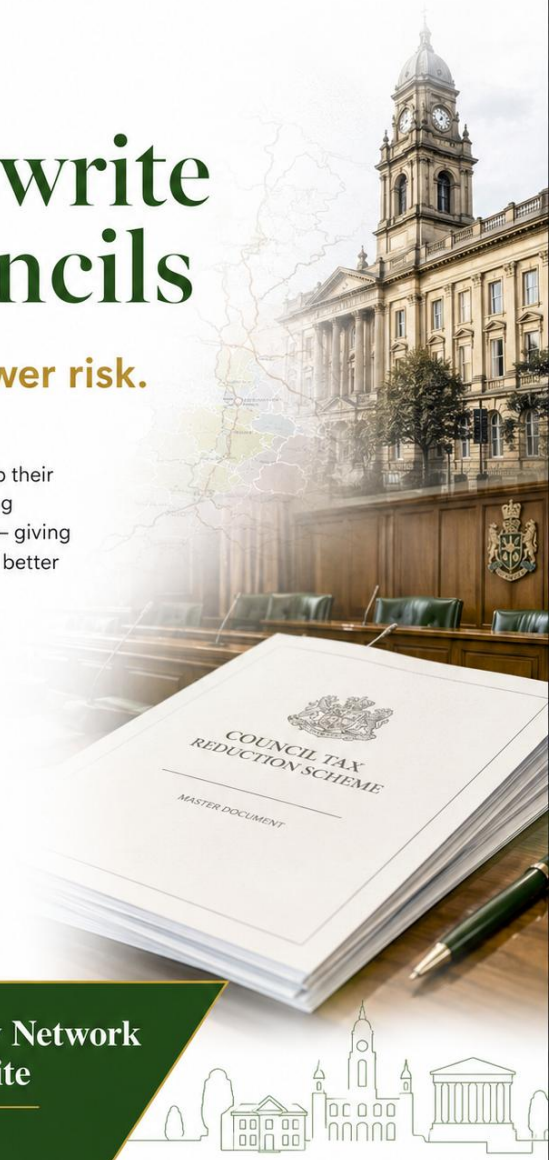
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Clear wording. Lower risk. Practical support.

Visionary Network helps councils keep their Council Tax Reduction scheme wording accurate, lawful, clear and up to date – giving confidence to decision-makers and a better experience for residents.

- Plain English drafting with technical accuracy
- Annual uprating and scheme updates
- A clean master document in your council's own style
- Support for redesign, policy change and LGR
- Trusted experience in Revenues & Benefits



Talk to Visionary Network about CTR Rewrite

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[Bristol City Council Case Study]

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Why councils choose CTR Rewrite

Your Council Tax Reduction scheme underpins fairness, compliance and public trust. CTR Rewrite gives you clear, accurate wording that supports confident decisions today—and a scheme that is easier to manage tomorrow.



What the service helps you do

- Keep scheme wording accurate, lawful and up to date
- Reflect annual uprating and policy changes
- Reduce ambiguity and implementation risk
- Maintain a clean master document in your council's own style
- Support redesign, consultation and future structural change

Why Visionary Network

- Trusted practical experience in Revenues & Benefits
- Plain English drafting with technical accuracy
- Local government understanding, not generic consultancy
- A service designed to support councils over time

For Directors of Finance and Revenues & Benefits Managers, CTR Rewrite offers clearer governance, lower drafting risk and a more resilient scheme document.

Talk to Visionary Network about CTR Rewrite

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In the news

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FRAUD AND ERROR

Cumbria benefit fraud investigations

WHAT HAPPENED

- DWP investigations uncovered cases involving undeclared work, savings or household changes.
- An £85,854 overpayment in the largest case covered Employment and Support Allowance and Housing Benefit.
- The case involved an undeclared shared household. Social media material was used as part of the evidence.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Confirm which benefit and period an overpayment relates to before allocating debt or starting recovery.
- Agree referral and evidence-sharing arrangements between council Housing Benefit teams and DWP.
- Make reporting routes for changes in earnings, savings and household circumstances easy to find.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

Local Council Tax Support at Q2 2026/27

WHAT HAPPENED

- England had 3,646,397 claimants on 30 September 2026, up 11,469 (0.3%) from June and 2,801 (0.1%) year on year.
- Working-age claimants increased to 2,306,073, up 0.7% from June and 0.8% year on year.
- Pension-age claimants fell to 1,340,324, down 0.3% from June and 1.1% year on year.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Compare September with June and with the previous September to distinguish quarterly movement from annual change.
- Review working-age and pension-age trends separately alongside local scheme or caseload changes.
- Use claimant counts alongside local award values to explain changes in scheme expenditure.

TAX ADMINISTRATION

HMRC turns away requests for tax guidance

WHAT HAPPENED

- HMRC declined almost half of requests for certainty about how its rules applied in the latest year covered.
- The refusal rate was the highest in five years in figures obtained by BCLP under freedom of information.
- The figures relate to requests for guidance on tax positions. They do not measure unanswered calls across HMRC.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- When liability or entitlement is unclear, give residents a route to a written decision and explain review rights.
- Track repeat contacts where a general reply leaves the specific Council Tax or benefit question unresolved.
- Escalate unusual cases to technical specialists and capture the reasoning for future cases.

WORKFORCE

DWP staff report backlogs and stress

WHAT HAPPENED

- Around 5,000 PCS members responded to a survey on DWP staffing.
- Staff reported delays in processing claims and appointments, alongside unpaid overtime.
- More than 75% of respondents in most areas reported unacceptable stress. Universal Credit and disability services were among the areas highlighted.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Monitor whether delays in DWP decisions generate repeat calls, Housing Benefit enquiries or hardship referrals.
- Set up escalation routes for residents facing an urgent income gap while a claim or appointment is outstanding.
- Track unresolved DWP referrals and their age alongside the council's own processing measures.

PROCUREMENT

Buying innovative public services

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Government Commercial Function has published a Procurement of Innovation Playbook for public contracting authorities.
- It covers different ways to engage markets and commission solutions where existing products may not meet service needs.
- It sits alongside the Procurement Act 2023 guidance and the wider government commercial playbooks.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Define what a new billing, assessment or fraud tool must achieve before specifying a product.
- Use early market engagement to test feasibility, integrations and evidence of performance.
- Set pilot measures for accuracy, customer impact and staff time. Include access to data and an exit route.

WALES

Community Right to Buy consultation

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Welsh Government proposes a statutory Community Right to Buy for eligible community groups.
- A right of first refusal and a protected period would give groups time to assess and finance a purchase when an owner decides to sell.
- The consultation covers qualifying assets, nomination, owner safeguards and delivery. It closes on 4 January 2027.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Clarify who is responsible for business rates while an asset is empty, in transition or reopened.
- Assess any relief on the occupier and actual use once a transfer is complete.
- Plan handovers between property, community development and Revenues and Benefits teams.

DISABILITY SUPPORT

Milburn review and a local disability fund

WHAT HAPPENED

- Alan Milburn's review is expected to propose ending ongoing Personal Independence Payment for some under-25s.
- A local fund would let affected young people apply for short-term expenses or equipment.
- The proposals would protect people with the most severe needs. Detailed eligibility and transition rules are pending.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Consider referral routes between disability, employment and local welfare teams if the proposal proceeds.
- Identify households where the loss of a qualifying award could affect linked support under local scheme rules.
- Clarify funding, decision-making and review arrangements before assuming a council delivery role.

WELFARE REFORM

Labour debate over the cost of welfare reform

WHAT HAPPENED

- Ministers are considering the Milburn review amid debate over the scale and timing of welfare changes.
- Some Labour MPs are concerned about the impact of reducing entitlements before work support is in place.
- International comparisons suggest that more intensive employment support could require substantial upfront spending.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Assess the risk of households losing income before support is in place.
- Track which plans become confirmed legislation and which require local commissioning or staffing.
- Model the transition separately from any eventual savings to central government.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

What Britain could learn from Denmark’s Fleksjobs

WHAT HAPPENED

- Denmark subsidises jobs matched to the capacity of people with lasting barriers to work.
- Coaches work with individuals and employers to tailor hours and support. The current model dates from 2013.
- The disabled employment rate rose from 44% in 2012 to 61% in 2024. The figures show the trend over the period.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Denmark spends about 2% of GDP on active labour market programmes, compared with around 0.3% in the UK.
- A comparable approach would require local employers, employment coaches and practical support.
- Model how fluctuating hours or earnings affect Universal Credit and Council Tax Reduction awards.

WELFARE POLICY

Conservative welfare savings and the IFS assessment

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Conservatives propose annual savings of about £36bn from working-age benefits.
- The IFS puts this at around 21% of projected working-age benefit spending in 2029/30 if fully realised.
- The £14bn estimate for cuts to working-age health-related benefits depends on how changes to eligibility would be defined and applied.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Assess the household effects of any future proposal alongside Council Tax Reduction and local hardship support.
- Separate published party savings estimates from legislation, delivery dates and eventual council caseloads.
- Track any changes to linked awards and align resident communications with confirmed rules.

LIVING STANDARDS

The 2026 Minimum Income Standard

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's benchmark reflects what the public considers necessary for a minimum acceptable living standard.
- The budgets vary by household type and cover essentials and participation in everyday life.
- In 2026, 13 groups reviewed the budgets first set in 2024, with specialist advice on energy and nutrition.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Use the budgets to test affordability assumptions in Council Tax Reduction and hardship policies.
- Model rent, Council Tax, childcare and travel costs for different household types.
- Use actual household circumstances when setting repayment arrangements.

ENERGY SUPPORT

Who misses out on the £100 energy payment?

WHAT HAPPENED

- Analysis with the Resolution Foundation estimates that nearly 700,000 of the poorest households miss out.
- It also estimates that 3.5 million households in the highest income fifth receive £350m in total.
- Government guidance uses bands A to D for eligible main homes in England. Payments begin in January 2027.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Government announced a separate £100m fund for councils to provide discretionary help to households outside the main scheme.
- Payment to eligible Council Tax direct debit households is planned via their bank accounts.
- Plan outreach and accessible payment routes for people who do not pay by direct debit, subject to detailed guidance.

BENEFIT UPRATING

Proposed benefit and pension rates for 2027/28

WHAT HAPPENED

- Inflation-linked DWP benefits rise by 3.5%. Most new rates take effect from 12 April 2027.
- The full new State Pension rises 3.9% from £241.30 to £250.70 a week.
- The basic State Pension rises from £184.90 to £192.10 a week.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Update applicable Housing Benefit calculation parameters and check how local Council Tax Reduction schemes apply uprating.
- Test annual billing, effective dates and household awards where income thresholds also change.
- Check benefit notification wording and plan for enquiries where the benefit and Council Tax dates differ.

ECONOMY

UK growth reaches 0.7% in the third quarter

WHAT HAPPENED

- UK GDP grew 0.7% from July to September 2026, following 0.5% in the second quarter.
- This was the strongest calendar-quarter growth since early 2024. Annual growth reached 1.9%.
- Services drove the expansion, with computer programming and AI-related activity among the contributors.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Compare national growth with local employment, earnings and Council Tax arrears.
- Use current local evidence when forecasting benefit demand and business rates collection.
- Check whether growth is concentrated in sectors with limited exposure in the local tax base.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Children's services contacts rise by 130%

WHAT HAPPENED

- ADCS estimates nearly 3.1 million initial contacts in England in 2025/26, up 130% since 2007.
- Contacts led to more than 650,000 referrals to children's social care.
- Around 220,000 children were in need at the end of March 2026, up 5% since 2024.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- ADCS warned that placement costs had doubled since the pandemic, adding pressure to council budgets.
- Use existing referral routes to help eligible families check Council Tax Reduction and other local welfare support.
- Coordinate benefits checks for care leavers with housing and children's services.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Casey Commission finds fragmented accountability

WHAT HAPPENED

- Research for the Casey Commission found that England lacks clear oversight of the adult social care system.
- It points to fragmentation across commissioners, providers and regulators.
- Baroness Casey supported the Covid-19 Inquiry's recommendations for social care. Final commission recommendations are due in summer 2027.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Clarify handovers for care charging, payments and benefits advice across teams.
- Make it easy for residents and carers to query decisions that involve more than one service.
- Consider where better information sharing would avoid repeated evidence requests.

DEVOLUTION

£150m for devolved capacity and capability

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Budget confirmed £150m in additional capacity and capability funding for strategic authorities in 2027/28.
- Research from the Local Policy Innovation Partnership Hub warns that equal allocations or competitive bidding can disadvantage places with less capacity.
- The report calls for a national strategy, regular assessments of need and clearer Whitehall and local responsibilities.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Check which transition costs and skills needs are eligible as funding rules emerge.
- Plan shared analytical and technical capacity where devolved employment support intersects with local welfare.
- Use local capacity evidence to support bids and discussions ahead of the 2027 Spending Review.

DIGITAL SUPPLIERS

Public sector reliance on US technology suppliers

WHAT HAPPENED

- IPPR found that around four fifths of public sector technology spending went to 150 firms.
- Only 15% of spending with those suppliers went to firms meeting IPPR's definition of fully British.
- The analysis identifies concentration and dependency across suppliers, ownership and resellers.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Identify which billing, benefits, payments and evidence services depend on the same underlying infrastructure.
- Test data export, continuity plans and the contractual ability to transfer to another provider.
- Check supplier and subcontractor dependencies at renewal and when buying new systems.

FRAUD AND ERROR

Data matching identifies undisclosed public sector jobs

WHAT HAPPENED

- The National Fraud Initiative uses personnel data from different bodies to identify potential employment fraud.
- It identified 301 people over a decade, including 256 in England. The Cabinet Office reported £1.35m recovered.
- In one case an individual was paid about £349,379 across eight roles held at different points between 2020 and 2023.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- A DWP spokesperson cited almost £490,000 in savings from a recent local borough pilot.
- Investigate matches before treating them as fraud. Check employer permissions and whether working periods actually overlap.
- Keep payroll controls, declared interests and service management responsibilities clear.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

A proposed UC pathway for under-25s

WHAT HAPPENED

- Under-25s without severe work-limiting disabilities could be offered employment, training or education support on a new pathway.
- The report describes a potential change to the Universal Credit health element of around £217 a month for new claimants.
- An option for care leavers is an education maintenance-style allowance of £50 a week for six months.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Model impacts on household budgets and Council Tax Reduction before any changes start.
- Check what would happen to existing claims, protections for severe disabilities and routes back after a failed placement.
- Align welfare and employment referral routes so young people can access support promptly.

HOUSING MARKET

Former rentals for sale in Lincoln

WHAT HAPPENED

- Hamptons found that 29% of properties advertised for sale in Lincoln in 2026 had previously been offered to let.
- The accounts from landlords describe properties remaining on the market and going empty between lettings or sales.
- The Budget announced a two-point increase in tax rates on rental income, taking the basic rate to 24%.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Check vacancy dates, liability changes and premium rules when landlords report a property empty or on the market.
- Track changes in locally available private rentals with housing colleagues.
- Monitor whether a smaller supply coincides with greater requests for help with rent gaps or deposits.

SEND

Disputes over Education, Health and Care Plans

WHAT HAPPENED

- Families in disputes over Education, Health and Care Plans have reported councils to the police.
- Parents won 99% of SEND tribunal appeals decided in 2024/25, according to figures cited in the article.
- The OBR warned that deficits linked to SEND spending could reach £14bn by 2029.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Help families reach the right statutory decision, complaint or appeal route promptly.
- Use existing disability and carers' support referrals for households struggling with additional costs.
- Keep a clear record of council decisions and communicate the next step when deadlines slip.

Quote of the Week

I am the one in ten
A number on a list
I am the one in ten
Even though I don't exist
Nobody Knows me
Even though I'm always there
A statistic, a reminder
Of a world that doesn't care

- Ali Campbell / Brian Travers / Earl Falconer / Jim Brown / Michael Virtue / Norman Hassan / Robin Campbell / Terrence Oswald Wilson

UB40 are a British reggae and pop band formed in Birmingham, England, in 1978. Known for hit songs such as “Red Red Wine”, “Kingston Town” and “(I Can’t Help) Falling in Love with You”, they became one of the world's most successful reggae groups, blending reggae rhythms with pop influences and socially conscious lyrics.



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The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

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Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF) for Councils

Target support. Strengthen resilience. Better outcomes.

Visionary Network helps councils design, review and deliver Crisis Resilience Fund services that are fair, practical and focused on residents facing financial hardship.

Local government expertise. Practical delivery. Stronger support where it matters most.



- Review local need and policy priorities
- Design eligibility, awards and governance
- Improve targeting, take-up and resident outcomes
- Support delivery, assurance and performance reporting
- Trusted experience in Revenues & Benefits

Trusted expertise. Practical support. Better outcomes.

Talk to Visionary Network about CRF

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Why councils choose CRF support



Crisis Resilience Fund support helps councils respond to financial hardship with clearer policy, stronger targeting and practical delivery support. Visionary Network helps councils create a fund that is fair, workable and focused on residents who need help most.

Our approach combines local government understanding, practical service design and strong governance so councils can deliver support with confidence.

What the service helps you do

- Define the purpose and priorities of your CRF
- Set clear eligibility, awards and decision rules
- Target support to residents facing hardship
- Strengthen governance, assurance and reporting
- Build a practical model for delivery and review

Why Visionary Network

- Trusted practical experience in Revenues & Benefits
- Local government understanding, not generic consultancy
- Resident-focused design, policy and delivery support
- A service designed to help councils support vulnerable households with confidence

For Directors of Finance and Revenues & Benefits Managers, **CRF support** offers clearer governance, better targeting and stronger resident outcomes.

Talk to Visionary Network about CRF

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Supporting better local outcomes through practical insight and partnership.

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LG Finance, LGR & Devolution Watch

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AI Watch

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COURTS AND AI

Expert witnesses and disclosure of AI use

WHAT HAPPENED

- Mrs Justice Joanna Smith said experts should disclose AI use that could influence the substance of their evidence.
- The Civil Justice Council working group recommended disclosure requirements. Adoption depends on the relevant rule-making process.
- AI summaries and transcriptions can lose context, introduce errors or alter the basis of an expert's opinion.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Record where AI assisted with a statement or report and retain the underlying evidence.
- Check quotations, calculations and case references against original material before submission.
- Agree disclosure arrangements with legal services and ensure the witness can explain and defend their own conclusions.

INFORMATION RIGHTS

Handling AI-assisted subject access requests

WHAT HAPPENED

- The ICO has published guidance on responding to subject access requests drafted with AI.
- The substance and circumstances of a request determine how to handle it, including whether it is complex.
- Practical problems finding, retrieving or disclosing information may matter. Using AI to draft the request is insufficient by itself.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Identify the personal data sought and coordinate searches across billing, welfare, correspondence and recovery systems.
- Ask for clarification where appropriate and record why extra time is needed in complex cases.
- Monitor response deadlines and keep the requester informed about what will happen next.

COURTS AND AI

AI oversight in family justice

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Nuffield Family Justice Observatory examined increasing use of privately supplied digital and AI tools in family justice.
- People without representation may use generative AI for advice or document preparation, with a risk of incorrect legal information.
- The research calls for standards, disclosure, monitoring and a way for litigants to challenge AI use.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Apply the same questions to tribunal and appeals evidence prepared using automated tools.
- Make it clear how a resident can challenge an error in a notice, evidence bundle or automated assessment.
- Retain the source material and make responsibility for checking and correcting outputs explicit.

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Why councils choose LGR & CTR support



Local Government Reorganisation creates pressure to review and harmonise Council Tax Reduction schemes. Visionary Network helps councils make confident choices with stronger evidence, clear options and practical delivery support.

We use **inbest.ai's CTR Data Analytics Tool** to provide robust modelling and insight you can rely on.

What the service helps you do

- Compare legacy CTR schemes across merging councils
- Test support levels, savings and distributional effects
- Assess equality, affordability and financial impacts
- Build a stronger case for consultation and approval
- Prepare for implementation, governance and future structural change

Why Visionary Network

- Trusted practical experience in Revenues & Benefits
- Local government understanding, not generic consultancy
- inbest.ai's CTR Data Analytics Tool supports strong modelling and evidence
- A service designed to help councils move from legacy schemes to a single workable future model

For Directors of Finance and Revenues & Benefits Managers, **LGR & CTR support** offers clearer policy choices, stronger evidence and a more resilient scheme.

Talk to Visionary Network about LGR & CTR

visionarynetwork.co.uk

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Expert partners in local tax and revenues.

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The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

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Local Government Reorganisation & CTR

Harmonise with confidence. Stronger evidence. Better outcomes.

Visionary Network helps councils navigate Local Government Reorganisation and harmonise Council Tax Reduction schemes using trusted sector expertise, robust analysis and **inbest.ai's CTR Data Analytics Tool.**

From legacy schemes to a clear future model.



- **Review existing CTR schemes and pressures**
- **Model realistic harmonisation options**
- **Understand claimant, equality and collection fund impacts**
- **Support consultation, member decisions and implementation**
- **Trusted experience in Revenues & Benefits**

Trusted expertise. Practical harmonisation. Lower risk.

Talk to Visionary Network about LGR & CTR

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Legal Issues of Note

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COUNCIL TAX

A 10p rise and a £785.98 Council Tax bill

WHAT HAPPENED

- Andy Mitchell's weekly income rose by 10p on managed migration from income-related ESA to Universal Credit.
- Somerset counted his UC disability-related element as income. His reduction fell from 100% to 10%, leaving a £785.98 bill for the rest of the year.
- The High Court found unlawful discrimination and a breach of the public sector equality duty. It quashed his individual liability decision.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Model legacy-to-UC migration for disabled residents under the current scheme and proposed alternatives.
- Test retained scheme rules as well as amendments in the equality assessment. Show councillors the resulting bills before they vote.
- Test an income disregard, revised thresholds or transitional protection. Assess costs, arrears and administration before selecting an option.

GOVERNANCE

Former council chief appeals email-deletion conviction

WHAT HAPPENED

- Anne Donaghy, former chief executive of Mid and East Antrim Council, is appealing two convictions connected to email deletion and freedom of information.
- The case concerned an email sent to Arlene Foster’s private address. Donaghy was fined £1,500 and cleared of a third charge.
- Her lawyers said the appeal was at an advanced stage. The outcome remained pending.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Preserve relevant messages and case records when an information request, complaint or legal dispute is active.
- Ensure official decisions and correspondence are captured in council systems even where other channels were used.
- Check retention and deletion controls with information governance teams.

INVESTIGATORY POWERS

Council surveillance shows high compliance

WHAT HAPPENED

- The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office carried out 114 local authority inspections during the reporting year.
- Council use of directed surveillance, covert sources and communications data was generally low.
- Inspectors found high compliance and identified no issues requiring formal inclusion in the report.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Keep fraud referrals, authorisation and oversight routes clear when considering investigatory powers.
- Record why any proposed use is necessary and proportionate and retain the decision and review trail.
- Review training and inspection readiness even where powers are used infrequently.

LEASEHOLD

Proposed changes to leaseholder charges

WHAT HAPPENED

- From April 2027, leaseholders in England and Wales are due to gain new rights to information about service charges.
- Landlords will need court or tribunal approval to pass on legal costs to leaseholders who challenge service charges.
- A separate Bill is expected to cover ground rent caps and the move to commonhold.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- Explain which charges sit with landlords or managing agents and which are billed by the council.
- Check whether a changed service charge is eligible in any Housing Benefit calculation where relevant.
- Reflect confirmed start dates and scope in customer guidance once rules are made.

TAX ADMINISTRATION

HMRC information requests after a death

WHAT HAPPENED

- Draft Finance Bill changes would remove the four-year time limit for certain information requests relating to deceased taxpayers.
- An information demand more than four years after death would require tribunal approval under the proposals.
- Separate proposed changes from April 2028 could treat failure to disclose a known error as deliberate, allowing assessment over 20 years.

REVENUES AND BENEFITS IMPLICATIONS

- This concerns HMRC information powers. The policy is relevant to how public bodies give executors clarity and minimise repeat requests.
- Make council routes for notifying a death, confirming liability and obtaining statements easy for executors to use.
- Document the dates used when settling Council Tax accounts or recovering sums from an estate.



Other Workshops

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HB subsidy workshops open for registration

Training covers subsidy estimates, timelines, settlement and exceptions.

Experienced staff workshops focus on the Subsidy Hub and revised audit workbooks.

DWP will discuss recurring assurance errors and good practice.

Expressions of interest are due by 30 November 2026.

SERVICE	Identify relevant staff and submit learning priorities to DWP.
FINANCIAL	Training costs or local savings are not specified.

SO WHAT? Subsidy capability is a core financial control during workforce turnover.



Job Adverts From Business Smart Solutions

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Your Revenues and Benefits Recruitment Partner

FCSA Recruiter Partner · IRRV Organisational Member · disability confident Committed · Cyber Essentials Certified · Armed Forces Covenant · Carbon Neutral Britain · GBC Good Business Charter Accredited · Just One Tree · Mindful Employer

Meet The Team



Ben Moreton

CEO
Co-Founder



Mark Thomas

Operations
Co-Founder



Chris Sharratt

Talent Partner



Leanne Carey

Contracts Manager

Trustpilot

"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 do so in permanent roles for the
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!"
#TeamBSS - Sam Goddard



NNDR Systems Specialist

3-6 Months | £33 per hour (umbrella) | Remote

As a Business Analyst you will explore, analyse, validate, and specify required amendments to software features and functions, used by key customers in local government in the billing and collection of non-domestic rates.

You will be engaging with customers and internal teams to develop and understand challenges and requirements, working with government and legislative bodies to ensure compliance within the product. Working as a member of a domain focused team of Product Managers and Business Analysts, you will enjoy support from a knowledgeable and skilled team, as a member of a larger community based both onshore and offshore.

To be effective, this role needs to bridge regulatory interpretation and system implementation, ensuring legislative change is translated into clear software requirements for MRI Revenues & Benefits.

What we're looking for:
We're looking for candidates who have these main skills/knowledge:

- Exceptionally good knowledge on the legislation that determines how software needs to work for Non Domestic Rates.
- At least 2 years' experience on the MRI Revenues & Benefits application specifically on the Non Domestic Rates software.
- Ideally you will have experience in SQL, but this is not essential.

To find out more or to apply
>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Revenues Officer (MRI/Academy)

3 Months | £25 per hour (umbrella) | Remote

Purpose of the job

Administer Council Tax, ensuring accurate and prompt billing of accounts

Key job outcomes/accountabilities

- Obtain and assess information to determine local taxation liability in accordance with legislation. This includes determination and allowance of discounts, reliefs, and exemptions
- Accurately update and maintain the revenues databases to ensure prompt and accurate billing of accounts
- Respond appropriately to enquiries received from citizens, businesses and agents and action amendments to accounts
- Agree repayment plans and determine appropriate recovery action that takes account of the person's circumstances whilst maximising collection
- Contribute to the review of working practices, procedures, and documents by making suggestions for improvement in service delivery and performance
- Take part in the training or coaching of other colleagues either on a one-to-one basis or in a formal training environment e.g. to assist with the induction of new staff

What we're looking for:

We're looking for candidates who have these main skills/knowledge:

- A thorough knowledge of local taxation law or experience which demonstrates the ability to absorb and understand complex legislation
- Be a skilled MRI (Capita/Academy) and NEC DM user
- Ability to contribute ideas for service development

To find out more or to apply

>> Click here to view the full advert <<

Senior Revenues Officer (NEC)

2 Months | £30 per hour (umbrella) | Remote

We are seeking a Specialist Council Tax Billing Officer to join our client's team to support them through a busy period.

Responsibilities:

- Dealing with all complex Billing duties to include moves, discounts, exemptions, reliefs.
- Taking escalation calls from customers in relation to complex billing queries.

What we're looking for:
We're looking for candidates who have these main skills/knowledge:

- At least 5 years Council Tax Billing experience.
- at least 3 years NEC(Northgate) experience.

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.

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.

Trustpilot

"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.

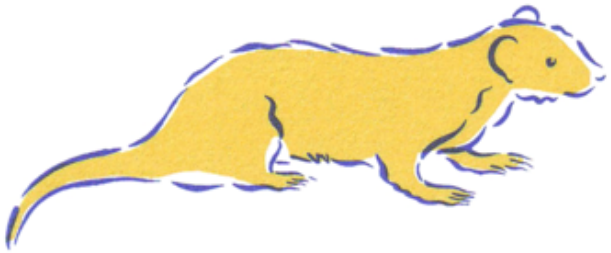
What I particularly like is how well they support everyone, and they really look after their people, which is unlike any other agency I have worked with in 30 years.

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



2015 EQUITY RELEASE AWARDS MortgageSolutions
WINNER
BEST TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER

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.

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

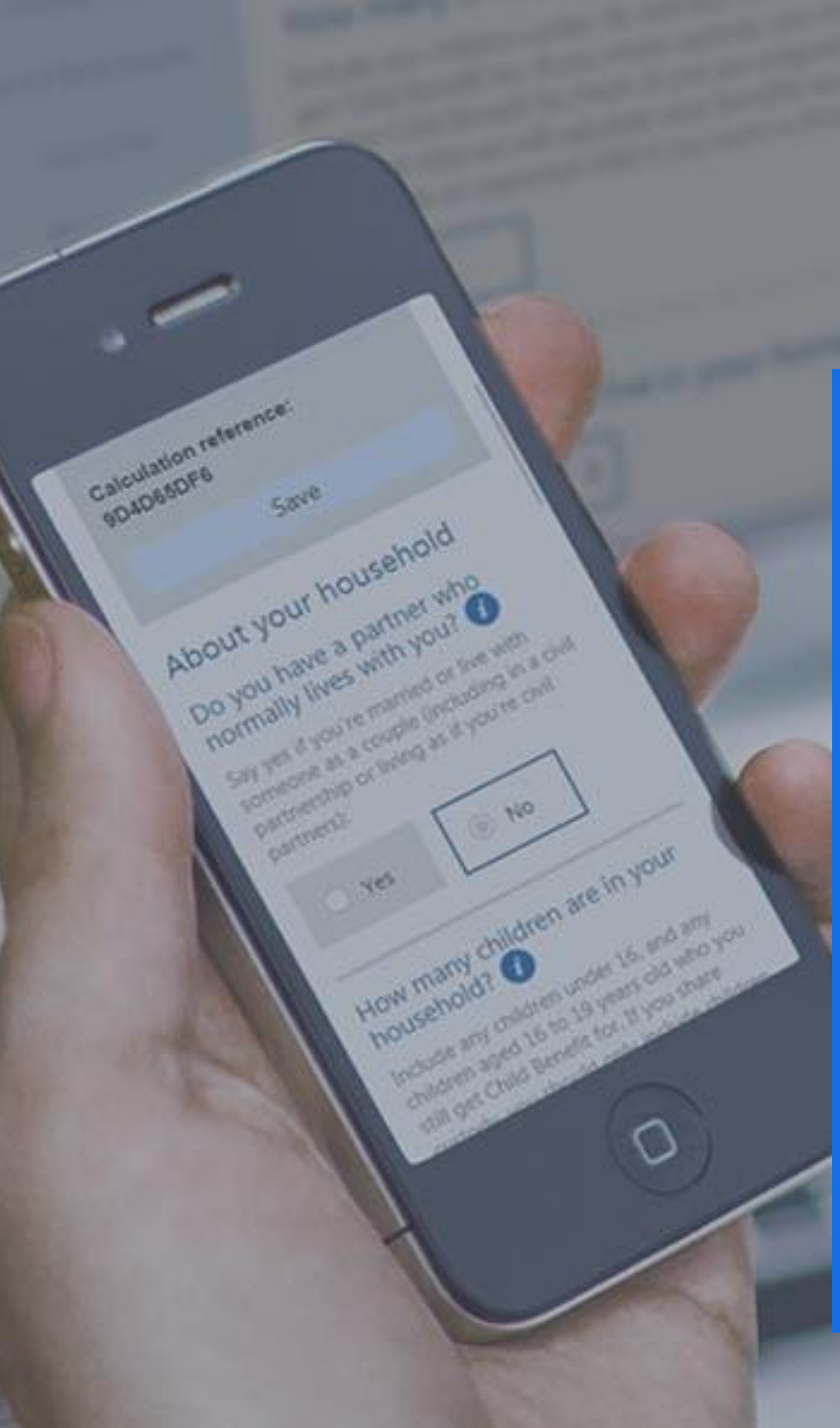
our customers:

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.



inbest Ascendant Solutions data management

Apply4.Online®

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

Previous Sessions

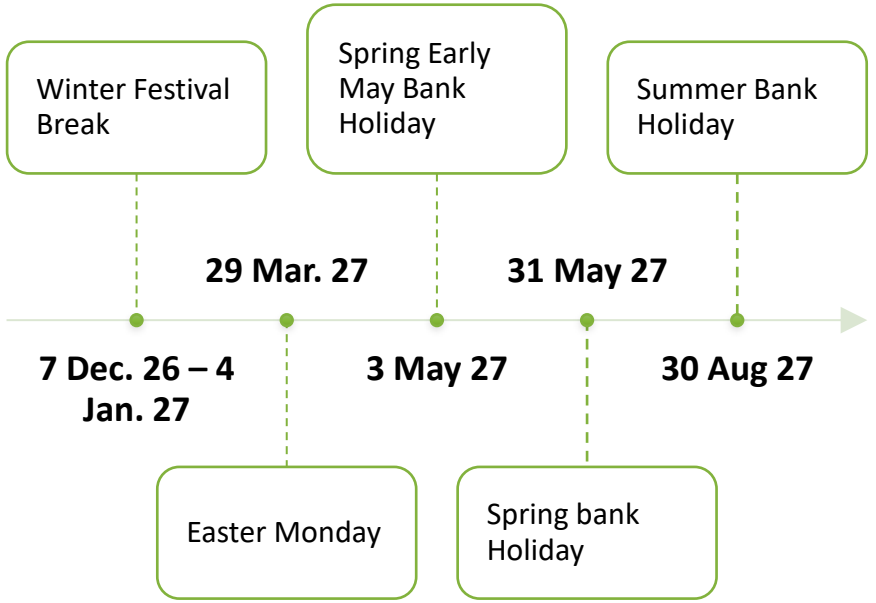
10 Jul 26	Devolution of Welfare and the Future of Revenues and Benefits
20 Jul 26	When one council's solution becomes another's cost
27 Jul 26	End of Year Review
17 Aug 26	Mid-break update: a busy summer for Revenues and Benefits
31 Aug 26	Mid-break update: Revenues and Benefits face widening financial and operational pressures
7 Sep 26	From Supplier Failure to Hidden NEETs and Box Shifting: The Monday Group Returns
14 Sep 26	LGR, the triple lock and what happens next
21 Sep 26	AI, Council Tax and the the limits of a quick fix
5 Oct 26	Welfare reform and the limits of public service cuts
19 Oct 26	Bedford, Smart Cuts and the Price of Getting Local Government Wrong
26 Oct 26	Council Tax: Are We Measuring Success or Simply Managing the Decline?
2 Nov 26	A budget that buys time but for whom
9 Nov 26	When benefits go unclaimed and rents go uncovered

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Dates where there will be no sessions



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Blogs

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Blogs

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The Independent Local Tax and Welfare Network

LGR has been given more time. But has Council Tax Reduction?

Budget 2026: what it means for councils, households and housing

Britain's Benefits Streets: How the Numbers Are Being Used to Tell the Wrong Story

The Welfare Card Returns: What Does the Evidence Actually Say?

Reflections on Ascendant by the Sea: Why Community Still Matters – Visionary Network

Reform's £50 Billion Welfare Plan: A Costing Is Not a Social Contract

Housing Benefit closes at last, but Universal Credit has not simplified housing support – Visionary Network

A Tale of Two Reorganisations

The danger is not change. The danger is not knowing what you do not know

When good intentions meet council tax reality, residents may pay the price

DWP spring forecast 2026 why the real welfare story is not just higher spending but a changing social contract

How Councils Can Use Administrative Data to Support the Delivery of the CRF

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

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Other Blogs

IFS
Unfreezing the personal allowance

BENEFITS IN THE FUTURE
'Tis the season to be jolly… misleading, in the Daily Mail

BENEFITS IN THE FUTURE
Lies, Damned Lies and the Telegraph

ENTITLEDTO
Child Benefit take-up hits a new low: the downside to 'wealth testing' benefits

ENTITLEDTO
Local Authorities left with their hands tied by lifting of the 2-child limit

ENTITLEDTO
Benefit take-up may be getting worse, but it's hard to know

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IFS: How unequal is Britain?

Better Policy: Id Council Tax A Rip-Off?

JRF: Poverty Statistics Are Changing

IFS: Is the minimum wage costing jobs?

Private eye: Farage's Flagship Council (And Other Stories From Rotten Boroughs)

IFS: Are Pensioners really better off?

More or Less: Can You Really Get £71,000 in Benefits?

Podcasts

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About Visionary Network

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Visionary Network

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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.

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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.

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Story Links

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References and links (1/10)

3–4 A 10p rise and a £785.98 Council Tax bill

Visionary Network | High Court judgment [2026] EWHC 2930 (Admin)

5–6 Cumbria benefit fraud investigations

News & Star* | Corroborating account

* Corroborating coverage used for case details.

7–8 HMRC turns away requests for tax guidance

The Telegraph | Syndicated article

References and links (2/10)

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11–12 Expert witnesses and disclosure of AI use

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13–14 Former council chief appeals email-deletion conviction

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15–16 Handling AI-assisted subject access requests

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17–18 Buying innovative public services

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19–20 Council surveillance shows high compliance

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21–22 AI oversight in family justice

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23–24 Community Right to Buy consultation

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25–26 Local Council Tax Support at Q2 2026/27

MHCLG official Q2 claimant tables

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27–28 Milburn review and a local disability fund

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29–30 Conservative welfare savings and the IFS assessment

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31–32 The 2026 Minimum Income Standard

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33–34 Who misses out on the £100 energy payment?

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35–36 Proposed benefit and pension rates for 2027/28

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37–38 UK growth reaches 0.7% in the third quarter

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41–42 Casey Commission finds fragmented accountability

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43–44 £150m for devolved capacity and capability

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