

Chief Officer Decision Notice

For non-key decisions

Notice is hereby given that the following Chief Officer Decision has been made, as delegated by the Cabinet/Cabinet Member or under their delegated authority in the Council's Constitution.

1. NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

Title of decision	Contingent Labour Contract Variation
Name and Title of Chief Officer(s) making the decision	Matthew Wallbridge, Chief Operating Officer
Directorate	Corporate Services
Reference No.	1550
Date of decision	23 October 2025
Relevant Ward	N/A

Details of Decision Taken

Decision	The Chief Officer agrees to extend the current contract with Matrix SCM for the provision of Temporary Agency Workers to the London borough of Hillingdon from 21st December 2025 to 5th April 2026. The estimated contract value for the 15-week period is £5.34 million, based on current volumes and usage.
Reason for decision	<p>The Council's current contract for the provision of Temporary Agency Workers with Matrix SCM ends on 20th December 2025, and delegated approval is sought for a short-term extension, to allow workforce strategy plans to be completed. The model supports both Corporate and Unqualified and Qualified Social Care requirements, whilst delivering a competitive pricing model and enabling us to mitigate Pay Parity liabilities under the Agency Workers Regulations (AWR). This is an essential part of our workforce strategy which supports service resourcing needs to cover absences, sickness, and unfilled vacancies.</p> <p>The categories of workers supplied under the terms of the agency contract include Administration, Clerical, Professional, Education, Technical, and unqualified and qualified social care roles. The contract supports our workforce planning by providing flexibility to meet specific or seasonal demands as and when required.</p> <p>Matrix SCM provide an online booking system where hiring teams can log the requests for temporary workers, detailing the role criteria and budget available, which is then distributed amongst a network of recruitment agencies. This has proven to ensure vacancies are filled quickly but also with quality candidates who display the right skill level to</p>

	<p>fulfil the job requirements. The online tool also supports digital, lean working arrangements. All requirements are authorised through the Spending Review Panel.</p> <p>In addition, Matrix enables agency workers who have been working with Hillingdon for a period of 12+ weeks to join the Council as a permanent member of staff with no additional 'temp to perm' fees.</p>
Alternative options considered and rejected	<p>Do nothing: This option is not recommended as the Council would be left with no formal contracted arrangements for the supply of Corporate Workers and unqualified and qualified Social Care workers placing key Council services to our Residents at risk.</p> <p>Re-tender: Any potential re-tender is forming part of the wider review currently in process. Given the work already underway to review the Council's recruitment provision, a tender process for a short-term contract would be unattractive to the market due to implementation time and costs and limited contractual period.</p> <p>Both scenarios rejected due to the short-term nature of this extension.</p>
Factors considered	<p>Extending the Matrix SCM contract will ensure the continuity of Council services without causing an impact to Hillingdon's residents and community. Should the request of an extension be declined, this would impact areas of the council's service provision, particularly across residential homes.</p> <p>To provide assurance on value for money, Matrix SCM will not increase prices for their service fees and continue to work closely with HR to further reduce agency fees.</p>
Report Author & Directorate	Stephen Ball- Corporate Services

Legal and Finance Comments

Finance comments	The funding for the Matrix SCM contract is allocated according to the requirements of each Directorate, supporting both corporate and care roles—whether unqualified or qualified. Temporary Agency workers will continue to be provided to the London Borough of Hillingdon for an additional 15 weeks from December 2025 to April 2026, with the costs estimated in line with recent average monthly expenditure on agency staff.
Finance Officer name and Title	Chris Malin Head of Finance – Corporate Services and Finance
Legal Comments	Extending the current contract with Matrix SCM will ensure the continuity of Council services without causing an impact to Hillingdon's residents and community. For reasons set out in the report, it would not be prudent, practicable or cost effective to conduct a full tender exercise at

	this stage. Additionally, the short-term extension will allow officers to continue conducting a review of the Councils current recruitment provisions. Legal Services confirms that there are no legal implications arising from this report or to agree to the recommendations.
Legal Officer Name and Title	Neena Sharma Deputy Principal Lawyer, Contract Lawyer, Property, Planning and Contract Team 22.10.2025

Appendices / report attached

List here any report / appendices / e.g. tender evaluations or other documentation to be included in support of this decision	
Exempt Classification	That the appendices be declared as exempt from publication as it involves the disclosure of information in accordance with Section 100(A) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), in that the report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

Cabinet Member & other Chief Officer consultation

Name and Title of any other Chief Officer(s) you have consulted with and as per any delegation.	N/A
Name and Title of the Cabinet Member you have consulted, and as per any delegation	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property
Any conflicts of interest declared by the Chief Officer making this decision and/or Cabinet Member who is consulted by the	N/A

officer which relates to the decision - or if dispensation by the CEO was granted to them.	
--	--

Authority for this decision

Detail authority from Cabinet or under delegated authority in the Constitution / Officer Scheme of Delegations	<p>This decision is within delegated authority. Cabinet on 10 April 2025 resolved:</p> <p>That the Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to vary the current contract with Matrix SCM for the provision of Temporary Agency workers to the London Borough of Hillingdon for an additional 6-month period from 21st June 2025 to 20th December 2025 at an estimated value of c£9.6m (based on an average monthly expenditure on agency staff of £1.6m between September 2024 and February 2025). 2. Furthermore, agrees that this includes the provision to extend the contract if needed for approximately a four-month period with the contract end date completing at the end of the financial year 2025/26, delegating approval of any extension to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Property.
--	--

Formal approval by Chief Officer making the decision

Signed *MP. Wallbridge* Date 23/10/25

Chief Operating Officer