



TO COUNCILLOR:

N Alam
L A Bentley
G A Boulter
F S Broadley (Vice-Chair)
M H Charlesworth (Chair)

M L Darr
J K Ford
D A Gamble
C S Gore
S Z Haq

G G Hunt
P Joshi
K J Loydall
I K Ridley

I summon you to attend the following meeting for the transaction of the business in the agenda below.

Meeting: Policy, Finance & Development Committee
Date & Time: Tuesday, 5 December 2023, 7.00 pm
Venue: Civic Suite 2, Brocks Hill Council Offices, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JJ
Contact: Democratic Services
t: (0116) 257 2775
e: democratic.services@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Oadby
27 November 2023

Anne E Court
Chief Executive



Meeting ID: 2571

ITEM NO.

AGENDA

PAGE NO'S

Meeting Live Broadcast | Information and Link

This meeting will be broadcast live.

Press & Public Access:

A direct link to the live broadcast of the meeting's proceedings on the Council's Civico platform is below.

<https://civico.net/oadby-wigston/18297-Policy-Finance-Development-Committee>

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence from Members to determine the quorum of the meeting in accordance with Rule 7 of Part 4 of the Constitution.



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Telephone: (0116) 288 8961 **Email:** customer.services@oadby-wigston.gov.uk



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OadbyWigstonBC



@Oadby_Wigston

2. Appointment of Substitutes

To appoint substitute Members in accordance with Rule 26 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Substitution Procedure Rules.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that any declaration of interest should be made having regard to the Members' Code of Conduct. In particular, Members must make clear the nature of the interest and whether it is 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary'.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4 - 6

To read, confirm and approve the minutes of the previous meeting in accordance with Rule 19 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

5. Action List Arising from the Previous Meeting

There was no Action List arising from the previous meeting.

6. Petitions and Deputations

To receive any Petitions and, or, Deputations in accordance with Rule(s) 11 and 12 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Petitions Procedure Rules respectively.

7. Economic Regeneration Strategy (2023-2028)

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Report of the National Management Trainee

8. Revised Draft Statement of Community Involvement (2023)

39 - 78

Report of the Planning Policy and Monitoring Officer

9. Procurement Policy (2023-2026)

79 - 110

Report of the Corporate Project, System & IT Manager

10. Budget Monitoring (Q2 2023/24)

111 - 125

Report of the Interim Finance Manager

11. Treasury Management Mid-Year Report (2023/24)

126 - 135

Report of the Senior Finance Business Partner and the Head of Finance / Acting Chief Finance Officer - S151

12. 2024/25 Draft Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and 2024/25 – 2026/27 Draft Capital Programmes

136 - 153

Report of the Head of Finance / Acting Chief Finance Officer – S151

13. Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Update (2023)

To Follow

Report of the Head of Finance / Acting Chief Finance Officer – S151

14. Income Generation Update and Advertising / Sponsorship Policy

To Follow

Report of the Interim Finance Manager

15. Organisational Strategy (2023)

154 - 165

Report of the Interim Strategic Director

16. Standards & Ethical Indicators (Q2 2023/24)

166 - 176

Report of the Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer

17. Exclusion of Press and Public

The press and public are likely to be excluded from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (Exempt Information) during consideration of the item(s) below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exempt item(s) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

18. Insurance and Leisure Operator Contract (Exempt)

177 - 184

Exempt Report of the Head of Finance / Acting Chief Finance Officer – S151

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Agenda Item 4

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD AT CIVIC SUITE 2, BROCKS HILL COUNCIL OFFICES, WASHBROOK LANE, OADBY,
LEICESTER, LE2 5JJ ON TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.02 PM**

PRESENT

M H Charlesworth Chair
F S Broadley Vice-Chair



Meeting ID: 2539

COUNCILLORS

N Alam
S S Athwal
G A Boulter
M L Darr
J K Ford
D A Gamble
C S Gore
S Z Haq
G G Hunt
P Joshi
K J Loydall
I K Ridley

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S J Ball	Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Deputy Monitoring Officer
B Bull	Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer
A E Court	Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
P Fisher	Strategic Director
D M Gill	Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer
T Hatton	Head of Customer Service & Transformation
A Kidder	Interim Finance Manager
A Thorpe	Head of Built Environment
S Wheeliker	Democratic & Electoral Services Officer

14. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor L A Bentley.

15. **APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES**

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

Councillor J K Chohan be allowed to substitute for Councillor L A Bentley without prior notice having been given to the Head of Law & Democracy.

Councillor J K Chohan substituted for Councillor L A Bentley.

16. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**Policy, Finance & Development
Committee**

Tuesday, 12 September 2023, 7.00 pm

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and Wigston Borough Council, Brocks Hill Council
Offices, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JJ
~ Page 4 ~*

None.

17. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was moved by Councillor G A Boulter, seconded by Councillor K J Loydall, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 June 2023 be taken as read, confirmed and approved.

18. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

None.

19. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

20. BUDGET MONITORING (Q1 2023/24)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 7 – 24 of the agenda reports pack), which provided an update following the end of the first quarter on the forecast financial position for the Council for the financial year 2023/24.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The contents of the report and appendices be noted; and**
- ii) The additions to the Capital Programme as detailed at paragraph 9.5 be approved.**

21. BUDGET SETTING APPROACH (2024/25)

The Committee gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 25 – 31 of the agenda reports pack), which consulted Members on the approach to setting the 2024/25 budget and updated Members on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) position and progress of the Sustainability Programme.

It was proposed by Councillor C S Gore, seconded by Councillor P Joshi, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

Recommendation A be amended to increase the membership of the 'Star Chambers' by one, to include a member of the opposition.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The Budget Approach for 2024/25 be agreed and recommended to Council; and**
- ii) The updated MTFP budget gaps and the progress on the Sustainability Programme be noted.**

22. COUNCIL TAX EMPTY HOMES UPDATE (SEPTEMBER 2023)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix (as set out at pages 32 – 40 of the agenda reports pack), which presented the Council Tax charges on the Empty Properties Policy (Empty Homes Premium) for approval by the Committee.

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor D A Gamble, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The increase in the Empty Homes Premium as detailed in Paragraph 2 be approved;**
- ii) A six-month grace period for new purchases of properties which are already subject to the additional premium be approved; and**
- iii) The introduction of the Council Tax charges on the Empty Properties Policy (Empty Homes Premium) be approved.**

23. PEOPLE STRATEGY (2023-2026)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 41 – 89 of the agenda reports pack), which asked Members to note a new People Strategy for 2023 – 2026, which is applicable to all Council staff.

By general affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The content of the report be noted;**
- ii) The People Strategy 2023 – 2026 be noted; and**
- iii) The Action Plan 2023 – 2026 be noted.**

24. STANDARDS & ETHICAL INDICATORS (Q1 2023/24)

The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix (as set out at pages 90 – 100 of the agenda reports pack), which asked the Committee to note the figures for local determination of complaints and ethical indicators for Q1 2023/24.

By general affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- i) The content of the report and appendix be noted.**

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.25 pm



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Economic Regeneration Strategy (2023-2028)**

Report Author(s): **Jamie To (National Management Trainee)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to ask Members to approve the Council's Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for the next five years covering 2023 – 2028.
Report Summary:	The Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan set out how Oadby & Wigston Borough Council will undertake, support and promote the economic regeneration of the borough over the next five years, and work towards a vision of an inclusive economy.
Recommendation(s):	That the Council's Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for 2023-28 (as set out in Appendix 1 and 2) be approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2635 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie To (National Management Trainee) (0116) 257 2603 jamie.to@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Economy (SO3) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	<p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Collaborative & Creative (V3) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputation Damage (CR4) Organisational / Transformational Change (CR8) Economy / Regeneration (CR9)

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	Place Shaping Working Group
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Regeneration Strategy (2023-2028) 2. Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan

1. Information

- 1.1 The Economic Regeneration Strategy (2023-2028) is attached at **Appendix 1**. The Action Plan which sits alongside the Strategy is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.2 The draft document has been considered by the Senior Leadership Team of the Council and the Place Shaping Working Group and has subsequently been referred to this Committee for formal approval.
- 1.3 The Council's new Vision approved in 2022 set out a new vision and strategic objectives of the council. The Economic Regeneration Strategy mirrors the objectives and seeks to support Our Vision, and fulfil the Council's purpose to "provide a sustainable council by listening, being engaged and putting our customers first enabling us to focus on local needs and priorities".
- 1.4 The Economic Regeneration Strategy has identified six priorities to bring forward the vision: "By 2028, Oadby and Wigston will have an inclusive and sustainable economy that fosters innovation, supports local businesses, generates high-quality employment, and enhances the overall quality of life for residents."
- 1.4.1 The priorities are:

Priority	Objectives
Our Town Centres	<p>To continue to work with town centre business groups to develop town centre-related initiatives.</p> <p>To work with town centre businesses to deliver the UKSPF-funded projects.</p> <p>To complete masterplanning refreshes for each town centre</p> <p>To look at the feasibility of introducing a Business Improvement District.</p>
Our Visitor Economy	<p>To utilise the business app to bring visitors into the Borough.</p> <p>To work with Visit Leicester and other organisations to</p>

	promote tourism in the Borough.
Our Businesses	<p>To work with estate agents to promote vacant units and encourage uptake.</p> <p>To establish relationships with and an understanding of the needs of both existing and new businesses.</p> <p>To signpost access to business support programmes and funding opportunities</p> <p>To promote and organise business events particularly through InvestOW.</p> <p>To annually publish a business directory.</p> <p>To regularly update the InvestOW Microsite and issue the business newsletter.</p>
Our People	<p>To promote digital skills projects.</p> <p>To encourage volunteering as a way into paid employment.</p>
Our Environment	To promote others and ourselves to work in accordance with the Councils Climate Change Strategy.
Our Partners	<p>To work in partnership to deliver business support services.</p> <p>To support and work with the Town Centre Business Groups in respect to initiatives and events.</p> <p>To work with businesses, individuals and community groups to access funding</p>

- 1.5 The Action Plan contains a number of actions associated to each priority. The actions are split between short term (including ongoing actions), medium term and long term. The council aims to deliver these over the five year life span of the strategy.
- 1.6 Like the Corporate Plan, the Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan is to be considered as a 'live' document and it will be reviewed on an annual basis as necessary. Similarly, ownership of the document is shared between members and officers to ensure a comprehensive approach towards the implementation of the actions.

**Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Economic Regeneration
Strategy
2023-2028**

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A Foreword by the Leader of the Council

Nestled on the southern edge of the city, Oadby and Wigston is small but perfectly placed being located between the M1 to the west and the A6 to the east. Based around three distinct towns, we are a diverse Borough with lots to offer to businesses, visitors and residents in this edge-of-city location.

The Economic Regeneration Strategy aims to promote economic well-being for all. A great deal of research and consultation has been put into the preparation of this document to ensure that the strategy reflects the economic position of the area.

It is our ambition that the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a place where businesses look to invest, start-up, grow and expand; where there is a wide range of local employment and training opportunities and where our town centres are vibrant and thriving. It is essential that all residents have equal opportunities and can access high-quality employment and training.

Since the last Strategy (which ran from 2015 to 2020) we have experienced several macro-economic changes which have changed the way we live, work, shop and communicate. This includes Britain's exit from the European Union, the global coronavirus pandemic, and the ongoing cost of living crisis. 2020 was an unprecedented year which significantly changed how we all live our lives and how we, our customers and our businesses worked.

Our strategy follows the Council's overarching vision for Oadby and Wigston to be 'our borough – the place to be'. The strategy and its action plan outline specific actions and highlights where we will work in partnership to deliver the vision. The Council fully appreciates the important role played by individuals, businesses and organisations who share our aim to improve the local economy and recognises that this Strategy cannot be delivered, in isolation, by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.



Cllr Samia Haq, Leader of the Council

The Vision

“By 2028, Oadby and Wigston will have an inclusive and sustainable economy that fosters innovation, supports local businesses, generates high-quality employment, and enhances the overall quality of life for residents.”

Introduction

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (OWBC) is a small Local Authority situated to the south-east of Leicester City centre but within easy reach of it. It covers the three settlements of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. The Borough covers 9 ½ sq. miles and is home to around 57,000 people. Whilst small, the Borough includes areas of countryside to the south and has a small section of the Grand Union Canal at Kilby Bridge. The Borough is also home to the Botanic Gardens and a large number of halls of residence, both belonging to the University of Leicester. The Borough hosts Leicester Racecourse to the north of the boundary.

In terms of transport, the A6 runs through the District in Oadby, connecting Leicester with Market Harborough. To the west, there is a train station at South Wigston which is on the Leicester to Birmingham line, served hourly. There are routes out to the west to connect the Borough to M1 at Fosse Park and eastwards towards the A47/A1.

There are thought to be around 2,000 businesses registered in the Borough. The vast majority of these are micro-enterprises and towards the lower employment number end. There are a small number of large employers. The position of the Borough within Leicestershire, its limited easy transport links, built up nature and lack of space for new build means that its business base is fairly static. Ad hoc redevelopments allow for new premises to be built as at South Wigston (Genesis Park) but there is limited scope for new developments. The unit stock is elderly and privately owned with smaller units. There are some start up estates in Wigston and South Wigston. Industrial areas are located at Oadby (around Kenilworth Drive) and in Wigston/South Wigston split across the Chartwell Drive/Cornwall Drive area and an area to the south of Blaby Road.

In terms of employment, there are three Town/District Centres (as defined in the Local Plan) – Oadby, Wigston, and South Wigston. These provide a range of facilities for local communities. There are smaller retail areas scattered across the Borough. There has been limited investment in town centres, although the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from central Government seeks to address some of this. The Borough is aware of the need to look again at town centre uses and will use the emerging Local Plan to do this. This will help to ensure that our town centres reflect both the needs of communities and the aftermath of the pandemic.

SWOT Analysis of Oadby and Wigston's Economic Prospects

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic geographical location close to the City of Leicester and with good transport links to M1/M69 motorways • Commuter links from South Wigston, connecting the Borough to Leicester and Birmingham. • Proximity to and quality of Higher/ Further Educations institutions • Desirable location to live with ten designated Conservation areas. • Highly skilled resident workforce. • Diverse population. • Targeted investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High employment in declining sectors. • High levels of commuting out of the Borough to work. • Low levels of inward investment. • High commercial vacancy rates in Wigston town centre. • Lack of space for future provision of employment land. • Densely populated area. • Capacity of the Borough Council to deliver programmes in Economic Regeneration. • Stagnant business base.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on Economic Development by diversifying the work of the Economic Regeneration Team. • Provision of new Economic and Employment Land within the borough. • Seek new funding streams to bring forward the new Masterplans for each town centre. • Build appropriate employment opportunities to increase our graduate retention. • Build a highly skilled workforce through graduate retention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of demand for small-scale employment sites. • Ageing population. • More opportunities for businesses in neighbouring authorities. • The need for re-skilling across the borough (and nationwide) to meet the jobs of the future. • Impacts of climate change and future resource needs. • Out-migration of younger people in the borough (especially graduates).

National Economic Drivers

Levelling Up Agenda

Levelling Up is a moral, social and economic programme for the whole of government. It is an ambitious programme which aims to reduce inequality and close the gap in productivity, health, income and opportunity within the United Kingdom, presenting a decade long policy agenda to change the UK's geography and narrow regional inequality through twelve national missions.

Published in February 2022, The Levelling Up White Paper sets out how the government will spread opportunity more equally across the UK.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a pillar of the Levelling Up Agenda from the UK Government. This is discussed in more depth in the Local Economic Drivers Section.

Regional Economic Drivers

Midlands Engine

The Midlands Engine is a pan-regional, apolitical partnership that convenes, connects and acts as a focal point to drive economic growth – for the greater benefit of people, places and businesses across the Midlands.

It is essential that the Council keeps updated on Midlands Engine's continued work across the region over the course of our five-year Strategy.

Sub-Regional Economic Drivers

Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)

The Future of the LLEP

With the integration of the LEPs into local government, the future of the LLEP will become clearer over the coming years. During the annual review of our action plan, we will consider how we will continue to work with the organisation to achieve our objectives.

LLEP Priorities

Local Enterprise Partnerships lead on economic regeneration priorities as set out by the Government. Accordingly, it is important that our economic regeneration strategy has policies that reflect those of the LLEP. This Economic Regeneration Strategy will look further at the local need of the Borough.

The four pillars and aims of the LLEP Economic Growth Strategy include:

- **Productive:** Increase GVA and productivity, continue to develop a leading science and technology led economy.
- **Innovative:** Global innovation leadership, increase innovation activities across the whole business base.
- **Inclusive:** Create a resilient, adaptive workforce where all residents have access to skills and career progression and are paid the living wage.
- **Sustainable:** Become a leader in zero carbon solutions, with sustainability principles built into everything we do.

The LLEP Economic Growth Strategy also has a key challenge to ensure that local training provision is able to meet both current and future needs and address skills shortages, especially in engineering.

LLEP Business Gateway

The LLEP Business Gateway is a ‘one-stop shop’ growth hub for all business needs. The gateway provides information on forms of business support available from local and national partners across a wide range of industries and sectors. Information is available on starting a business, growing your business, how to access finance, hiring and training, and premises and investing.

Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan

The Strategic Growth Plan is the overarching plan which sets out the aspirations for delivering growth (housing, economic, infrastructure) in Leicester and Leicestershire until 2050. Nine local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire and the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) engaged in the preparation of this Plan.

Local Economic Drivers

The Council’s Corporate Plan

The existing Corporate Plan came into effect on 1 April 2019. You can view the full Corporate Plan by [clicking on this link](#).

The objectives set out in the Corporate Plan are:

The building, Protecting and Empowering Communities - “Be Proud of your borough as a place to live”

This objective looks to not only build suitable accommodation to meet the needs of the community, delivering housing, attract people to our borough to live, reducing homelessness and the causes of homelessness, but to also build upon our strong communities, engaging with them and building greater community cohesion.

We also want to protect our communities, not just working with the Police to tackle crime, antisocial behaviour and enforcement, but to address health needs across the borough. We will work with our health partners, including the Fire Service, to improve health equality, meaning nobody should feel excluded and reducing loneliness created by the modern world.

We will empower our communities, generating positive involvement, not only through the work of Councillors within their wards and neighbourhood forums, but to engage a greater proportion of our borough, engaging with those who often feel disenfranchised. We will increase our volunteering opportunities and encourage our communities to get more involved, taking greater responsibility for where they live, work and play.

Growing the Borough Economically - “Realise the aspirations of the borough, benefiting those who live and work here”

This objective aims for our borough to be the best it can be, economically. We will work with businesses – from local sole traders to multinational corporations as to how we can help businesses develop and grow within our borough whilst attracting new organisations to the borough. This will not only provide greater opportunities for employment for our residents and regeneration opportunities, but helps our local

students with opportunities to stay within the borough whereas they may be forced to look further afield for such opportunities.

The borough has a rich array of attractions that should attract people to the borough, but sadly we are not maximising this. We will market the borough as a place that is worth visiting, working with partners to create a “joined-up” approach. We will also identify what areas of demand we are lacking and look to plug those gaps – increasing the reasons to visit the borough. We will also look at our entertainment and night-time economy and look to create a sustainable and enjoyable environment where people can enjoy the borough through a host of opportunities in the evenings.

The Council will look to be more commercial in regards to generating income that can protect frontline services and not have to cut them. We will look to maximise the value our assets can provide and look at ventures that could generate commercial income rather than increase taxes on our communities.

Providing Excellent Services - “Delivering those services needed to the highest standard whilst providing value for money”

This objective for our borough is to put the customer first – getting things right first time and providing services to the highest standards. The Council has always aspired to provide excellent services for all of our customers, be they Residents, Businesses, Partner Organisations or internally, meaning that we need to understand their needs. The Council has already shifted to focussing on outcome delivery, and we will ensure that we will get things right at the first opportunity we have.

The Council will aim to achieve the prestigious and nationally recognised “Customer Service Excellent Award” to demonstrate that we are achieving what we have set out to do. The award is a quality-mark award that rates how the services received by residents are delivered by the Council. We will use this award as a driver of continuous improvement and enable our staff to improve their skills which will enable further improvements in the delivery of services.

We will also be utilising technology to make life safer for our residents or the implementation of smart technology in the homes of the vulnerable to allow them instant access to services, alongside the utilisation of technologies to improve our effectiveness in delivering our services.

The Council’s Vision – ‘Our Borough, The Place To Be’

The Council’s Vision was adopted to reflect the last few years that brought a huge amount of change to how we live, work and spend our time. Adopted in late 2022, the new Vision will be followed by a new Corporate Plan which will set out what the council plans to achieve over the coming years.

The Vision is designed to strengthen the relationship between the council and its residents, businesses, community groups, young people, tenants and more. The details of the adopted Vision [can be found here](#).

To support the vision of ‘Our Borough, The Place To Be’, there are a number of strategic objectives. These are:

- Our Council

- Our Communities
- Our Economy
- Our Environment
- Our Partners

To meet the objective of 'Our Economy', the vision sets out we want to:

- Support economic growth that is focused on our town centres.
- Make our Borough an inviting place to visit.
- Help to provide good employment opportunities.

Our Strategy aligns with the Corporate Vision and aims to improve economic prospects within the Borough.

Planning Policy

Local Plan (2019 – 2031)

The current Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan was adopted in April 2019. The current Local Plan sets out the policies that the Council uses to manage growth and change as well as determine Planning applications.

The Local Plan helps direct new development to the right places. New development includes, but is not limited to; new housing; new and existing employment land; new community facilities and services; new retail; and new leisure and tourism development.

A Local Plan is not a static document, it is a fluid document that needs to change with the times, therefore it is a document that needs reviewing and updating on a regular basis. The Council has already begun work on the new Local Plan, planning for growth up to 2041. The Council is currently working towards an ambitious timescale and hopes to adopt its New Local Plan by Summer 2026.

Authority Monitoring Report

The Authority Monitoring Report reviews and monitors the Local Plan, it assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in local development documents are being achieved. An Authority Monitoring Report is produced and published each year and covers the period from 1st April to 31st March.

Oadby, South Wigston and Wigston Town Centre Masterplans

Each of the Borough's town centres will benefit from a refreshed masterplan by 2024.. These set out the aims and objectives to position the Council to best inform decisions around development within each town centre in addition to informing potential future bids for Government funding for development and regeneration, should such opportunities arise.

Wigston Town Centre Masterplan was conducted in 2022 and provided the Council with evidence to support applications for funding. The Oadby and South Wigston Masterplans are currently being prepared and have been funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Once finalised, this suite of documents will feed into the Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan and help to inform long-term aspirations of the Council for each town centre.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF or the Fund) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund through a funding formula rather than a competition.

The Council developed an [investment plan](#) on how Oadby and Wigston will allocate this funding. The Council will start to spend the funds from January 2023.

The government has allocated Oadby and Wigston £1,342,011 for 2022-2025 which will be shared across the three interconnected investment priority themes:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

InvestOW Brand

Our InvestOW brand aims to **promote the Borough and attract new investment to the area.**

Our Business App

The app, named *OW Local*, will be the one-stop-shop for everything Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston related. Residents and visitors can use the app to browse through local businesses and events in the area, check out offers and even purchase directly through the app itself. The app has been created in partnership with Bubltown, an award-winning technology company which has already had major success creating and implementing such projects for councils throughout the country. The app is just one of the tools that we will use to persuade residents and visitors to visit our town centres.

Microsite

This is the home of information to businesses and individuals on the services offered by the council and other authorities (such as Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership). It also acts as a hub for any UKSPF promotional material and gives an overview of the borough. This is updated on an ad-hoc basis when there are new projects that occur.

Business Newsletter

The business newsletter is an email-marketing tool which helps the Council to interact and engage with the business community. We use this method of communication to signpost Oadby and Wigston based businesses to grants, business support, webinars, and networking events. Monthly Business Newsletters are sent by the council to subscribers of the business newsletter.

Current Economic Baseline Figures

Oadby and Wigston over the last ten years:

(Source: How life has changed in Oadby and Wigston: Census 2021, ONS Website, 19 January 2023)

- As of 2021, Oadby and Wigston is the fifth most densely populated of the East Midlands' 35 local authority areas, with around 18 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land.
- Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Oadby and Wigston increased by 2.8%, from around 56,200 in 2011 to around 57,700 in 2021.
- Population growth was lower in Oadby and Wigston than across the East Midlands.
- The share of residents aged between 50 and 64 years increased by 1.1 percentage points between 2011 and 2021.
- Private renting in Oadby and Wigston increased from 9.9% to 16.0%, while the rate of home ownership decreased from 80.8% to 75.2%.
- In Oadby and Wigston, there has been an increase of 13.0% in people aged 65 years and over, and a decrease of 1.7% in people aged 15 to 64 years.

Priority One: Our Town Centres

Aim

Regenerate our three town centres.

Objectives

- To promote, support and undertake the regeneration of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston town centres by encouraging and enabling a variety of projects.

Key Statistics



Figure 1 Wigston Town Centre Footfall (source: Town Centre Manager's KPI Q4 22/23)

Footfall in Wigston has returned to its pre-pandemic (Winter 2019) level in March 2023. It now shows a strong upwards trajectory to continue to reach the highest level in footfall since recording began in May 2018. This could indicate there is a growing drive to shop, experience and eat local, rather than at destination shopping experiences (e.g. Fosse Park or Leicester City Centre).

Challenges

The key challenge for our town centres is the attraction of destination retail outlets in neighbouring local authorities. Competition has dragged retail footfall away from town and district centres into out-of-town retail parks. However, with town centre usage leaning towards services and leisure opportunities, there is the opportunity to overcome the challenges town centres face.

Moreover, in a post-pandemic world, shopping habits have changed and we are seeing the boom in online shopping. This is further exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living where town centre regeneration is needed to raise footfall and support town centre businesses.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Continue to work with town centre business groups to develop town centre related initiatives.
Work with town centre businesses to deliver the UKSPF funded projects.
- Complete Masterplanning refreshes for each town centre.
- Bring forward both employment and residential development sites as defined in the Local Plan.
- Look at the feasibility of introducing a Business Improvement District.

Priority Two: Our Visitor Economy

Aim

Promote the Borough as an exciting place to visit.

Objectives

- To promote and market the borough as an area that offers opportunities for development, investment and relocation.
- To provide advice on the availability of sites for both businesses wishing to locate in the area and to local businesses requiring 'grow on' space.
- To develop the visitor economy, particularly related to the evening economy and our localised assets.

Key Statistics

Visitor numbers (millions) (Source: Steam Report 2022)

	2019	2022	Change (%)
Blaby District Council	3.41	3.01	-11.7
Charnwood Borough Council	6.06	5.16	-14.9
Harborough District Council	2.79	2.53	-9.3
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	4.26	3.66	-14.1
Leicester City Council	11.71	9.92	-15.3
Melton Borough Council	1.84	1.62	-11.9
North West Leicestershire District Council	3.46	2.97	-14.0
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	1.85	1.66	-10.2
Leicestershire	23.67	20.61	-12.9
Greater Leicestershire	35.37	30.53	-13.7

Local Authority Share of Visitors (Source: Steam Report 2022)

	2019 (%)	2022 (%)	Change (%)
Blaby District Council	9.6	9.9	2.3
Charnwood Borough Council	17.1	16.9	-1.4
Harborough District Council	7.9	8.3	5.1
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	12.0	12.0	-0.5
Leicester City Council	33.1	32.5	-1.9
Melton Borough Council	5.2	5.3	2.1
North West Leicestershire District Council	9.8	9.7	-0.3
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	5.2	5.4	4.1

Visitor numbers to Oadby and Wigston had decreased from 1.85 million in 2019 to 1.66 million in 2022. This represents a decline of 10.2%.

However, Oadby and Wigston's share of the totals for Greater Leicestershire saw a slight increase of 4.1%, perhaps owing to the reduction in visitor numbers across the county.

Number of Visitor Days (millions) (Steam Report 2022)

	2019	2022	Change
Blaby District Council	3.81	3.42	-10.2
Charnwood Borough Council	6.94	6.11	-11.9
Harborough District Council	3.24	2.99	-7.7

Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	4.75	4.15	-12.6
Leicester City Council	15.15	13.49	-10.9
Melton Borough Council	2.13	1.94	-9.0
North West Leicestershire District Council	4.14	3.68	-11.1
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	2.17	1.87	-13.8
Leicestershire	27.17	24.16	-11.1
Greater Leicestershire	42.32	37.65	-11.0

Local Authority Share of Visitor Days (Source: Steam Report 2022)

	2019	2022	Change
Blaby District Council	9.0	9.1	1.0
Charnwood Borough Council	16.4	16.2	-1.0
Harborough District Council	7.7	7.9	3.7
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	11.2	11.0	-1.8
Leicester City Council	35.8	35.8	0.1
Melton Borough Council	5.0	5.1	2.3
North West Leicestershire District Council	9.8	9.8	-0.1
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	5.1	5.0	-3.1

Day visitors to the borough were 1.87 million in 2022. This was a decrease of 0.3 million visitors from 2019. We are not alone; all districts in Leicestershire saw a decrease over the same period. In 2022, the district accounted for five percent of the total number of day visitors to Leicestershire. This figure mirrors our percentage of the Leicestershire Population.

Challenges

As a small borough, there is yet to be a capitalisation on key tourist attractions due to the constrained number on offer. Despite this, the share of visitor days matches the share of the population of Leicestershire. This shows we are not comparably worse, but shows there is an opportunity to promote the boroughs key visitor attractions together.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Use the business app to bring visitors into the Borough.
- Work with Visit Leicester and other organisations to promote tourism in the Borough.
- Support the representative of Oadby and Wigston Borough at County Wide tourism boards.

Priority Three: Our Businesses

Aim

Support businesses to thrive and overcome barriers to success.

Objectives

- To develop a sustainable and successful business base and encourage and support both established businesses and start-ups.
- To engage with businesses expressing a desire to relocate in order to ensure their continued presence in the borough.
- Regeneration of key employment sites within the borough to enable them to meet the needs of modern business requirements.
- Provide ongoing support for SMEs and for those wishing to start up a business.
- To engage with and support businesses wishing to take on apprentices, and to promote the advantages to businesses of providing apprenticeship, traineeships and work placements opportunities.

Key Statistics

UK Business Count 2022 – Numbers (Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS)

	Oadby and Wigston	Leicestershire	England
Micro Enterprises	2,005	39,850	2,157,245
Small Enterprises	175	3,925	204,960
Medium Enterprises	25	710	36,495
Large Enterprises	5	175	9,345
Total	2210	44,660	2,408,040

UK Business Count 2022 – Percentages (Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS)

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
Micro Enterprises	90.72	89.23	89.59
Small Enterprises	7.92	8.79	8.51
Medium Enterprises	1.13	1.59	1.52
Large Enterprises	0.23	0.39	0.39
Total	100	100	100

In 2022, of the 2210 businesses in the Borough, the majority (90.7%) were microbusinesses (of less than 10 members of staff). This is in line with the England average. The combined SMEs (small and medium businesses, not including micro) make up 9% of businesses.

Percentage of businesses per industry grouping 2022 (Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS)

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	0.5	5.6	3.9
Production	9.3	7.5	5.5
Construction	12.2	14.0	13.6
Motor Trades	3.4	3.5	2.9
Whole Sale	9.0	5.1	4.0
Retail	8.6	7.0	8.1
Transport and Storage	6.1	5.5	5.1
Accommodation and Food Service	5.0	5.2	6.1
Information and Communication	6.3	4.9	7.5
Finance and Insurance	2.0	3.1	2.3
Property	4.3	4.0	4.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical	12	14.6	16.1
Business Administration and Support Services	6.4	7.9	8.5
Public Administration and Defence	0	0.5	0.3
Education	2.0	1.9	1.8
Health	7.9	3.7	3.8
Arts, Entertainments and Recreation	5.0	5.9	6.5

Business Survival Rates (Source: Business Closures and Incorporations – Oadby and Wigston, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, LLEP Website)

Business Closures 2011 to 2021

- During the period 2011 to 2021, 65,791 businesses were either dissolved or in liquidation across the LLEP area. Of these, 2,666 (4.1%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- In 2019, there were 8450 businesses that were either dissolved or in liquidation. Of these, 334 (4%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- In 2021, there were 11,289 businesses that were either dissolved or in liquidation. Of these, 367 (3.3%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- Of those 367 businesses, 286 businesses were from the wholesale trade sector, 59 businesses were from the office admin sector and 34 businesses were from the retail trade sector.

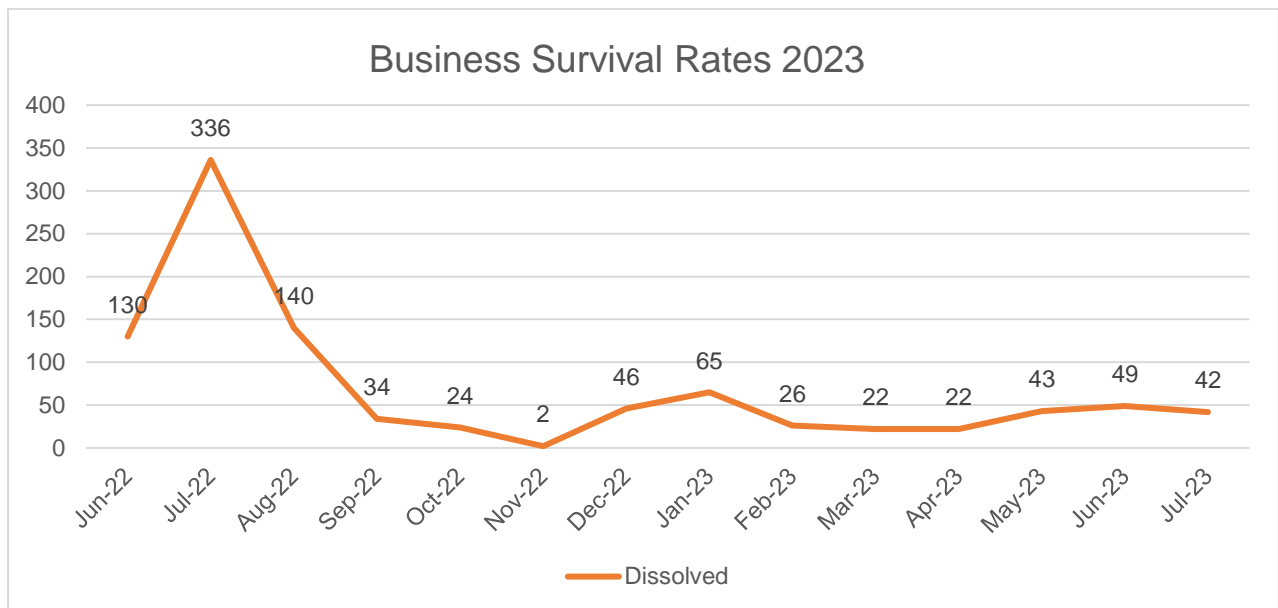
Business Incorporations 2011 to 2021

- During the period 2011 to 2021, 97,805 businesses were incorporated. Of these, 5,963 (6.1%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- In 2021 there were 9,529 businesses that were incorporated. Of these 529 (5.6%) were in Oadby and Wigston. In 2019, the share was 4.7%.

- The figure is a breakdown of the number of incorporated businesses across the Oadby and Wigston district area in 2021 by industry area. The figure contains those industries with the largest numbers of incorporations.
- Of those 529 businesses, 76 businesses were from real estate activities, 72 businesses were from the retail trade sector, 35 businesses were from food and beverage service activities.

Oadby and Wigston’s Business Survival Rates 2023

(Source: Labour Market Profiles – Oadby and Wigston, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, LLEP Website, May 2023)



The number of dissolved businesses has remained consistent over the last 12 months. In contrast, incorporations peaked to 243 and 141 in February and April 2023, respectively.

Challenges

With a stagnant business base, the challenge for the Borough is to facilitate growth within its boundaries. We are constrained with the size of our industrial units, with a

lack of space for new developments seen across the rest of the county. This is a challenge as the Borough may not be seen as a place to start a business or move to grow.

The type of businesses we see in Oadby and Wigston is much the same as Leicestershire. Whilst not a challenge, it provides an opportunity for the Borough to learn from best practice on how to support these industries from our neighbouring local authorities.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Work with estate agents to promote vacant units and encourage the uptake of these.
- Establish relationships with and an understanding of the needs of both existing and new businesses.
- Signpost access to business support programmes and funding opportunities
- Promote and organise business events particularly through InvestOW.
- Annually publish a business directory.
- Work to enable the provision of courses on the best use of superfast broadband opportunities.
- Provide support in respect to the planning process to help businesses to submit good quality applications.
- Regularly update the InvestOW Microsite and issue the business newsletter.

Priority Four: Our People

Aim

Maximise employment prospects and developing a skilled workforce.

Objectives

- To create widespread employment opportunities
- To work in partnership to upskill the local workforce and to enable the best opportunity to meet the potential offered by local companies.
- To have an emphasis on supporting skills development for young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS) and the unemployed
- To address any mismatch between the requirements of local businesses and the skill sets of the local community.
- To develop the opportunity for local construction jobs as new development sites come forward.
- To ensure local people have access to appropriate transport facilities in order to access employment and education locations.

Key Statistics

Employment and benefits

	Oadby and Wigston	Leicestershire	England
Population 2021 (ONS Population Estimates)	57,800	1,078,600	56,536,400
Working Age Population 2021 (ONS Population Estimates)	34,900	683,900	42,174,700
Unemployment Rate May 2023 (ONS Claimant Count)	3.8%	5.9%	4.6%
Claimant Rate May 2023 (ONS Claimant Count)	2.5%	3.2%	4.0%
Gross Weekly Pay 2022 (ONS Annual Survey)	£593.9	£607.9	£645.8
Economic Activity 2022 (ONS Annual Survey)	84%	79.0%	79.6%
Job Density 2022 (ONS Job Density)	0.65	0.80	0.85

Full-time/Part-time split

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
Working Full-time	63.2	71.0	70.2
Part-time	42.1	29.0	29.8

- Higher percentage of total employee jobs which are part-time in Oadby and Wigston.

Employee Jobs by Industry 2022 (Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey)

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
B: Mining and Quarrying	0.0	0.3	0.1
C: Manufacturing	13.2	12.0	7.0
D: Electricity, Gas, Steam And Air Conditioning Supply	0.1	1.0	0.3
E: Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities	0.3	0.6	0.7
F: Construction	4.7	4.3	6.2
G: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	18.4	15.5	13.0
H: Transportation and Storage	2.6	7.6	5.5
I: Accommodation And Food Service Activities	5.3	5.6	7.3
J: Information And Communication	1.8	2.9	4.9
K: Financial And Insurance Activities	2.1	2.5	3.5
L: Real Estate Activities	1.3	1.4	1.9
M: Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities	4.7	9.1	9.7
N: Administrative And Support Service Activities	10.5	7.6	8.6
O: Public Administration And Defence; Compulsory Social Security	4.2	3.9	4.2
P: Education	11.8	10.1	8.2
Q: Human Health and Social Work Activities	13.2	11.1	12.6
R: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3.7	2.3	2.7
S: Other Service Areas	2.6	1.9	2.6

Highest Level of Qualifications (Source: ONS – 2021 Census)

All usual residents aged 16 years and over	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
No qualifications	18.6	16.7	18.1
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	9.7	9.7	9.7
Level 2 qualifications	12.8	13.6	13.3
Apprenticeship	5.7	6.3	5.3
Level 3 Qualifications	18.5	19.2	16.9
Level 4 Qualifications or above	32.0	32.0	33.9
Other qualifications	2.7	2.3	2.8

Challenges

A significant number of employment opportunities are found outside of the Borough. This is because of our close proximity to Leicester to the north, and good connections

to large industrial sites to the southern border. With many residents commuting out of the borough for work, we also see a weak graduate retention for similar reasons. Providing high quality employment would allow for the borough to grow economically potential industries that have not located themselves in Oadby and Wigston before. In doing this, we will expect to see a rise in the gross weekly pay in the borough, where we are trailing behind Leicestershire and England.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Support the organisation of jobs fairs to ensure people have an understanding of local employment and training opportunities.
- Work with local universities, North Warwickshire South Leicestershire College and other further education providers to reflect skills gaps and local business needs.
- Work with construction companies and developers on local sites to encourage them to take on local people for jobs, apprenticeships and work placements.
- Work with local people to access community funds.
- Engage with local transport providers to ensure people can access employment and training both within and outside of the borough.
- Promote digital skills projects.
- Encourage volunteering as a way into paid employment.

Priority Five: Our Environment

Aim

Work with our businesses and partners to collectively reduce our environmental impact.

Objectives

- To support the Council's Climate Change Strategy to encourage businesses to share best practise and foster active environments to include increased cycling and walking.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Identify and signpost the support or funding required to help businesses to become more sustainable.
- Collaborate with our partners, sharing ideas and best practice for sustainability.
- Work in accordance with the Climate Change Strategy.

Priority Six: Our Partners

Aim

Develop strong partnerships to deliver a range of projects.

Objectives

- To ensure that a broad range of support packages are available to local businesses, particularly micro and small enterprises.
- To develop strong partnership relationships, which have the capacity to lever in funding where required to deliver both large- and small-scale projects.

Actions

- Support local business support organisations to deliver business support services.
- Work in partnership with DLUHC, LLEP, local education providers, Leicestershire County Council, the other Leicestershire District Councils to help enable economic regeneration opportunities.
- Build a strong working relationship with the University of Leicester to bring about regeneration programmes.
- Support and work with the Town Centre Business Groups in respect to initiatives and events.

Conclusion

The new strategy will assist the council in its important leadership role to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area. It will also function as a framework for influencing and supporting various partners and stakeholders, who will be involved in driving economic development and regeneration locally and in particular to help enable the realisation of funding opportunities by demonstrating that the council has ambitious aspirations based on factual evidence.

Email: business@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Tel: (0116) 288 8961
Web: www.InvestOW.co.uk

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

DRAFT

Economic Regeneration

Strategy

2023-2028

Action Plan

Oadby & Wigston | Our borough -
the place to be

Implementation of Action Plan

Delivery of the Action Plan will primarily be dependent upon a strong relationship between the Borough Council and its key partners including:

- Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
- Private sector partners such as land owners and developers
- Public sector bodies
- Existing businesses and business organisations
- Public transport providers and the Local Highways Authority
- Local resident's organisations
- When justified and deemed necessary, the council will use Compulsory Purchase Order powers

Monitoring of Action Plan

The action plan will be reviewed annually to assess the progress of the Council against its actions and outputs.

Time Frame Key
S - Short Term 1 Year / Ongoing
M - Medium Term 3 Years
L - Long Term 3 - 5 Years

Priority One: Our Town Centres

Action	Partners/Initiatives	Outcomes	Timeframe
To continue to work with town centre business groups to develop town centre-related initiatives.	Oadby town centre association Wigston business group South Wigston Trade and Commerce	Number of initiatives Number of events Number of businesses engaged	S
To work with town centre businesses to deliver the UKSPF-funded projects.	Town Centre Businesses	Number of initiatives Number of events Number of businesses engaged	M
To complete masterplanning refreshes for each town centre	Leicestershire County Council	Projects developed and brought forward	S
To look at the feasibility of introducing a Business Improvement District.	Town centre businesses and business groups	Introduction of a Business Improvement District to the Borough.	S

Priority Two: Our Visitor Economy

Action	Partners/Initiatives	Outcomes	Timeframe
To utilise the business app to bring visitors into the Borough.	LLEP Visit Leicester Developers Town centre businesses and business groups Leicestershire County Council	Number of sites brought forward Number of jobs created on sites Number of attendees at events	S
To work with Visit Leicester and other organisations to promote tourism in the Borough.	Visit Leicester River Soar Partnership Canals and Rivers Trust Brocks Hill University of Leicester (Botanic Garden) Leicester Racecourse Hotels	Number of visitors in the Borough Number of attendees events	M

Priority Three: Our Businesses

Action	Partners/Initiatives	Outcomes	Timeframe
To work with estate agents to promote vacant units and encourage uptake.	Business community Estate agents	Number of businesses engaged Number of vacant units filled	S
To establish relationships with and an understanding of the needs of both existing and new businesses.	Business community Business groups Networking events	Number of businesses engaged Business confidence figures Business surveys	S
To signpost access to business support programmes and funding opportunities	LLEP Business Gateway OWBC website East Midlands Chamber Leicestershire Business Advice Service	Business Gateway statistics Number of businesses supported Number of grants received	S
To promote and organise business events particularly through InvestOW.	OWBC website/microsite Business Newsletters Social media Town centre digital displays	Number of attendees at events Number of businesses engaged with initiatives	S
To annually publish a business directory.	OWBC website Business community Other OWBC Teams	Number of businesses engaged	S
To regularly update the InvestOW Microsite and issue the business newsletter.	OWBC staff Business community Local business forums OWBC staff	Total businesses registered New registration rate	S

Priority Four: Our People

Action	Partners/Initiatives	Outcomes	Timeframe
To promote digital skills projects.	LCC OWBC Staff	Number of people upskilled	S
To encourage volunteering as a way into paid employment.	Volunteer Organisations	Number of volunteers Number of employments	S

Priority Five: Our Environment

Action	Partners/Initiatives	Outcomes	Timeframe
To promote others and ourselves to work in accordance with the Councils Climate Change Strategy.	OWBC Staff	Progression towards carbon neutrality in council operations	M

Priority Six: Our Partners

Action	Partners/Initiatives	Outcomes	Timeframe
To work in partnership to deliver business support services.	Leicestershire Business Advice Service Town Centre Groups Events	Number of grants obtained by businesses Business Satisfaction	S
To support and work with the Town Centre Business Groups in respect to initiatives and events.	OWBC Staff Local business forums Local Business	Number of positive comments at events Business Satisfaction Vacancy rates Footfall figures	S
To work with businesses, individuals and community groups to access funding	Residents association Sports and youth clubs Community Groups Businesses Individuals	Grants obtained Number of projects implemented	

Agenda Item 8



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Decision
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Report Title: **Revised Draft Statement of Community Involvement**
Report Author(s): **Lisa Chevallereau (Planning Policy and Monitoring Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee’s approval to publicly consult on a revised Statement of Community Involvement for an 8 week period.
Report Summary:	<p>The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the Borough Council’s approach to involving and consulting local people and stakeholders in planning process, more specifically the preparation of the various components of the Local Plan and in making development management decisions on planning applications.</p> <p>The consultation practices contained in the SCI satisfy the statutory requirements set out in the relevant legislation.</p> <p>The Council will always seek to exceed the statutory requirements, where appropriate, to ensure wide and inclusive consultation to reflect local circumstances, the character and composition of the local community, and the resources available. This extends to those groups who have traditionally find it more difficult to engage in the planning process.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That Committee approve the revised Statement of Community Involvement for the purpose of an 8 week public consultation due to commence on Wednesday 13 December 2023.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jamie Carr (Planning Policy and Development Manager) (0116) 257 2652 jamie.carr@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ed Morgan (Principal Planning Policy Officer) (0116) 257 2650 ed.morgan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Lisa Chevallereau (Planning Policy and Monitoring Officer) (0116) 2572 636 lisa.chevallereau@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Partners (SO5)</p>
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)

	Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None so far, however this report is seeking approval to consult with the public and other key stakeholders.
Background Papers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)</u> 2. <u>The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)</u>
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revised Draft Statement of Community Involvement (Working Draft) 2. Equality Assessment

1. Information

- 1.1 The Council is committed to building a strong, empowered and active community to achieve high quality planning and development. It is intended that the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will allow all local people, businesses and stakeholders to become fully engaged in the planning process in order for the local planning system to be a positive tool in shaping the future growth and improvement of the Borough.
- 1.2 The SCI will ensure that consultation and participation takes place in a timely manner and that a range of involvement techniques are in place to allow people to have a real influence over planning in the Borough.
- 1.3 The revised draft SCI document sets out the Borough Council's approach to involving and consulting local people and stakeholders in the planning process, more specifically the preparation of the various components of the Local Plan and in making development management decisions on planning applications. In line with statutory requirements the SCI should be reviewed at least every 5 years. The Council's current SCI was adopted in 2019.

- 1.4 As a minimum, the Council is required to consult on; planning document preparation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended); and, planning applications as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
- 1.5 The SCI sets out in detail how the Council is to consult at each stage of planning document preparation, as well as each stage of planning application decision making.
- 1.6 In summary, the current SCI (2019 version) has been reviewed and amended, however there have been no major changes from the 2019 version to this current review draft SCI (2023 version).

2. Next Steps

- 2.1 Subject to Committee approval, the Council is to publish the Revised Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation for a period of 8 weeks. Therefore, this report seeks approval to carry out a public consultation from the week commencing Wednesday 13 December 2023 for a 8 week period. The length of the consultation has been extended from 6 weeks to 8 weeks to account for the fact that the consultation runs over the Christmas period.
- 2.2 Once the statement has been subject to public consultation, any representations that have been received will be taken account of and factored into a final version of the statement, as necessary. The final version will then be submitted to Members for approval at the next appropriate Member Committee.

Draft Statement of Community Involvement 2023

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The Council's Vision for Community Involvement

This statement is part of a wider commitment made by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to create a healthy and empowered community. The Council will always ensure that everyone who lives and works in the Borough is able to help shape its future through consistent, meaningful and far-reaching engagement, particularly in making sure that residents and businesses have wide-ranging and continuous opportunities to influence planning policies put in place by the Council.

The Council recognises the importance of community involvement in planning and its role in shaping growth through the effective delivery of well-designed homes, places and services that meet local needs in the Borough. This growth in turn contributes to improving people's health, happiness and well-being, and giving the opportunity to enjoy peaceful, harmonious, high quality and active lifestyles.

The Council will always seek to go above and beyond the minimum requirements set, where appropriate. This Statement of Community Involvement sets the Council's statutory duties for community involvement, as well as additional, non-statutory ways in which it makes best attempt to reach all members of the community.

This statement sets out the how, when and where you can engage with the consultation process to make important contributions heard and reflected in your area.

Councillor Samia Haq

Leader of the Borough Council

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (the Council) is committed to building a strong, empowered and active community to achieve high quality planning and development.
- 1.2 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is a formally adopted document that sets out how the Council will engage with local people, businesses and stakeholders in planning processes. Having members of the community fully engaged with local planning decisions and systems is a positive tool in shaping positive social, economic and environmental growth and improvement of the Borough.
- 1.3 The Council uses a range of communication channels to ensure community involvement happens in a timely an effective manner. This allows people to have an influence in planning the place they live, work and visit. This SCI responds to the Council's strategic objective 'Our Partners: to ensure we are engaged and listening to all sections of the community'. This also allows consultation to reach groups who have traditionally found it difficult to engage in the planning process, in turn giving the Council community feedback that best reflects its stakeholders.
- 1.4 The consultation practices contained in this SCI satisfy the statutory requirements set out in the relevant Legislation, as set out in 'The planning system and legal requirements' section of this report.
- 1.5 The Council intends to exceed the statutory requirements, where appropriate, to ensure wide and inclusive consultation to reflect local circumstances, the character and composition of the local community, however in certain circumstances the resources available may mean that only the statutory requirements are met.

2. The planning system and legal requirements

- 2.1 All Local Planning Authorities are required to produce an SCI under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This SCI set out the how, where and when consultation takes place in the planning process with persons who have an interest in development within their area. Key areas of consultation are on components of the Local Plan and development management decisions on planning applications.
- 2.2 Minimum requirements for consultation are set out in '*The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)*' (The Regulations) in the case of Planning Policy Documents and '*The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended)*' (DMPO) for planning applications.
- 2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework states that plans should '*be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees*'.
- 2.4 The Council adopted their first SCI in March 2006. There have been considerable changes since then, including the replacement of 'Local Development Frameworks' with 'Local Plans' and changes to the planning Regulations that set the ways in which the Government expects plans to be produced. The Local Plan contains the planning policies and proposals that will shape the future of the Borough. These policies and proposals are used to allocate or safeguard land for or against development, as well as to help inform the determination of planning applications.
- 2.5 When preparing planning policy documents and determining planning decisions, the Council must also comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.6 The Council is required to review its SCI regularly to ensure that it is up-to-date and robust. This SCI is the latest review and has enabled the Council to reflect on and update its methods of consultation based upon the techniques that have worked best in the Borough since the previous SCI's publication in 2019. This updated SCI demonstrates how the Council complies with the minimum legal requirements and standards for consultations and how, in most cases, exceeds them.
- 2.7 Once adopted, the Council will follow the procedures for consultation and engagement as set out in this SCI.

Duty to Co-Operate

- 2.8 Current Legislation and planning policy and guidance places great weight on the Duty to Cooperate. The Duty sets out how local authorities should engage with partnering organisations during the Plan making process. To ensure that the Duty is met, the Council will engage with its partners such as neighbouring Councils and government bodies throughout the formulation of its plans. Duty to Cooperate partners are listed in Appendix 2.

Local Development Scheme

- 2.9 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a regularly updated document outlining the local authority's programme of completion of planning related documents. The LDS for the Borough area establishes the programme for the preparation of, and consultation on, all the components of the Council's Development Plan, including the Local Plan.
- 2.10 The LDS document is available to view on the planning pages of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council website.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004

- 2.11 Members of the public have the statutory right, under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004, to request information held by the Council.
- 2.12 The Council always aims to make as much information accessible online through the website. If you cannot find information online, please do contact the Council in the first instance, however you have the right to request information held by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council under the FOI and EIR.

Privacy and data collection

- 2.13 The Council will maintain an address and personal contact information database of individuals, groups and other interested parties wishing to be informed when planning policy documents are published. The database will be kept up to date and amended as and when necessary. The information held on this database is done so in conformity with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Accessibility

- 2.14 The Council is committed to making its website accessible in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.
- 2.15 All documents and communication are, where possible, limited in their use of technical terms and jargon. However, the use of technical terms cannot be avoided when set out as a requirement under Legislation that the Council has a statutory to complete. A glossary of technical terms may be included at the end of reports published by the Council.
- 2.16 Most of the Council website can be navigated using speech recognition software.
- 2.17 For a step-by-step guide on how to access planning services on the website, such as how to make a planning application or comment on a planning application, please contact the Council's planning team by email planning@oadby-wigston.gov.uk or call us on 0116 288 8961.

- 2.18 If you require any information from the website in a different format, such as an accessible PDF, large print, language translation, audio recording or braille, please contact the Council by email communications@oadby-wigston.gov.uk or call us on 0116 288 8961 where staff also have access to a telephone translation service. If you contact the Council before you visit, we can arrange a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.
- 2.19 Please visit the Council's online accessibility statement for further information on how the Council fulfils accessibility requirements.

The need for review

- 2.20 As mentioned earlier, the need for review comes with the statutory duty to update the SCI every 5 years. The Council's last SCI was updated in 2019.
- 2.21 In general, there have been no major governmental changes in relation to consulting with the public regarding planning matters since the last updated SCI.
- 2.22 The only notable change to processes has been the transition towards a digital-first approach to communication with the public, largely seen as a natural incline resulting from the pandemic. Although the Council acknowledge the value of having in-person meetings, technology and the flexibility it allows for is recognised as a desired first approach to communication. Therefore, while the Council offices and hubs are open to in-person meetings on demand, digital pathways of communication are encouraged. Examples are through the website, phone calls and online meetings.

3. Planning Documents

- 3.1 Depending on the type of planning policy document or planning application being considered, there are a number of consultation bodies that the Council must notify and invite to make representations in order to comply with the Regulations set by Government.

Development Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.2 Development Plans can be made up of a number of separate 'Development Plan Documents (DPDs) or be a comprehensive Local Plan document. These provide strategic policies for the area's growth, non-strategic policies, policies maps and Site Allocations.
- 3.3 The Regulations set out that Duty to Cooperate partners should be consulted during the production of a Development Plan.
- 3.4 The Regulations also set out specific consultation bodies that the Council must consult in the production of a Development Plan document and / or a Supplementary Planning Document. Specific consultation bodies are listed in Appendix 3. Chapter 4 also contains further information regarding who is consulted and at what stage of document production.
- 3.5 At the Council's discretion, it may also consult with a number of other bodies that it deems appropriate to engage with at an appropriate time / stage of consultation. These are referred to as general consultation bodies within the Regulations and are listed in Appendix 4.
- 3.6 These lists may change as a result of amendments to the Regulations and / or by the Council choosing to update or amend its list of general consultation bodies. The Council therefore reserves the right to amend the details held within the Appendices for either of these reasons.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>

Planning Submissions

- 3.7 As set out in The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the Council is required to consult various organisations and bodies on planning applications. A complete list of these consultees can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/595/contents/made>

4. Who and how we consult – key stages of consultation

- 4.1 There are a wide range of consultation methods open to the Council when producing planning policy documents and determining planning applications.
- 4.2 In the case of planning policy documents, there is a distinction between ‘formal stages’ of plan production (where the nature of consultation is governed by the Regulations) and ‘ongoing consultation’ with the community as part of the development and assessment of emerging options. The type of consultation method will vary depending upon the stage of production and this document makes the distinction between consultation that is ‘required’ by the Regulations and that which is invited by the Council through its SCI over and above the minimum requirements. Table 2 in this section outlines the methods of communication for the statutory and non-statutory notification of the Local Plan process stages.
- 4.3 The Council is the ‘Local Planning Authority’ (LPA) for the area and is therefore responsible for the determination of most planning submissions, other than those determined by Leicestershire County Council. It is also responsible for producing up to date and robust planning policy documents, including the Local Plan. The minimum legal consultation requirements in relation to the production of planning policy documents at formal stages of consultation and in determining planning applications are set out below.
- 4.4 The Council regards the statutory requirements set out in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012) (as amended) as the minimum requirements for consultation. Along with being in accordance with Legislation, the Council will seek to go beyond the minimum requirements outlined throughout the plan preparation process where appropriate and when resources allow for it.

Local Plan Process

- 4.5 The Town and Country Planning Regulations set out the stages of plan production where considerable, well documented, consultation is required. The Regulations sets out the definitive process.
- 4.6 There are many opportunities for the community to be involved throughout the Local Plan process. The earlier people become involved, the greater the opportunity to influence the spatial strategy and direction of policies in the Local Plan.
- 4.7 Usually, Development Plan Documents require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). These documents are produced in tandem with the production of the Development Plan Documents to assess their economic, environmental and social impact.
- 4.8 The tables below set out the Local Plan process and indicates how SA / SEA / HRA can be aligned with plan production. The tables set out who will be consulted at each stage. For up to date information on the current stage at which the Local Plan process is at, please visit the Council website.

Table 1. Process and requirements for the production of a Local Plan

Stage 1: Issues and Options and Preferred Options. Includes the SA/ SEA / HRA. (Regulation 18)

There will be at least one 'formal' consultation, lasting for at least 6 weeks, for bodies identified to comment on the Plan and what it should contain. The following bodies will be notified and invited to consult on the 'formal' consultation:

- Specific consultation bodies (see Appendix 3 for full list)
- General consultation bodies (see Appendix 4 for full list)
- Residents or other persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area

At a minimum, bodies will be notified of the consultation period by a letter or email. Consultation documents will be available through the website and at the Council offices.

This is a stage of formal consultation. It should be noted that the Council may consult on more than one occasion during this Regulation 18 consultation stage, for example at Issues and Options stage and Preferred Options stage.



Stage 2: Pre-submission. Includes SA / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 19 and 20)

Before submitting a Local Plan, the Council must ensure the proposed Plan is available for inspection by bodies notified under Regulation 18.

All representations made under Regulation 18 will be available upon inspection of the Local Plan proposed.

Copies of the proposed Plan and its associated documents will be available for inspection through the website or at the Council offices for a minimum of 6 weeks. The specific and general consultation bodies invited to make representations under Regulation 18 will be notified of consultation on the draft Plan by a letter or email.

The Council invites comments for further representations about the proposed Plan.



Stage 3: Submission to the Secretary of State. Includes SA / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 22)

The Plan and accompanying documents are sent in electronic form to the Secretary of State. Once the LPA has submitted a Local Plan, the following will be publicly available:

- A copy of the proposed Plan and supporting documents that are, in the opinion of the LPA, relevant to the Plan's preparation.
- The submitted Policies Map (if the adoption would result in changes to the Adopted Policies Map and SA).
- A statement on the website and notification to specific and general consultation bodies that the proposed Plan, supporting documents and proposed Policies Map are available to view.
- A statement on the website setting out bodies invited and how they were invited to make representation under Regulation 18, a summary of the issues raised in representations and how representations made have been taken into account. The statement will also include if representations were made under Regulation 19 and 20, and if so the number of representations made with a summary of issues raised.
- Copies of representations made under Regulation 19 and 20.

The Council will also give notice to those persons who have requested the notification of submission of the draft Local Plan. This is not a consultation stage.



Stage 4: Independent examination of the Local Plan and its supporting documents including the SE / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 24)

Six weeks prior to the independent examination, the Council will provide a statement on the website of the date, time and place at which the hearing is held, as well as the name of the Inspector appointed to carry out the independent examination.

Any person who made a representation in accordance with Regulation 19 and 20 will be notified of the independent examination.

Should the Inspector require the Council to make main modifications to the Plan in order to make it 'Sound', it is likely that the Inspector will require the modifications to undergo further consultation (usually six weeks). This may be an additional informal opportunity to consult. Any representations submitted are then considered by the Inspector.



Stage 5: Proposed modifications

If main modifications are proposed, there is formal consultation with those who made representations in accordance with Regulation 19. The consultation period is usually 6 weeks and consultant bodies will be notified by letter or email. A public notice will also be posted on the website.

This is an additional informal opportunity to consult.



Stage 6: Publication of Inspector's Recommendations. (Regulation 25)

Once the Inspector's recommendations are received, all persons who requested to be notified will be given notice that the recommendations are available.

This is not a consultation stage.



Stage 7: Adoption of the Local Plan and its supporting documents including the SE / SEA / HRA. (Regulation 26)

The final version of the Local Plan will be presented to the Councillors at an appropriate committee to seek resolution to adopt.

Once adopted, the Plan and its accompanying evidence will be made available on the Council website along with an adoption statement and outline the places and times at which the Local Plan is available for inspection.

The following will be notified when the Plan is adopted:

- Secretary of State
- Council Members
- Duty to Co-operate partners (see Appendix 2 for full list)
- All persons who requested will be notified

This is not a consultation stage.

4.9 Different methods of communication on the Local Plan process are deployed by the Council to notify stakeholders of consultations and how to make a representation, and also notify the public on the current Local Plan stage. This variety of communication channels enables the Council to reach as many of its residents and stakeholders as possible, especially those otherwise hard to reach.

4.10 Table 2 below outlines methods of communication used, coded as:

- **statutory means of communication to bodies mentioned in Table 1**
- **non-statutory means of communication by which the Council may seek to announce and notify on the stage of the Local Plan**

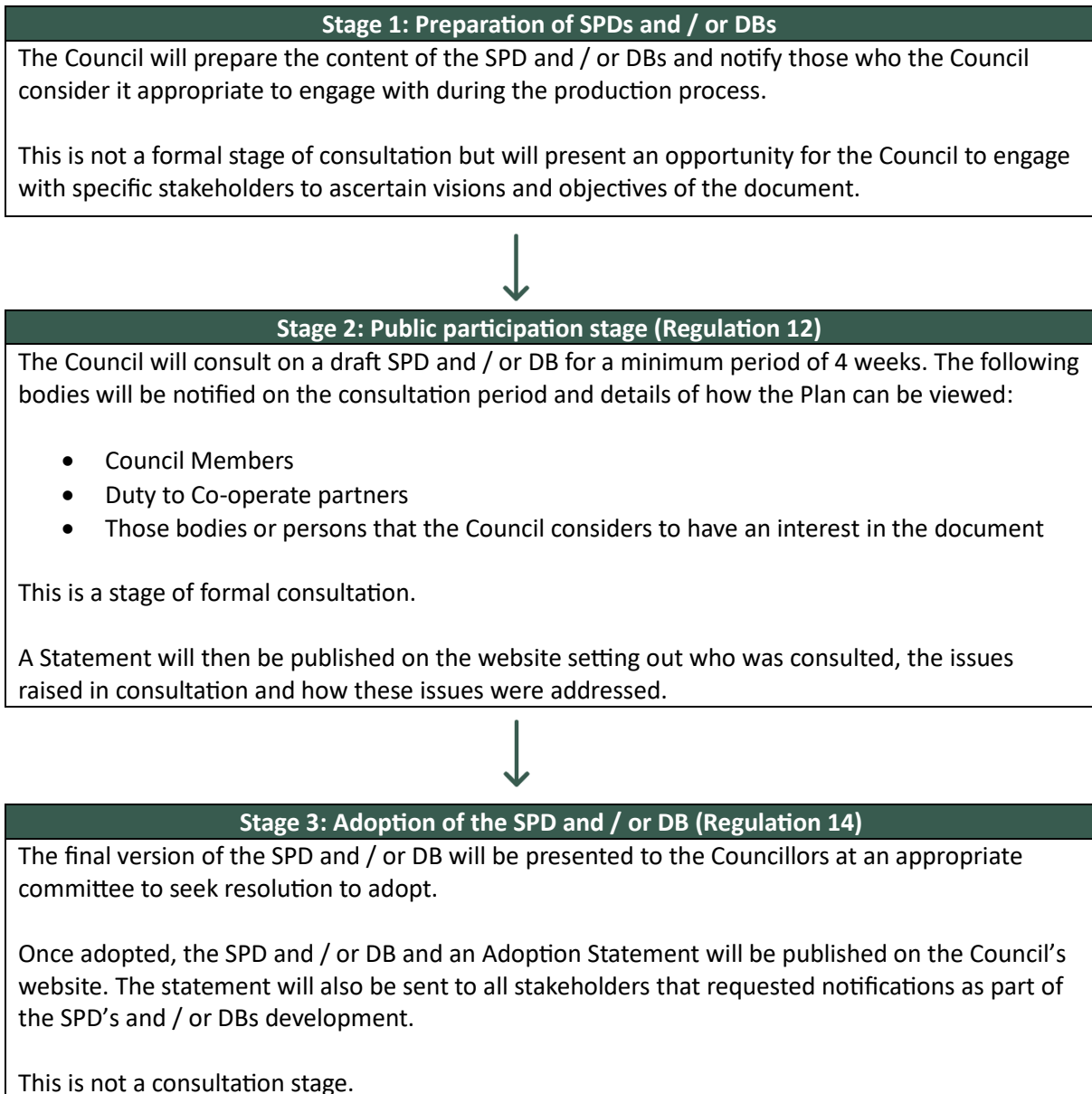
Table 2. Methods of communication in the Local Plan process

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Stage 7
Letter or Email or other virtual means	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council's website https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Press release to local newspaper, radio and regional TV.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Public events, forums and/or exhibitions.	Yes	Yes	Yes				
Stakeholder group meetings.	Yes	Yes					
Summary Leaflet prepared which may be circulated to households in the Borough.	Yes	Yes					
Council Newsletter article	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Social Media consultation notifications, for example Twitter and Facebook.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes
Advertisement of the consultation on the digital display screens.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			Yes

Supplementary Planning Document and / or Development Briefs Process

- 4.11 As part of the on-going production of planning documents, the Council will produce Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Development Briefs (DB). These documents seek to add greater depth to a planning area or topic and support planning policies as well as the Council’s objectives. Although SPDs and DB’s do not have the same status as Development Plan Documents and do not contain policies, they are important documents in decision making.
- 4.12 The Town and Country Planning Regulations set out the requirements for the production of SPDs and / or DBs. The requirements involve formal stages of involvement. The Regulations sets out the definitive process, however a summary of these requirements is set out below. The summary tables set out who will be consulted at each stage, and how they will be consulted.

Table 3. Process and requirements for the production of SPDs and DBs



- 4.13 Different methods of communication on the production of SPDs and DBs are deployed by the Council to notify stakeholders of consultations and how to make a representation at the relevant stages. This variety of communication channels enables the Council to reach as many of its stakeholders as possible, especially those otherwise hard to reach.
- 4.14 Table 4 below outlines methods of communication used, coded as:
- **statutory means of communication to bodies mentioned in Table 3**
 - **non-statutory means of communication by which the Council may seek to announce and notify on the process on the production of SPDs and / or DBs**

Table 4. Methods of communication used to notify on the production of a SPDs and / or DBs

	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Letter or Email or other virtual means	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council's website https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/		Yes	Yes
Press release to local newspaper, radio and regional TV.		Yes	Yes
Public events, forums and/or exhibitions.		Yes	
Stakeholder group meetings.		Yes	
Summary Leaflet prepared which may be circulated to households in the Borough.		Yes	
Council Newsletter article		Yes	Yes
Social Media consultation notifications, for example Twitter and Facebook.		Yes	
Advertisement of the consultation on the digital display screens.		Yes	

Representations

- 4.15 Representations help shape planning documents and form part of the robust evidence base used by the Council to justify the making of policies in the Local Plan.
- 4.16 The Local Planning Authority (LPA) must consider any representation made to them in response to invitations. Although the Council will consider all representations thoroughly, proposals may not always change as a result of representations received as the Council has the responsibility to achieve a balanced and effective suite of planning policy and guidance.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 4.17 There are two main mechanisms for neighbourhood planning – Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders.
- 4.18 Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and further strengthened by the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017. Neighbourhood plans must be prepared in accordance with Legislation set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and The Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016.
- 4.19 A Neighbourhood Plan is a way of helping local communities influence the planning of the area they live and work in. If a plan is prepared and agreed by the community by referendum, it will become part of the Development Plan for the Local Authority area and will be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.20 It is the full responsibility of the community forums or local groups in the Borough to prepare the Plan and to undertake an inclusive consultation. The Council has a duty to assist.

Planning Applications

- 4.21 The Council is aware of the importance of consultation with the community when it comes to considering and deciding formal planning submissions.
- 4.22 As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), the Council is required to consult various organisations and bodies and is advised to consult others depending on the type of planning application being considered.
- 4.23 The Borough Council deals with many hundreds of planning applications each year and the nature of the planning applications dealt with are wide ranging from householder and minor applications, to large scale mixed use proposals including residential, leisure, and other forms of development. The nature, scale and type of planning application submitted will determine how the Council will engage with the Community and other stakeholders.
- 4.24 Planning applications submitted to the Council are either determined at Development Control Committee by elected Council Members or they are delegated to Officers and are determined without the need to be reported at Planning Committee. When a planning application is to be considered at a Planning Committee, there may be the opportunity for interested parties to address

the Committee at the meeting prior to any decision being taken. Further information on this can be viewed on the Council's website.

- 4.25 Chapter 5 explains in more detail how the Council will engage with the community when determining planning applications.
- 4.26 Some planning applications can require special (or additional consultation) procedures due to their particular characteristics, including but not limited to:
- applications which are a departure from the Local Plan
 - applications which are classed as Major Developments, as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)
 - applications which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement
 - applications for Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and certain works that materially affect the character of Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings
 - applications affecting public Rights of Way.
- 4.27 There are some applications where there is no statutory requirement to consult the public. These include Certificates of Lawful Development, internal alterations to a Grade II listed building, advertisements, non-material amendments and approval of details.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 4.28 The Council offers a chargeable pre-application advice service for all planning applications. Pre-application discussions identify issues and requirements at an early stage and are beneficial for applicants to provide clarity as to the process and some degree of certainty where local planning policies and constraints are identified. Details of how to approach pre-application advice, including fees and how to request a meeting, can be found on the Council's website.
- 4.29 The Council cannot require a developer or householder to undertake pre-application discussions, or to engage with local residents and amenity groups, however it is advised as a 'good practice' approach. Pre-application discussions with the Council are encouraged for all development proposals.

Community Involvement

- 4.30 Community involvement on planning applications does not just involve the public. The Council must also consult the appropriate statutory bodies. Statutory bodies are those bodies which have particular powers in the policy making process. In deciding which statutory body is consulted, the Council must take into account the nature and location of the proposal. There are also a significant number of non-statutory bodies including local interest groups which the Council will consult in appropriate circumstances. The public, statutory consultees and non-statutory consultees have 21 days to make any comments they may have on a submission from the initial notification of an application. The results of any such consultation will be taken into consideration in the determination of any planning application.

- 4.31 In publicising planning applications, it is necessary for the Council to strike a balance between the consideration of cost, speed of decision making and providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment.
- 4.32 In the event that an application is significantly amended during its consideration, the Council may send a further round of consultation letters to nearby residents, to those who have already written in with comments and consultees. Further comments can then be submitted regarding the amendments.

What should comments cover?

- 4.33 Comments can be made to support, object, or make a general observation on planning application proposals. It must be noted, that the Council can only take into account material planning considerations within the determination of planning proposals and therefore would only encourage comments that relate to planning related observations only.
- 4.34 Comments which contain unacceptable language, discrimination or harassment of any kind, or contain any content that may be potentially libelous will not be accepted by the Council.
- 4.35 The Council does reserve the right to publish all comments received on a planning proposal.

Permitted Development

- 4.36 It is important to note that certain proposals do not need permission of the Council because these developments fall under 'Permitted Development' and are given permission by Central Government Legislation. What constitutes permitted development is detailed in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order (2015) (as amended). For any further information on what requires planning permission and what constitutes 'permitted development', it is advisable to speak to the Council's Planning Department before you undertake any work.

Petitions

- 4.37 The Council will accept petitions relating to plan-making and planning applications, however each signed petition will be considered as one representation and will have equal weight to any other representation reported on in officer reports.

Appeals

- 4.38 Anyone who has submitted a planning application has a right of appeal to the Secretary of State if an application is refused, not determined, or if the permission contains conditions that are considered to be unacceptable to the applicant. Details on how applicants can appeal against a decision are contained within all decision notices issued by the Council. Third parties do not have the right to appeal.

- 4.39 Upon receipt of an appeal and start date from the Planning Inspectorate, the Council may inform neighbours and all those who have made representations on the application that an appeal has been lodged. Appeals are examined by an Independent Planning Inspector.
- 4.40 An appeal may be considered either through an exchange of correspondence (known as written representations), at an informal hearing, or at a more formal Public Inquiry.
- 4.41 Any comments received during the original consideration of the application will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate. There may be the opportunity to make further representations on the appeal directly to the Planning Inspectorate, and the Council will seek to ensure that the same neighbour notifications as the original planning application are carried out.
- 4.42 If the matter is to be heard by an Inspector at an informal hearing or Public Inquiry, then objectors will be invited to attend the hearing / inquiry where, at the inspector's discretion, they may have the opportunity to make verbal submissions. The Appellant and the Borough Council also appear at the hearing or inquiry. All parties associated to the appeal are informed of the Inspector's decision if they have requested to be notified.

Leicestershire County Council

- 4.43 As mentioned, the Borough Council does not deal with all types of planning applications, as certain applications are the responsibility of Leicestershire County Council. The County Council will deal with applications relating to waste and minerals developments, as well as applications relating to County Council owned properties such as depots.

Planning Aid

- 4.44 Planning Aid provides independent professional advice and information on planning matters and is run by a network of volunteer caseworkers. It is aimed at individuals, community groups and other voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for private consultants. Planning Aid may be able to help you if you want to find out how to:
- apply for planning permission
 - object to or support another person's planning application
 - appeal against a refusal of planning permission
 - get involved in Local Development Document preparation
- 4.45 Contact details for Planning Aid can be found at: <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>
- 4.46 Another source of useful planning information is the Planning Portal. Planning Portal website details are as follows: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk>.

5. Who and how we consult – planning proposals further information

- 5.1 This Chapter follows on from the previous, with a more in-depth discussion on the methods used in consultation of planning proposals.
- 5.2 There are a wide range of consultation methods open to the Council when determining planning applications. The planning Legislation sets out the minimum requirements for public participation and the Council will notify all stakeholders and organisations (at least) as set out in the Regulations. The preferred method of consultation is by email, but where a person or organisation does not have an email address, a letter or other methods will be used.
- 5.3 Appendix 1 contains a list of the methods used by the Council and their associated benefits and disadvantages.
- 5.4 The statutory requirements for consultation with regards to planning applications are set out within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The Regulations require that planning applications are publicised by way of some or all of the following, depending on the type of application:
- neighbour notification letters
 - a notice in a local newspaper
 - a site notice
- 5.5 Some of the ways that the Council may look to achieve appropriate levels of publicity for an application are set out below.
- 5.6 **Neighbour notification by letter or email** - Statutory organisations and neighbours adjoining a site or otherwise directly affected may be targeted. The letter includes brief information about the proposals and gives guidance on how to comment.
- 5.7 **Site notices** – is the principal method of consultation and are a ‘formal’ requirement of the Regulations for applications which affect conservation areas, or for listed buildings, public rights of way and major applications. Site notices are posted on public land on or close to the site as soon as possible upon receipt of a valid application. These notices invite comments for a minimum of 21 days and may, in certain circumstances, be supplemented with letters to individual households. Letters are not statutory on all applications, however the Council will issue site notices on all relevant applications.
- 5.8 **Newspaper advertisements** - are a statutory requirement for applications in conservation areas, listed building, public rights of way and major applications.
- 5.9 **A Weekly List of Planning Applications** - is produced on the Council’s website which details every application received and validated. This information can be viewed on the website.
- 5.10 The Council’s Website is a useful tool to search for and view new planning applications via the online PublicAccess database. If you have any issues accessing the website, please call the Council on 0116 288 8961.

- 5.11 **Posting public notices and press releases** - the local press and radio broadcasters may be an option to communicate with the public on larger planning applications.
- 5.12 Applications can be made available for inspection at the Council offices upon request.
- 5.13 Customers can request face to face appointments to meet with one of our officers at one of the hubs outlined on the website. Customers are also encouraged to attend their local Library or internet café where internet is free to access the website.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Methods of consultation

Method	Benefit	Disadvantage
Make documents and supporting information available at the Council Offices and public libraries.	Consultation document, information and forms for submitting responses are free of charge to view and available during opening hours.	Not all stakeholders will be able to access this information due to limitations on their ability to travel etc. Also opening times can be limiting.
Make documents and supporting information available on the Council's website.	Information easily accessible from people's own homes and businesses, 24 hours a day.	Not all stakeholders will be able to access this information due to limitations on their access to the internet.
Hold Exhibitions and / or staffed Road Shows where practical and appropriate.	Publicises information in a user friendly way in a variety of locations. It also provides an opportunity for the public to have a conversation with Officers / the Council about the issues in hand, face to face.	Not all stakeholders will be able to attend these events. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Include information in a Summary Leaflet and send out to households in the Borough where appropriate, this could also include a questionnaire with collection boxes provided around the Borough.	Provides a brief summary of the document outlining the key headlines to inform plan preparation or to raise awareness of upcoming events or public consultations etc.	Not all residents will read the leaflet. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Council Newsletter	Newsletter could be distributed to all households in the Borough to alert people to upcoming major issues or planning consultations.	Not all residents will read the leaflet. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Attendance of Planning Officers at meetings and community forums.	Allows information to be displayed in public locations in local areas. Gives opportunities for representatives at meetings and forums to raise and discuss issues.	Not all stakeholders will be able to attend / be aware of these events. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Letters and emails sent to stakeholders and organisations.	A formal means of communication with those on the database; ensures communication is received.	Not all stakeholders have an email registered or will check their emails regularly.

Method	Benefit	Disadvantage
		Stakeholders address details may also be out of date.
On-line response form on the Council's website.	Comments can be submitted to the Council, quickly, at any time of the day, with no postage costs.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because it requires them to have access to the internet and an email account. There may also be a charge to the Council for its implementation.
Dedicated email address for planning policy matters.	Means of submitting comments and contacting the Council for further information and assistance for the public.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because it requires them to have access to the internet and an email account.
Press releases to local newspapers, radio and regional TV.	Information to the local community which stimulates debate.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because they may not see or hear it. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Posters around the Borough Including the Council's Digital Display Screens.	Information for the local community that may not be seen by other forms of communication. These can be displayed on Notice Boards, Bus Stops, and on Lamp Posts in the areas that are effected.	Not always easily accessible to all stakeholders because they may not be seen. They can also be removed or vandalised. This can also be a very costly and resource intensive consultation method.
Involving Elected Members and providing updates.	By informing Members of the latest publications or consultations, they will then be prepared to inform their constituents of the latest planning policy position.	Information presented may be missed or be misinterpreted.

Appendix 2 – Duty to Cooperate bodies

Relevant bodies to Oadby and Wigston Borough Council extracted from Part 2, Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) that must be consulted to conform to the Duty to Co-operate:

Local nearby Councils:

Local Authorities in the Housing Market Area

Blaby District Council

Charnwood Borough Council

Harborough District Council

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Leicester City Council

Melton Borough Council

North West Leicestershire District Council

Leicestershire County Council.

Other relevant bodies that may be consulted on:

Active Travel England

Environment Agency

Historic England

Natural England

Civil Aviation Authority

Homes England

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB)

Office of Rail and Road

National Highways

Leicestershire County Council Highway Department

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership

Appendix 3 – Specific consultation bodies

In accordance with Government Regulations, and depending on the scale or nature of a submitted planning application the Borough Council as Local Planning Authority may have a statutory duty to consult the following organisation or bodies, however, notwithstanding any formal requirements to consult these bodies they may also be consulted where the Borough Council considers that they may have a relevant interest in any planning application or document:

This list is not intended to be definitive and it may be appropriate to consult other groups not listed.

Local nearby Councils:

Blaby District Council

Harborough District Council

Leicester City Council

Leicestershire County Council

Other relevant bodies:

Active Travel England

Coal Authority

Canal and River Trust

Control of major-accident hazards competent authority (COMAH)

Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy

Environment Agency

Forestry Commission

The Gardens Trust

Health and Safety Executive

Highways England

Historic England

Homes England

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board (LLR ICB)

Leicestershire Police

Natural England

Network Rail

Relevant Telecommunication Companies

Relevant Utility Companies

Severn Trent Water

Sports England

Theatres Trust

The Crown Estate

Appendix 4 – General consultation bodies

This list is not intended to be definitive (it gives an example of the likely groups) and these, or other groups, may be consulted when appropriate.

Category	General consultation bodies
Architecture, Design and Heritage Interests	Local Groups and Organisations*, inc. Civic / Historical Societies
Business and economic Development Organisations	Confederation of British Industry (CBI) Chambers of Commerce, East Midlands Chamber
Countryside / Rural Organisations	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, The Countryside Charity National Farmers Union Rural Community Council for Leicestershire and Rutland
Emergency Services	Leicestershire Constabulary Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service
Environmental Protection and Conservations Organisations	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) The National Trust
Health Organisations	Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board
Housing Providers and Organisations	Home Builders Federation
Libraries	Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries
Major Landowners	The Crown Estate University of Leicester
Media Organisations	BBC Radio Leicester
Other Government Organisations	H M Prison Services
Other Voluntary Bodies / Charities	British Red Cross Citizens Advice Bureau Guide Dogs for the Blind Association
Planning Consultancies	National and Local Planning Consultancies that have registered their interest

Postal Services	Royal Mail Group Limited
Racial, Ethnic, National, Religious and Minority Groups Representatives and Interests	Local Groups and Organisations where requested
Retailers	National and Local Retailers that have registered their interest
Services for the Disabled or those with Special Needs	Equality and Human Rights Commission Mind
Services for the Elderly	Age UK
Service Providers and Conservation Bodies	National Grid plc
Sport and Leisure Organisations	Sport England Active Together
Telecommunication Groups	Relevant Groups and Organisations
Tourism	Go Leicestershire
Transport Undertakings and Interests	Network Rail Local Bus Companies
Youth Organisations	Schools Youth Council

Appendix 5 – Government consultation bodies

Home Office

Ministry of Defence

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities

Ministry of Justice

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Department for Education

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Department of Health and Social Care

Department for Transport

Department of Work and Pensions

Appendix 6 – Glossary of terms

Adoption: The final confirmation of a Plan and its policies being deemed acceptable by the Council.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): Is a report that measures the ‘success’ of planning policies and assesses plan making performance.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Document subject to independent examination, which will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA): An evaluation tool which analyses the effect that a policy or procedure will have on a particular group of people to highlight whether their needs are being met and if there are any issues requiring further action.

Independent Examination: Development Plan Documents will be examined by an Independent Inspector whose role is to assess whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate, legal and procedural requirements and whether it is sound.

Local Development Scheme (LDS): The Council’s programme for preparing planning documents.

Local Plan: The document setting out the overall planning strategy, policies and proposals for the Borough area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): The NPPF sets out the Government’s National planning policies and how these are expected to be applied at a local level.

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended): The Regulations that set out the process by which the Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared.

Planning Inspectorate: A government body whose work involves processing planning and enforcement appeals and holding examinations into Development Plan Documents.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): Document setting out when, with whom and how consultation will be undertaken on Local Development Documents.

Supplementary Planning Document: Document that expands on policies and proposals set out in the Local Plan.

Stakeholder: A person, group, organisation, company etc with an interest in or potentially affected by planning decisions in the Borough.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): Document setting out the appraisal of plans and policies to ensure that their potential impact is assessed and that they reflect sustainable development objectives.

Test of Soundness: A series of questions the Independent Inspector asks during the Independent Examination of the Local Plan to assess whether it has been positively prepared, justified, effective, and if it is consistent with national policy.

The Council: Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Town and Country Planning (Local Plans) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended): The Regulations that set out the process by which the Local Plans and SPDs must be prepared.

Appendix 7 – Contacts

You can contact the Planning Department by telephoning the Council , or by emailing or writing us:

Tel: 0116 288 8961

Email (Development Management - Applications):

planning@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Email (Planning Policy):

planningpolicy@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Postal Address:

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Brocks Hill Council Offices
Washbrook Lane
Oadby
Leicester
LE2 5JJ

Appendix 8 – Further information

Legislation

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Latest available (revised) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents>

Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents>

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/contents>

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/596/contents>

National Policy / Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework, sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

National Planning Practice Guidance, sets out the government's guidance for implementing policies set out in the NPPF. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Planning Aid, provides independent professional advice and information on planning matters and is run by a network of volunteer caseworkers. It is aimed at individuals, community groups and other voluntary groups who cannot afford to pay for private consultants. <http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid/>

Planning Portal, is the national home of planning and building Regulations information and the national planning application service: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/>

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Planning, outlines the way planning issues are dealt with by the Council. <https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/planning>

Building Control, provides advice and assistance to achieve quality of design and construction in buildings in accordance with The Building Regulations and associated Legislation. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is part of the Leicestershire Building Control Partnership, which is based at Blaby District Council. <https://www.blaby.gov.uk/building-control/>



Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL

EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy/Function:		This is new
		This is a change to an existing policy
		This is an existing policy, Function, not previously assessed
	X	This is an existing policy/function for review

Date of screening	6 November 2023
--------------------------	-----------------

1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

The Council is committed to building a strong, empowered and healthy community to achieve high quality planning and development.

It is intended that this Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) will allow all local people, businesses and stakeholders to become fully engaged in the planning process in order for the local planning system to be a positive tool in shaping the future growth and improvement of the Borough.

The document sets out the Council's approach to involving and consulting local people and stakeholders in the planning process, more specifically the preparation of the various components of the Local Plan and in making development management decisions on planning applications.

2. Are there external considerations?

e.g. Legislation/government directive etc

Relevant legislation and national guidance.

3. Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?

All planning applicants, businesses and residents who are seeking / proposing change or are wishing to comment during the preparation of the Council's (relevant) planning policy documents.

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom?

The SCI will ensure that consultation and participation takes place in a timely manner and that a range of involvement techniques are in place to allow people to have a real influence over planning in the Borough.

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

No previous public consultations have taken place. The current draft of the revised Statement of Community Involvement, subject to Member approval, will be subject to a 8 week public consultation commencing on Wednesday 13 December 2023.

6. Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of Inequalities/negative impacts?

Consider and identify any evidence you have -equality data relating to usage and satisfaction levels, complaints, comments, research, outcomes of review, issues raised at previous consultations, known inequalities) If so please provide details.

No.

7. Could a particular group be affected differently in either a negative or positive way?

Positive – *It could benefit*

Negative – *It could disadvantage*

Neutral – *Neither positive nor negative impact or not sure.*

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Age	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Gender Reassignment	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Sex	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Sexual Orientation	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Religion/Belief	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally

Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive – it is considered that the document will positively affect all residents and businesses that wish to participate in public planning consultations equally
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8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?

e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes, homeless?

None apparent.

9. Are there any human rights implications?

Yes/No (If yes, please explain)

No.

10. Is there an opportunity to promote equality and/or good community relations?

Yes/No (If yes, how will this be done?)

No.

11. If you have indicated a negative impact for any group is that impact legal?

i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation

N/A.

12. Is any part of this policy/service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

None apparent.

13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?

No.

14. Date by which a Part 2 full Equality Assessment is to be completed with actions.

N/A.

Please note that you should proceed to a Part 2, the full Equality Impact Assessment if you have identified actual, or the potential to cause, adverse impact or discrimination against different groups in the community.

We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out and a full equality assessment **is not required*** (please delete as appropriate).

Completed by: Lisa Chevallereau
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date: 06 November 2023

Completed by: Jamie Carr
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date: 06 November 2023

Completed by: Adrian Thorpe
(*Head of Service*)

Date: 08 November 2023

Equality Assessments shall be published on the Council website with the relevant and appropriate document upon which the equality assessment has been undertaken.

Agenda Item 9



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Procurement Policy (2023 - 2026)**

Report Author(s): **Ben Wilson (Corporate Project, System & IT Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	To present the updated Procurement Policy for Oadby and Wigston Council for approval by PFD Committee.
Report Summary:	The Procurement Policy sets out the key roles and responsibilities for procurement across the Council including the process staff should follow, the consideration of local purchasing, risk management and documenting purchasing and tenders appropriately.
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report and appendix 1 be approved by Committee.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2635 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Bev Bull (Head Of Finance / Acting Chief Finance Officer – S151) (0116) 257 2649 bev.bull@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ben Wilson (Corporate Project, System & IT Manager) (0116) 257 2711 ben.wilson@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1)</p> <p>Our Communities (SO2)</p> <p>Our Economy (SO3)</p> <p>Our Environment (SO4)</p> <p>Our Partners (SO5)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)</p> <p>Customer & Community Focused (V1)</p> <p>Proud of Everything We Do (V2)</p> <p>Collaborative & Creative (V3)</p> <p>Resourceful & Resilient (V4)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	<p>Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1)</p> <p>Key Supplier / Partnership Failure (CR2)</p> <p>Reputation Damage (CR4)</p> <p>Regulatory Governance (CR6)</p>
Equalities and Equalities	There are no implications directly arising from this report.

Assessment (EA):	EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Procurement Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Local Authorities have a duty to spend public funds in the most cost-effective way ensuring consideration is given to the spending of money in the local area and to ensure the organisation remains compliant with legislation.
- 1.2 The Council should have in place a policy which sets out its approach to procurement. This is proposed in Appendix 1, Procurement Policy.
- 1.3 Procurement is the act of sourcing suppliers and purchasing goods or services from those suppliers. It can include negotiating and bidding, contract management, and tendering.
- 1.4 The Council has financial thresholds within its Contract Procedure Rules that explains how the Council is expected to spend money within those financial thresholds.
- 1.5 The Council must abide by the 'Public Contracts Regulations 2015' legislation.
- 1.6 This policy, and the periodic review hereafter, ensures the Councils approach is up to date with legislation and with current best practices.

2. Procurement Policy

- 2.1 The policy has been created to ensure all employees who are responsible for purchasing follow the same approach, whilst ensuring best value for money is achieved.
- 2.2 This policy has been benchmarked against other Local Authorities of a similar size to Oadby & Wigston.
- 2.3 The policy also has consideration to the benefits to local spending and highlights the need to evaluate against the lowest price offered to ensure the Council is spending money in the most effective way.
- 2.4 The policy states the tender rules and guidelines associated to expenditure for a Local Authority.
- 2.5 The policy gives indication to the tender lifecycle whilst listing the roles and responsibilities

of staff throughout the process, including the legal and finance section.

2.6 The policy promotes positive risk management & includes information relating to the social value of purchasing locally.

2.7 It is imperative that all expenditure is logged, promoted/published according to legislation, and that the information is easily accessible, something this policy considers and ensures.

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council Procurement Policy

December 2023 - 2026

PFD Committee – 5 December 2023

Oadby & Wigston | Our borough -
the place to be

Procurement Policy 2023

Document Details:		Date:	
Author:	Ben Wilson	1 November 2023	
Version:	Final Version	Review date: 01 November 2026	
Approved By:	Sal Khan	23 November 2023	
Approved By S151:	Bev Bull	23 November 2023	
Comms Team published	Awaiting approval at PFD	TBC	
Committee Date for Approval	PFD Committee	Date: 5 December	
Approved By Members	TBC	Date: 5 December	
Document Review:			
Version	Amendment	By	Date
Draft Version 1	Draft publication	Ben Wilson	18 August 2023
Final Version	Final amendments complete	Ben Wilson	20 November 2023

Section 1: Background.....

1.1 Introduction.....

1.2 Principles.....

1.3 Influences.....

1.4 Links to Legislation and Guidance.....

Section 2: Procurement Policy.....

2.1 The Procurement Lifecycle.....

2.2 Thresholds and Procurement Types.....

2.3 Procurement Policy Principles in Practice.....

2.4 Fraud, Risk Management and Other Considerations.....

2.5 Process Summary.....

Section 3: Further Information and Accessibility.....

3.1 Further Information.....

3.2 Accessibility.....

Section 1: Background

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Like all local authorities the Council is required to commission and procure a wide range of supplies, services and works to support its activities, from back-office functions to public facing front line services. Whether it is called procurement, commissioning, purchasing, contracting or buying, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council spends approximately £14 Million a year on obtaining a range of supplies, services and works from the external market.

1.1.2 As such the Council undertakes a number of procurement exercises every year. This includes undertaking tendering exercises compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and further competitions from existing framework agreements. There are also a number of examples of functions being commissioned with community and voluntary organisations.

1.1.3 But tender exercises account for a small proportion of the Council's purchases, with the vast majority being below the tender threshold detailed in the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. However, it should be noted that all expenditure should be carried out in the most appropriate way to remain compliant, best value for money and with considerations to local benefits and social value.

1.2 Principles

1.2.1 With such significant spend it is imperative that the Council has in place robust arrangements for ensuring that its supplies, products, and services are procured or commissioned in a way that provides Value for Money. Ensuring Value for Money means the Council will take into account the optimum combination of quality and "whole life" cost.

1.2.2. This document provides a policy framework for the processes and resource allocation of the organisation in its procurement of works, supplies and services. The policy is intended to, and must, be used in conjunction with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4, Section 7 of the Constitution, and having regard to the Council's Financial Regulations, as set out in Part 4, Section 8 of the Constitution.

1.2.3 It incorporates methods and techniques designed to meet the varying requirements of the Council. The policy will guide officers in making the right decisions **and engage with colleagues and Members as appropriate** when undertaking contracting activities, while complying with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which form part of the Council's Constitution.

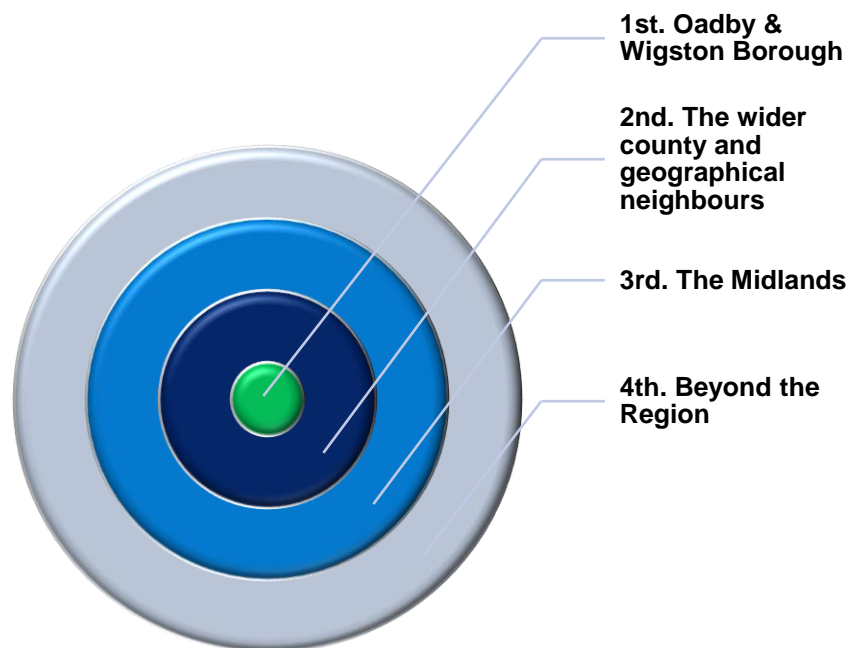
1.2.4 The Council will continue its approach of using best practice procurement approaches and processes. This will assist in the delivery of high-quality services to support strategic priorities while ensuring Value for Money. Long term sustainability will also be promoted, as will the public duties to promote equality of opportunity both within the Council's operations and through the impact of its buying decisions, using effective selection and management of its relationships with its partners and supply chain.

1.2.5 The Council recognises its responsibilities to local communities including promoting local economic development through its Corporate Plan. Local businesses should be able to compete for work alongside contractors from outside the area and this should be considered when developing procurement requirements. Maximising opportunities for local businesses and organisations, whilst still ensuring compliance with applicable procurement regulations, is a key principle throughout this document, and is detailed further in paragraph 2.4.3.3.

1.2.6 Specifically defining what “local” can be is difficult given the geographical location of the Borough, however this can bring opportunities through easy access to neighbouring counties and the East Midlands. What is local should be considered specifically in the context of any given procurement process based on an understanding of the local and national market, which is significant as it will be relevant in the shaping of the appropriate lots for the procurement process.

1.2.7 Where appropriate the local focus should be on the Borough of Oadby & Wigston extending to direct geographical neighbours and the wider county of Leicestershire, then into the Midlands region and beyond. References to “local” within this policy refer to consideration of the appropriate area of focus in the order as illustrated in Table 1 below.

Tab 1: What is local?



1.3 Influences

1.3.1 Several internal drivers have also been taken into account in the policy, building on the implementation of the Council's previous Procurement Strategies.

1.3.2 The Council has a well embedded ethos of efficiency and effective resource management. This revolves around the fundamental approach of analysis of evolving internal and external needs to shape delivery models, which may in turn lead to commissioning or procurement (using the most appropriate model) of services from providers in the public, private, voluntary or community sector.

1.3.3 Several external influences have also been taken into account in the preparation of this policy, including the following:

- As a result of Central Government's continuing commitment to reducing the national budget deficit, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council has faced ongoing reductions in its budget settlements from Government.
- The public duty to promote equality of opportunity.
- The National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England 2018 which sets out a vision for local government procurement, and encourages all councils in England to engage with the delivery of outcomes in three key areas:
 - (i) Showing Leadership:** Engaging councillors; engaging senior managers; working with partners; engaging strategic suppliers
 - (ii) Behaving commercially:** Creating commercial opportunities; managing contracts and relationships; managing strategic risk
 - (iii) Achieving community benefits:** Obtaining social value; engaging local SMEs and micro-businesses; enabling voluntary and community sector engagement

This Procurement Policy is designed to be an enabler for the Council's delivery of the National Procurement Strategy and the themes above are integrated throughout the Policy.

- The Localism Act which gives Community and Voluntary groups the right to express an interest in taking over the running of a local service. According to the Act, the authority must consider and respond to this challenge.
- The Public Services (Social Value) Act requires all public commissioning bodies in England and Wales to consider how the services they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.
- The Government's Transparency Code which encourages local authorities to make public data, including contract information and expenditure data, openly available.

1.4 Links to Legislation and Guidance

1.4.1 This policy is intended to, and must, be used having regard to applicable National procurement legislation and practices.

1.4.2 Specifically, the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which came into force on 26th February 2015.

1.4.3 National interpretations and guidance on the implementation of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 are provided by the Cabinet Office. This is regularly updated.

1.4.4 The Procurement Bill, which will reform and replace the existing Public Contracts Regulations is, at the date of drafting this policy, going through Parliament. The Procurement Bill and supporting documents can be accessed via the [Parliamentary website](#). The Government has published information on how public procurement will change to improve the way supplies, services and works are procured for the public sector. The [Transforming Public Procurement page](#) explains what the new procurement regime will mean and provides more detail about the learning and development programme that is supporting its introduction.

1.4.5 Advice for public authorities, businesses, and other organisations on the outcome for public procurement policy from 1st January 2021 has been published.

1.4.6 The key change is the introduction of a new e-notification service called “Find a Tender” which will be used to post and view public sector procurement notices. <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk>

1.4.7 The Government has announced the launch of its refreshed [National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England](#), and [accompanying toolkit](#), to support local authorities to maximise opportunities in their supply chains. The role of procurement in local government remains pivotal in maximising opportunities and managing the challenges faced by our sector and our communities. The strategy introduces new approaches, emphasises better use of data, greater collaboration to deliver value, and how to unlock even more benefits through social value,

1.4.8 The following resources provide useful information to support officers when considering procurement and related issues:

- Link to [Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#)
- Link to [Procurement Policy Notes](#)
- Link to [Public Sector Procurement Advice for Contracting Authorities](#)
- Link to [Transforming Public Procurement](#)
- Link to [Social Value in Procurement](#)
- Link to [Local Government Procurement: Fraud and Corruption Risk Review](#)
- Link to [Competition and Markets Authority](#)

1.4.9 Procurement advice and guidance can also be obtained internally by contacting the Council’s Corporate Project Section.

Section 2: Procurement Policy

2.1 The Procurement Lifecycle

2.1.1 This section summarises the principles of procurement and commissioning which all officers should have an awareness of however specific context and additional information is detailed in the subsequent sections.

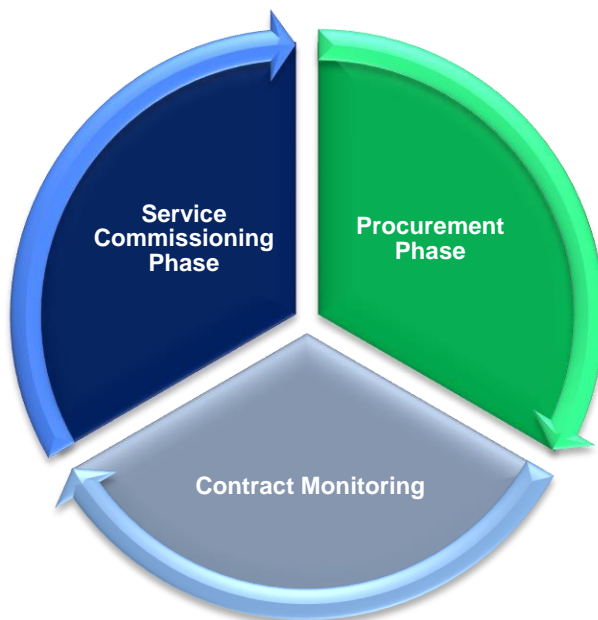
2.1.2 The Council takes the approach of devolved responsibility for procurement, i.e., Service / Contract managers are ultimately responsible for their own budgets and therefore all associated purchases in compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules.

2.1.3 Procurement is the process of obtaining supplies, services, and works, but it has a far wider scope than “purchasing”, “buying” or “commissioning”. Officers should take a holistic approach to service delivery, by assessing what users really need from services and securing services or products that best meet that need utilising the most appropriate model.

2.1.4 This policy considers procurement in a way that encompasses the full life cycle of the asset or service contract. The “life cycle” is the period from the initial definition of the business need through to the end of the useful life of the asset or service contract.

2.1.5 The key stages are illustrated in Figure 1. These are intended to be cyclical.

Fig 1: Procurement Lifecycle:



2.1.6 There is support available to all Service / Contract managers, however it is important to define the responsibilities for procurement to ensure the process is as effective as possible and achieves its outcomes for the Council and its residents.

2.1.7 Service / Contract managers should think about whether any specific procurement could be considered as “non-routine”, for example: is of particular importance; is of significant financial value; or has potential for significant impact on the organisation or the Borough. Where a procurement is **non-routine the relevant Chief Officer and PFD Member must be engaged at the outset of the procurement lifecycle**, subject to any potential conflicts of interest. It should also be considered whether a Member working / steering group is appropriate.

2.1.8 Taking the three phases of the Procurement Lifecycle as detailed in Figure 1, officers should consider each of the stages within each Lifecycle phase noting the responsibility for each. The stages and the lead responsibilities are shown in Figure 2 below (noting that **colleagues and / or PFD Members** may also need to be engaged within these phases as appropriate):

Figure 2: Procurement Lifecycle Stages and Responsibility



2.1.9 The following sections fully detail the principles and purpose of each of the phases and stages shown in Figure 2. Officers must pay regard to these when considering any procurement.

2.1.10 Service Commissioning Phase

2.1.10.1 The “Service Commissioning” phase covers the first 3 stages of the full life cycle and includes the review and analysis of relevant data to support an evidenced based decision-making process. It is essential to understand at this stage what the intended outcomes are (i.e. what is to be achieved rather than how it is to be achieved).

2.1.10.2 In the “Identify Need” stage, service managers should assess the need for the function they are considering for procurement at an early stage. They should look at the "as-is" provision, forecast and manage demand and take account of any potential Business Transformation that could be undertaken.

2.1.10.3 The “Commercial Assessment” stage should identify the market (which may include soft market testing), engage in market development where necessary, undertake risk assessment and review budgets or sources of funding. Only once these two phases have been properly considered can the most appropriate delivery model be identified.

2.1.10.4 These models could include procuring or commissioning the service (or elements of) from the external market, outsourcing, or selling the service as a going concern, sharing services internally / externally or setting up as a social enterprise or joint venture.

2.1.10.5 Please note that if the analysis in this phase results in a function or service that is to be revised or delivered in a different way, then an Equality and Health Impact Assessment may be required.

2.1.10.6 Where the analysis demonstrates a particularly complex approach to procurement is required, the estimated contract value is more than £200,000 or any other potential need for a corporate level project-based approach is identified, then a report should be provided to the next available Corporate Project Assurance Board (CPAB) meeting to agree an appropriate project management approach. This could include the project being added to the Corporate Programme and reported to the CPAB on an ongoing basis. Service managers should consider, particularly in complex procurements, whether the necessary technical resource is available in-house or whether external consultancy support is required to ensure an effective process.

2.1.11 Procurement Phase

2.1.11.1 The “Procurement” phase can only commence once service managers have comprehensively established that procurement or commissioning with the external market is appropriate. Service Managers should ensure that appropriate staff resource and technical capability are allocated to the Procurement (and Contract Monitoring) phase in order for specifications and other technical documents to be collated and prepared. These documents in turn contribute to identifying the most appropriate procurement method, which may include full tendering, joint procurement with other organisations or accessing framework agreements (by direct call-off or further competition as appropriate).

2.1.11.2 It is important to ensure that in any procurement or commissioning process, the selection phase is made as simple as possible and proportionate to the scale and complexity of the contract. This will help smaller organisations to compete for contracts, while still allowing the Council to identify suitable providers and manage risk appropriately. Service Managers are responsible for managing their procurements, and the Corporate Project team will provide the associated advice and guidance on the undertaking and managing of a tender process in compliance with the applicable legislation.

2.1.12 Contract Monitoring

2.1.12.1 Once the Procurement phase is over, the relationship between the Council and supplier begins. **Service Managers are responsible for mobilising the contract and the works / supplies / services with the contractor. Service Managers are also responsible service/contract managers upon award of a contract to ensure that the draft contract documentation used in the procurement process is fully completed to enable legal services to engross the agreement.**

2.1.12.2 "Service Managers" are also "Contract Managers" and officers will need to make sure that they provide an appropriate level of resource throughout the contract duration to manage this element to build and develop relationships with suppliers so that the return on investment is maximised.

2.1.12.3 All contracts should be managed, but not all contracts will require the same level of resource to manage them. Service managers should prioritise the key strategic contracts and regularly monitor and report on their performance to ensure that these contracts are achieving the Corporate Priorities.

2.1.12.4 This phase involves the mobilisation of the contract and the ongoing operation and management of the contract for the duration of the contract term. This includes monitoring the performance and cost of the contract (including the reporting of management information) and managing technical or financial variations where applicable. Where contract potential disputes arise, these should be referred to the Legal Team for support as necessary.

2.1.12.5 The phase concludes with a review of the performance of the contract, ahead of the contract expiry so that the procurement process can move cyclically into the need identification phase for future delivery of the service.

2.2 Thresholds and Procurement Types

2.2.1 All contracts for purchase by the Council will fall under the definition of Works, Supplies or Services.

- **Works:** In general, this will include the execution of building or engineering projects. It can range from civil engineering or construction projects right through to the installation of fixtures / fittings or work such as plastering or joinery.
- **Supplies:** The definition of supplies is broad but could include contracts for the purchase of goods such as consumable items.
- **Services:** This will include any proposed public service contract. This is a wide-ranging definition, but examples could include waste collection or recycling contracts.

2.2.2 The procurement process the Council is required to follow when purchasing works, supplies or services is dependent upon the type and estimated value of the contract. For 'lower value' contracts, quotations will be obtained, and the budget manager and relevant Head of Service will make the decision as to which supplier to award the contract to. This decision will normally be based on best value for money.

2.2.3 For all other contracts, the proposed works, supplies or services will be advertised as widely as possible. Suppliers will be asked to express their interest in applying and will then be invited to tender for the contract. Tender documents will be evaluated against pre-determined criteria to find the successful candidate.

2.2.4 Where permissible and appropriate, potential suppliers may be invited to complete a Selection Questionnaire (SQ) before being invited to tender for a contract. Based on the SQs submitted, a short-list will be produced, and these potential suppliers will then be invited to tender for the contract.

2.2.5 All public sector bodies including local authorities are also subject to national procurement regulations that govern how they may purchase supplies, works or services over a specific value. The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 detail fully the requirements for undertaking procurement procedures which are above these thresholds and impose only limited requirements for below threshold procurements.

2.2.6 Figure 3 below details the thresholds that govern what procurement procedure must be used as set out in the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules.

Figure 3: Procurement Thresholds

TYPE OF CONTRACT / ESTIMATED VALUE		PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE
Works	Supplies / Services	
Up to £3,000 (exclusive of VAT)	Up to £3,000 (exclusive of VAT)	One oral quotation (confirmed in writing where the total value exceeds £500)
£3,001 to £50,000 (exclusive of VAT)	£3,001 to £50,000 (exclusive of VAT)	Three written quotations
£50,001 to £5,336,936 (inclusive of VAT)	£50,001 to £213,476 (inclusive of VAT)	Invitation to tender to at least three, and normally no more than six candidates
£5,336,937* (inclusive of VAT) and above	£213,477* (inclusive of VAT) and above	Follow the above threshold procurement procedure

2.2.7 For further advice and guidance on choosing procurement procedures please contact a member of the Council’s Corporate Project Team.

2.2.8 Procurement at the Council is decentralised across the different service areas and departments of the Council, whereby each Service works within our Contract Procedure Rules, Financial Regulations and applicable National legislation, and individual budget managers are able to procure supplies and services.

2.2.9 As every budget manager has ownership of procurement this can result in different approaches being undertaken to procurement, demand management and supplier relationship management. This can make it difficult for the Corporate Project Team to keep fully informed of future requirements or develop core corporate contracts on behalf of the authority. To allow effective forward planning of procurement exercises by the Corporate Project Team, all future potential procurements (including new purchases and where current contracts are expiring) should be documented by services as part of the annual service planning process, and the contracts register kept up to date by contract managers.

2.2.10 To support the effective co-ordination of the programme of procurements the Council’s Corporate Project Team will co-ordinate a Council-wide operational procurement planner capturing all relevant information on all forthcoming procurement processes building on the contracts register. Service / Contract

managers must provide the necessary information to inform this planner. Forthcoming procurements must be on the Procurement Planner. This is to ensure that the process can be initiated in a timely manner, and that the associated colleagues (for example Legal and Finance) have sufficient opportunity to put the necessary resource in place to provide the relevant support.

2.2.11 The Corporate Project Team will continue to provide relevant training for key procurers and implement and manage appropriate systems across the organisation, standardising the way in which procurement is undertaken and to provide procurers with the tools and knowledge to make their specified purchase in the most appropriate way. This could include looking to share resources with other authorities. The Corporate Project Team provides co-ordinated corporate support by:

- Providing an experienced skill and knowledge base.
- Providing project management support and other advice and guidance to support Service Managers to Service Managers undertaking procurements.
- Supporting the administering of the tendering process in higher value (i.e. above £50,000) procurement exercises.
- Ensuring best value and best practice.
- Collaborating with other procurement organisations.

2.2.12 Where estimated contract values exceed the tender threshold, having established the need to procure and compiled a detailed specification, procuring officers should liaise with the Corporate Project Team for advice on timescales at the earliest opportunity, bearing in mind that a full tender process can take upward of three months.

2.2.13 Procuring officers should adhere to the timetables compiled, as delays in providing information (for example specification documents or other technical information), will delay procurement processes leading to the risk of contracts not being let in time, which in turn leads to the potential for service failure. To mitigate this risk, services and departments should ensure that appropriate staff resource and technical capability are allocated to the procurement exercise to liaise with the Corporate Project Team throughout the process. Procuring officers should also liaise with the Financial and Legal teams at the outset.

2.3 Procurement Policy Principles in Practice

2.3.1 The Procurement Process

2.3.1.1 There are several officers that may have involvement in, or take responsibility for, procurement processes – for the purposes of this policy the term “Budget Manager” has been used to describe the officer with overall responsibility for the contract being procured. Elements of the procurement process can be delegated to an alternative technical officer or contract manager.

2.3.1.2 Once budget managers have gone through the relevant assessment of procurement needs as described in the Service Commissioning phase of the Procurement Lifecycle (**Figure 2**) the following points should be considered before undertaking procurement exercises of any value:

- **Confirm the need for procurement:**
 - What do you want to buy?
 - Do you need to buy it?

- Can the service being procured be delivered in a different way prior to the procurement to make the purchase better value for money?
 - Are there any lessons learned from previous contract issues or service delivery issues that should be factored into specifications, contracts, tender documents.
 - Engagement with the relevant PFD Member(s) for any non-routine procurements (noting that Members will be kept up to date through routine discussions on general procurement activities) subject to any potential conflicts of interest.
- **Confirm the procurement approach:**
- The Corporate Project Team should be notified at the earliest opportunity when a procurement process is necessary.
 - What is the contract length? (You should consider the scope for contract extensions).
 - What is the estimated contract value (contract value is for the entire length of the contract e.g. £10,000 per annum for a 3-year contract = £30,000 for entire length of contract).
 - Understand the local and national market. Does soft market testing need to be undertaken?
 - Are there framework agreements that could be accessed that increase value for money?
 - Are there other corporate contracts already in place that could be utilised instead of procuring?
 - Establish a Timetable for the Procurement Process.
- **Confirm the financial implications**
- The Finance team should be notified at the earliest opportunity when a procurement process is necessary.
 - What are the budgetary implications? (For example, is there an existing budget for this purchase, or is this to be a growth item?).
 - Consider the benefits of purchase versus leasing (for example, in certain circumstances it may be more appropriate to borrow the money to purchase supplies outright rather than to lease over a period of years, or vice-versa). Where leasing may be appropriate Officers must consult with the Chief Finance Officer and adhere to the Leasing rules under the Financial Regulations, including undertaking an options appraisal that must be prepared in accordance with the Prudential Code to ensure the Council obtains Value for Money.
 - Undertake and document risk assessment to understand service and financial risk relating to the procurement to inform the procurement approach and the necessary financial assessment methodology.
 - All assessments of bidders' financial standing should be proportionate, flexible, contract specific and not overly risk averse while ensuring protection of taxpayer value and safety, and compliance with relevant procurement law¹.
- **Confirm the legal implications**
- The Legal team should be notified at the earliest opportunity when a procurement process is necessary.
 - What will the contract terms and conditions be?

¹ In line with Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 02/13

- Confirm the legal framework for tender documentation.
- **Consider any input that may be required from other relevant departments or stakeholders, for example:**
 - Human Resources may need to be involved in the process, particularly where there may be TUPE implications or Equalities implications.
 - Corporate Health and Safety input may be required, particularly where CDM regulations need to be considered.
 - The Climate Change Officer may need to be consulted on issues of climate change sustainability.

2.3.2 Responsibilities by Contract Value

2.3.2.1 Once the most appropriate procurement process has been agreed it is important to define the responsibilities of the procurement process to ensure it is as effective as possible and achieves the desired outcomes for the Council and its residents. Support is available to all from the Corporate Project Team to officers undertaking procurement exercises.

2.3.2.2 It is essential that all officers involved in procurement process ensure that they provide the appropriate level of staff and time resource to guarantee they are able to provide timely input at the relevant milestones.

Up to £3,000

2.3.2.3 The responsibility for purchases up to the value of £3,000 lies with the relevant budget manager. As with all tenders it is essential to ensure the necessary budget is available for the purchase.

2.3.2.4 For purchases up to £3,000 managers need as a minimum only gather one oral quotation, sought from a suitable supplier, which should be confirmed in writing where the Total Value exceeds £500. Budget managers are responsible for the shortlisting.

2.3.2.5 When considering which suppliers to obtain quotes from, Budget Managers may consider the commercial benefits of any suitable local suppliers, subject to awarding to MEAT/obtaining value for money, as referred to elsewhere in the Policy. Budget managers must retain an audit trail as to why those suppliers invited are “suitable” for the contract being procured.

2.3.2.6 Depending on the complexity of the requirements it may be appropriate to create a specification and service managers will be required to keep a record of all expenditure documentation most notably the request for quotes, the formal quotes and communication relating to the awarding of the contract or works.

2.3.2.7 Advice is available from the Corporate Project team if required.

Between £3,001 and £50,000

2.3.2.8 A minimum of three quotations must be sought from suitable suppliers.

2.3.2.9 When considering which suppliers to obtain quotes from, Budget Managers may consider the commercial benefits of any suitable local suppliers, subject to awarding to MEAT/obtaining value for money, as referred to elsewhere in the Policy. Budget managers must retain an audit trail as to why those suppliers invited are “suitable” for the contract being procured.

2.3.2.10 Within this threshold the most appropriate way of purchasing is dependent upon the available budget, requirements of the supplies/works/services being procured and the time available to carry out the process. It is essential that budget managers have considered these before initiating a procurement exercise.

2.3.2.11 In all cases there will be the need for a specification and evaluation methodology to be developed and it is the responsibility of the budget managers to create them. The detailed nature of each specification will differ depending on the overall requirements and potential costs. For example, the specification for the printing of signage will significantly differ to a specification relating to the appointment of consultant support.

2.3.2.12 Budget managers will need ensure that appropriate terms and conditions are in place for all purchases. This may involve support from the legal team should there be the need for contract documentation to be created, and financial documents if there are any financial implications that need to be considered.

2.3.2.13 Budget managers should use electronic means for inviting tenders and this will be corporately stored in the relevant file storage area.

2.3.2.14 Shortlisting of quotes and associated award should be undertaken in line with the Contract Procedure Rules.

2.3.2.15 Advice is available from Corporate Project team if required.

Greater than £50,001 (inclusive of above threshold tenders)

2.3.2.16 In this threshold competitive tendering must be carried out. It is essential to involve a member of the Corporate Project team who will undertake several duties to support you from the beginning of the process.

2.3.2.17 Where the estimated contract value (inclusive of VAT) exceeds the relevant thresholds contained in regulation 5 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the procurement must be run in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

2.3.2.18 In above threshold contracts for Goods or Works it should be considered whether it may be possible to include selection criteria or award criteria relevant to the subject matter of the contract which helps increase opportunities for local suppliers.

2.3.2.19 For above threshold contracts for Services the Council it should be considered whether it may consider non-commercial considerations but only where it is necessary and expedient to do so to enable compliance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

2.3.2.20 However, as an alternative to tendering, where appropriate, the Council may opt to use Framework Agreements to award contracts. This could be through a direct call-off or through further competition with the suppliers on the framework as appropriate.

2.3.2.21 The points listed below set out the key principles and responsibilities that need to be undertaken or considered by the relevant participants as part of the procurement process:

➤ **Service / Contract Manager Responsibilities**

- Service / Contract Managers have overall responsibility for the procurement process.
- Coordinate with a Corporate Project team representative to arrange a procurement start up meeting with all necessary representatives allowing sufficient time for procurement to be undertaken.
- Agree budgetary implications with Finance.
- Provide input to indicative procurement timetable to ensure it meets the service need and decision-making timetable.
- Understand the local and national market.
- Prepare the specification accordingly.
- Liaise with the Communications & Regeneration Teams to ensure appropriate advertisement of opportunities via the relevant Local Business Networks.
- Contribute to risk assessments balancing service risk and financial risk.
- Provide input on Quality / Cost weightings.
- Provide input on evaluation criteria.
- Answer any technical clarification questions as part of the tender process.
- Undertake evaluation of bids.
- Ensure engagement with the relevant PFD Member(s) and prepare and co-ordinate the sign-off and reports approving contract award.
- Mobilise the contract with successful bidder.
- Liaise with legal representative to ensure that the contract is engrossed.
- Ensure the contract details are listed on the corporate contracts register.

➤ **Corporate Project Team Responsibilities**

- Support the creation of an indicative procurement timetable.
- Provide procurement advice to the Service / Contract manager.
- Provide project management advice to the Service / Contract manager.
- Support a procurement record where tendering is applicable.
- Contribute to risk assessments balancing service risk and financial risk.
- Support the preparation of tender documentation.
- Ensure appropriate advertisement of the tender opportunity in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations via the tendering portal²
- Ensure appropriate local advertisement of the tender opportunity, such as the Council's website, social media channels, business e-newsletter and any other appropriate

communications mechanism, noting the requirements for the timing of notices and adverts set out in the Public Contracts Regulations³

- Manage tendering portal.
- Can moderate the evaluation.
- Provide support on an award contract notices and decision notices / letters.
- Provide any relevant input to reports approving contract award to relevant Committees.

➤ **Legal Representative Responsibilities**

- Prepare draft contract documentation.
- Comment on procurement documents, for example to ensure consistency between contract and tender documents.
- Contribute to risk assessments balancing service risk and financial risk.
- Administer preparation and signature of contract pack post decision.
- Contribute to reports approving contract award to relevant Committee.
- Provide legal advice as necessary throughout the process.

➤ **Finance Representative Responsibilities**

- Provide advice on budgetary issues.
- Provide advice on financial assessment methodology and proportionate evaluation thresholds.
- Contribute to risk assessments balancing service risk and financial risk.
- Provide advice on Financial Regulations.
- Undertake financial assessment.
- Contribute to reports approving contract award to relevant Committee.
- Provide financial advice as necessary throughout the process.

2.3.2.22 Upon conclusion of the procurement process, including any required standstill period (see Paragraph 2.3.7 for further information on standstill periods), appropriate approvals have been granted and the Contract pack is passed to legal for preparation and signature, the Corporate Project team representative will publish an award notice via the portal at which point their support to the project will cease and the Service / Contract Manager will mobilise the contract with the successful bidder.

Please note the following:

“Regulation 110 of the PCR 2015 provides that where the Council advertises a contract award opportunity for below threshold contracts, it must publish the information on Contracts Finder too. The notice on Contracts Finder must be published within 24 hours of the time when the Council first advertises the contract award opportunity elsewhere.

³ Regulation 52 of the PCR 2015 provides that a notice for a new opportunity cannot be published elsewhere until it has been published on Find a Tender Service (see sub-para (3)). Sub-para (4) provides that publication can take place in any event if the Council has not been notified of the publication on FTS within 48 hours. Sub-para (5) provides that the notices published through other channels **must only contain information which has been included in the Contract Notice published on FTS.**”

2.3.2.23 For every tender process, the Corporate Project team will be available to co-ordinate a written record of the procurement process which will include all key considerations and decisions made throughout

the end-to-end process. Managers must engage with this section to ensure relevant information is kept for audit purposes.

2.3.3 eProcurement in Tenders

2.3.3.1 “eProcurement” describes the use of an electronic system to acquire and pay for supplies, works and services from suppliers. The benefits include the elimination of paper-based systems, stationery, postage and time delays.

2.3.3.2 All tenders should be carried out using e-procurement methods, the Council will utilise an e-procurement solution for its tenders that may include ‘Contracts Finder’ or more bespoke software to ensure a suitable method is used. Utilising digital technology allows for information to be available in real time, access contract documentation independently and submit tender documentation quickly and easily. It is vital that digital procurement methods are used in all tender processes as the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 brought in new regulations governing the electronic availability of procurement documents.

2.3.4 eProcurement in Quotation Gathering and Contract Management

2.3.4.1 The Council’s electronic solution or digital tools will also be an auditable tool for managing procurements where the gathering of quotations is required, and will maintain a clear and transparent expenditure process.

2.3.4.2 This function allows for contract lists to be set up, ensuring improved supplier engagement, a simple mechanism for exchanging requirements, quotations, and feedback in addition to easily identifying and recording usage with ‘local’ suppliers.

2.3.4.3 This contributes to an increased focus on below tender threshold purchasing across the Council and assists in building a detailed spend profile for the Council’s purchasing activities to allow for more detailed category management.

2.3.5 Transparency

2.3.5.1 Electronic access to tender documentation and advertisement of opportunities is closely related to issues of openness and transparency.

2.3.5.2 The [Transparency Code 2015](#) stipulates that all contracts and agreements are published online at least quarterly and in easily readable formats. This requirement is to allow potential suppliers, including small and medium sized enterprises, access to contracts registers, increasing the accessibility of future opportunities for working with the Council.

2.3.6 When Limited Numbers of Bids Are Received

2.3.6.1 Budget managers should ensure that the required number of quotes have been obtained.

2.3.6.2 When less than the required number of bids / quotations under the Contract Procedure Rules has been received the procurement process may continue and be evaluated and awarded (including when only one bid has been received) if it is determined that:

- The specifications were clear and not unduly restrictive.
- Adequate competition was solicited, and it could have been reasonably assumed that more than one bid would have been submitted.
- The price is within the financial framework of the Council; and
- The bid received is compliant with the minimum requirements of the procurement process.

2.3.6.3 Where less than the required number of bids / quotations under the Contract Procedure Rules has been received and a contract is to be awarded then an Exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules Form must be completed.

2.3.7 Standstill Period

2.3.7.1 Prior to contract award, all interested parties must be informed of the outcome of the tender process. The “standstill” period provides for a short pause between the point when the contract award decision is notified to bidders, and the final contract conclusion, during which time suppliers can challenge the decision.

2.3.7.2 A minimum 10-day standstill period is mandatory in tenders over the EU threshold.

2.3.7.3 For competitive tenders below the EU threshold or where quotations have been obtained a standstill period is not mandatory but should be considered as best practice. There is no minimum length for a standstill period within this threshold, but Budget Managers should assess the risk associated with the specific contract being tendered when agreeing a standstill period.

2.3.7.4 Budget Managers should debrief unsuccessful bidders upon conclusion of a procurement process if requested.

2.3.8 Award Approval

2.3.8.1 Once shortlisted, it is the responsibility of the Budget Manager to prepare and co-ordinate the sign-off of any necessary Executive Decision Records or Reports approving the contract award.

2.3.8.2 Recommendations for the appointment of a contractor or supplier to the Council must be made in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules. Officers may accept quotations and tenders received in respect of proposed contracts, provided they have been sought and evaluated fully in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules and, in respect of proposed contracts that are expected to exceed £200,000, the approval of the relevant Deputy Leader has been secured. The awarding of contracts that are expected to exceed £500,000 shall also be approved by the PFD Committee.

2.3.9 Exemption to Contract Procedure Rules

2.3.9.1 The Council has the power to waive any requirements within its Contract Procedure Rules via the use of an Exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules Form. This should only be used in exceptional circumstances and must be approved as detailed in the Contract Procedure Rules.

2.3.9.2 Budget managers must ensure that completed and signed forms are sent to Democratic Services for collation and recording.

2.3.10 Contract Register

2.3.10.1 The Council publishes a comprehensive register of all contracts currently in place along with other procurement spend data on its website. When considering procuring supplies or services, officers should check that there isn't already a contract in place elsewhere in the organisation that could fulfil their requirements before proceeding. Before procuring it is also worth considering whether there are similar contracts that could be consolidated to achieve efficiencies or economies of scale.

2.3.10.2 It is essential that the Budget Manager ensures the contract awarded is listed on the corporate contracts register upon contract award.

2.3.10.3 The Council's Policy and Compliance officer provides a system for managing the Contracts Register. Budget managers should use this for keeping their Contract records up to date, and for the ongoing contract management process throughout the contract period. The Corporate Project team will periodically review the contracts register to ensure the budget managers are including all necessary contracts.

2.3.10.4 Guidance can be sought from Policy and Compliance Officer on the contract register.

2.3.10.5 The procurement process used should also be identified on the Contracts Register.

2.3.11 Document Retention

2.3.11.1 Records relating to procurement processes must be retained by Budget Managers in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

2.3.11.2 Full information on records and retention including the associated timescales can be found in the Council's Document Retention Guidelines.

2.3.11.3 If a particular document does not appear in the attached guidelines, you should apply a retention period consistent with the type of document concerned. If you are unsure, consult a member of the Legal section.

2.4 Fraud, Risk Management and Other Considerations

2.4.1 Fraud

2.4.1.1 This Policy fundamentally minimises the opportunity for potentially fraudulent or corrupt activities by setting out the rules and principles that all staff must follow, including adopting a devolved approach to procurement that integrates several departments. However specifically acknowledging and mitigating the risks of fraud and corruption are critical for sound financial management and key to ensuring value for public money.

2.4.1.2 Officers must adhere to the Code of Conduct, Financial Regulations and comply with all Prevention of Corruption and Declaration of Interests rules within the Contract Procedure Rules. Officers must not invite or accept any gift or reward in respect of the award or performance of any contract and should disclose any pecuniary interest and include the appropriate anti-fraud/corruption clause in contract documentation.

2.4.1.3 At the outset of a tendering process all officers involved in the process must be asked to declare that they have no pecuniary interest arising from the procurement in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Responses must be recorded in the Procurement Record. Where Contracts exceed £500,000 all officers must provide a signed declaration.

2.4.1.4 Officers should ensure that appropriate anti-fraud/corruption measures under the Public Contracts Regulations are included in procurement exercises.

2.4.1.5 To identify potential fraud and corruption incidents, all Officers should be aware of potential issues. The list below is not exhaustive but are example of situations that could be indicative of fraudulent or corrupt activity:

- Abnormally low bids received in a procurement process.
- Unsuccessful bidders are subcontractors to the winning contractor.
- Similarity between suppliers' bids (similar wording, same errors etc.)
- Unexpected refusal to bid by certain suppliers.
- Bidders withdrawing from a procurement process unexpectedly.
- Unusual timing of a procurement or unnecessary limitations on the number of days to advertise a procurement.
- Procurement of works / supplies / services that are unusual for the department or the Council as a whole.
- One individual championing the need for the works / supplies / services, particularly when against factual information.
- Close relationships between a supplier and an Officer/Member.
- Officer/Member seeking to control a specific procurement of goods and services or insisting on the use of a specific contractor.
- Specifications that are unusually broad, narrow, or vague.
- Many smaller payments made to a single supplier, as opposed to a single contract.
- Unusual communications between Officers/Members and suppliers.

2.4.1.6 Controls within the financial processes not only help the prevention of fraud but also protect the individuals concerned against allegations of fraud and misappropriation. It is important when referring to these processes to consider the following:

- All budget managers have a duty to ensure that systems are in place to prevent fraud.
- Managers and staff should be aware that they have a duty to behave honestly and in a trustworthy manner.
- All staff are, individually and collectively, responsible for the safe and proper arrangements of the public purse.
- All employees have a role to play in maintaining the standards which the public are entitled to expect of officers of the Council.

2.4.1.7 Budget managers must ensure that control measures are in place to ensure appropriate procurement actions are incorporated into their budget management approach. For example, confirmation that the required procurement process has been followed and that supplies / services / works have been provided / received should be sought before the approval of requisitions and invoices.

2.4.1.8 Detailed information, guidance and best practice relating to the prevention of fraud and corruption in local government procurement can be found using the link to the Local Government Procurement: Fraud and Corruption Risk Review found in Paragraph 1.4.8.

2.4.1.9 Advice in relation to potentially fraudulent or corrupt activities in procurement can be sought from the Chief Finance Officer or the Corporate Project, Systems & IT Manager, but any concerns must be reported to the appropriate line manager.

2.4.2 Risk Management

2.4.2.1 All staff involved in procurement will need to assess the risk involved when engaging in any procurement process. This will need to be considered in respect to both cost and service standards and these factors must be paramount when choosing a particular procurement option.

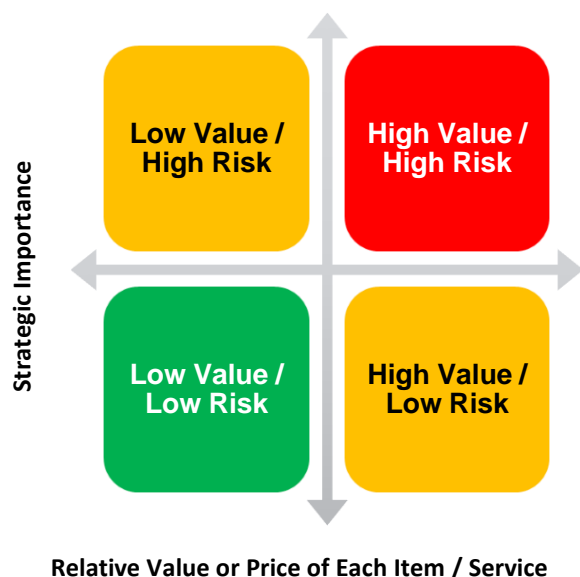
2.4.2.2 This assessment of risk must consider the impact and associated risks of the contractor failing, which will help inform the financial assessment.

2.4.2.3 Risk assessment proportionate to the work / supplies / services being procured should be carried out at least when:

- Alternatives to existing service provision are being evaluated.
- During the procurement planning stage.
- Whenever a major procurement change is proposed.
- Whenever a change in the procurement process or methods is proposed.

2.4.2.4 The information below will assist budget managers when considering risk in a procurement process.

Figure 3: Risk Management Matrix



2.4.2.5 The high value/high risk area will be the main focus of attention with the other high risk and high value areas proportionally less. Supplies and services which fall into these categories will be assessed carefully when alternatives are being considered.

2.4.2.6 Management of risk involves having processes in place to monitor risks, access to reliable, up-to-date information about risks, an appropriate level of control in place to deal with those risks and decision-making processes supported by a framework of risk analysis and evaluation. Risks must be managed in an integrated way.

2.4.3 Other Considerations

2.4.3.1 All budget managers should think strategically when planning and delivering a procurement process. The planning process should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the supplies/services/works being procured. Budget Managers should ensure that procurement requirements are relevant and proportionate, reflecting the need and the nature of the supply market.

2.4.3.2 It may be the case that not all of the following items apply to all procurement exercises, but they should be considered before the procurement process begins.

2.4.3.3 Local Purchasing - The Council recognises its responsibilities to local communities, including promoting local economic development, and the benefits that more local supply can bring towards reducing climate change impacts. It will continue to work to ensure that local businesses are able to compete for work alongside contractors from outside the area. Contracts must be awarded based on the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT), but the opportunities for local organisations to compete must be maximised. Where tenders are advertised then the visibility of adverts should be maximised within the local area through effective communication, and engagement with Local Business Networks. More generally the Council should continue to engage with the local business community, for example through “supplier information” or “meet-the-buyer” days.

2.4.3.4 Where direct quotations are being sought, when considering which suppliers to obtain quotes from, Budget Managers may consider the commercial benefits of any suitable local suppliers, subject to awarding to MEAT/obtaining value for money. Where tendering is relevant, service managers must consider subdividing the contract into separate lots to maximise opportunities for smaller / local organisations to bid for the services / works. An indication of the main reasons for any decision not to sub-divide into lots shall be recorded. Regulation 46(5) enables contracting authorities to limit the number of lots that may be awarded to one tenderer, and any opportunities arising from this should be considered when constructing a procurement process and evaluation methodology.

2.4.3.5 Community and Voluntary Organisations - Where appropriate the Council should deliver Value for Money for its residents by “commissioning” outcomes rather than “procuring” services in the traditional manner. Commissioning with the third sector should continue to be assessed as an option for future service delivery. Commissioning decisions should be evidence based and outcomes focused, through engagement with residents, service users, communities and other appropriate stakeholders.

2.4.3.6 Social Value - The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 imposes an obligation on contracting authorities procuring service contracts above the threshold in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 to consider (1) how what they are proposing to buy might improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the relevant area and (2) how in conducting the procurement process the contracting authority

might act with a view to securing that improvement. Budget Managers should think about Social Value, as the outcome of these considerations could inform elements of the procurement approach and the design of the services required, noting the need to also comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Consider social value as early as possible – i.e. before the procurement starts and when the requirement is still in the “service commissioning” phase. The decisions made during this stage will be integral to the final contract and the type of suppliers that will perform it. For example, Budget Managers should consider whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure social, economic and environmental benefits for their area or stakeholders. While this is not an exhaustive list, this could include considering some key benefits of Social Value and whether the approach to be taken can:

- Improve value for money by requiring suppliers to do more than ‘just’ deliver the core services as specified.
- Increase local spend by through maximising opportunities for local supply chains, including SMEs and Community and Voluntary Organisations.
- Increase opportunities for disadvantaged people or promote social mobility.
- Enabling skills, training and employment opportunities.

2.4.3.7 Value for Money Council - The Council aims to provide services that offer Value for Money in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness; that are responsive to the needs of our communities; and that have the capacity to continuously improve performance. Budget managers should review activities and services to determine how, if at all, they can be delivered in future. The Council will consider all options for the future delivery of services and choose the most effective solution from a range of available methods of service delivery.

2.4.3.8 Ethical Procurement - The Council is committed to ethical procurement. It will not discriminate on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics of equality and will provide appropriate, sensitive, and accessible services. Budget Managers should ensure that suppliers maintain high standards of integrity and professionalism in their business dealings and practices, adhering to the laws of the countries where they operate. While this is not an exhaustive list, this could include considering:

- Ethical sourcing practices.
- Fair employment practices.
- Support working conditions that are legal, fair and safe.
- Encouraging equality and diversity.
- Operating to relevant animal welfare standards.
- Risk of Modern Slavery within the supply chain.

2.4.3.9 Climate Change and Sustainability - All procuring officers should consider “green” or “sustainable” procurement. This is a process that considers environmental elements when buying products and services. This could include considering low energy, more sustainable, local purchasing in our procurement and commissioning models. Budget managers should consider action plans on any related strategy including the (climate change) Environment Strategy. While this is not an exhaustive list budget managers should consider opportunities within the procurement to:

- Ensure contractors and suppliers have an environmental management policy to minimise their environmental impact.

- Work with contractors to promote the reduction of carbon emissions.
- Make a positive impact on waste generated in the workplace and recycling provision / recycling rates.
- Reduce energy consumption.
- Raise awareness and promote positive behaviour regarding climate change.
- Enable working with partners for a coordinated approach to tackling climate change.
- Achieve / retain appropriate environmental management accreditation.
- Reduction in business or fleet mileage.
- Considered the future effect that climate change could have on the procurement or service.
- Consider all the above in relation to the contractors delivering a service on our behalf and within their supply chain.

2.4.3.10 Other Council Policy and Strategy - All procuring officers should pay regard to any other Council Policy or Strategy that may also be in place during the life of this Procurement Policy that could influence their considerations.

2.5 Process Summary

2.5.1 The following table is designed to act as a step-by-step process flow to assist officers when considering and / or conducting a procurement process. However, the full detail contained within this Policy should be considered in conjunction with this table to ensure full compliance (N.B. the phasing of the stages within each overarching phase are not necessarily linear and may need to be considered in the round):

Phase	Action	Comments	Owner
Service Commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify Corporate Project Team (CPT) of a potential procurement need for the Procurement Planner to be updated accordingly 	N.B. tenders can take several months. It is important to consider your service / contract continuity, and appreciate the need for the programming of resource in the other teams supporting your procurement	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the need for the function you are considering for procurement 	What do you want to buy? Do you need to buy it? Can the service be delivered in a different way prior to the procurement to improve VFM? Are there other corporate contracts already in place that could be utilised instead of procuring?	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the market, undertake risk assessment and review budgets or sources of funding 	Understand the local and national market. Consider soft market testing, or engaging in market development where necessary	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the benefits of purchase versus leasing 	Where leasing may be appropriate Officers must consult with the Chief Finance Officer and adhere to the Leasing rules under the Financial Regulations, including undertaking an options appraisal that must be prepared in accordance with the	Service Manager / Finance Team

		Prudential Code to ensure the Council obtains Value for Money	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with the relevant Member prior to potential non-routine procurement. 	<p>Consider any policy decisions that may affect the procurement or contract.</p> <p>While PDF Members will be kept up to date through routine discussions on general procurement activities, for any non-routine procurement the PDF Chair must be specifically engaged, subject to any potential conflicts of interest.</p>	Service Manager
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm procurement need to CPT, Finance and Legal Teams 	N.B. tenders can take several months. It is important to consider your service / contract continuity, and appreciate the need for the programming of resource in the other teams supporting your procurement	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that appropriate staff resource and technical capability are allocated to the procurement 	Consider any contract management resource requirements.	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate Procurement Record 	For every tender process, the CPT will help co-ordinate a written record of the procurement process which will include all key considerations and decisions made throughout the end-to-end process.	Service Manager & CPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm contract length 	You should consider the scope for contract extensions	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm estimated contract value 	Contract value is for the entire length of the contract e.g. £10,000 per annum for a 3-year contract = £30,000 for entire length of contract	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm procurement approach 	Are there framework agreements that could be accessed that increase value for money?	All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider appropriate sub-division of the procurement into lots 	<p>Where tendering is relevant, service managers must consider sub-dividing the contract into separate lots to maximise opportunities for local organisations to bid for the services / works. An indication of the main reasons for any decision not to sub-divide into lots shall be recorded.</p>	<p>Service Manager</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Timetable for the Procurement Process 	<p>Service managers are responsible for taking ownership of the procurement and achievement of indicative timetables, with the support of the CPT.</p>	<p>Service Manager and CPT</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake risk assessment to understand service and financial risk relating to the procurement to inform the procurement approach and the necessary financial assessment methodology. 	<p>All assessments of bidders' financial standing should be proportionate, flexible, contract specific and not overly risk averse while ensuring protection of taxpayer value and safety, and compliance with relevant procurement law.</p>	<p>Service Manager and Finance Team</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider any other considerations in line with this Policy for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local considerations - Social value - Value for money - Ethical procurement - Climate change and sustainability - Other Council policy and strategy 	<p>To achieve this, input may be required from other relevant departments or stakeholders for example HR Team may need to be involved, particularly regarding TUPE. Corporate Health and Safety input may be required, particularly where CDM regulations need to be considered. Environmental Health may need to be consulted on issues of climate change sustainability</p>	<p>Service Manager and CPT</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate specification 	<p>The detailed nature of each specification will differ depending on the overall requirements and potential costs. All relevant aspects as set out in the procurement policy should be considered e.g. ethical procurement; climate change and sustainability; and social value.</p>	<p>Service Manager</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate contract document or terms and conditions 	<p>Budget managers will need ensure that appropriate terms and conditions are in place for all purchases. This may involve support</p>	<p>Service Manager and Legal Team</p>

		from the legal team should there be the need for contract documentation to be created, and finance management if there are any financial implications that need to be considered.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate tender documents and set up tendering portal and advertise tender electronically to the market as necessary 	<p>All tenders should be carried out using e-procurement methods, via the Council's e-procurement software solution.</p> <p>Ensure appropriate local advertisement of the tender opportunity, such as the Council's website, social media channels, and business e-newsletter, noting the requirements for the timing of notices and adverts set out in the Public Contracts Regulations⁴</p>	CPT – on request by Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with the Communication Team & Regeneration team to ensure appropriate advertisement of opportunities via the relevant Local Business networks 	<p>This helps maximise opportunities for local providers to access procurement processes.</p> <p>Where quotations are being sought, please ensure that the requisite number of quotes are being sought.</p>	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate bids and moderate where necessary 	<p>In accordance with the published evaluation methodology for the procurement.</p> <p>CPT to review for compliance.</p> <p>Service managers to review tenders and pricing.</p> <p>Finance team to review financial performance and pricing.</p> <p>CPT Team to moderate evaluations</p>	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate necessary approval (for example EDR or Report) in accordance with the Constitution 	Service Manager is responsible for engagement with the relevant Member(s) and obtaining the necessary approval for contract award	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish Award Notice 	Service Manager or CPT will notify bidders of the outcome and publish the relevant contract award notice electronically in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations, following any necessary standstill period.	Service Manager or CPT Team

⁴ Regulation 52 of the PCR 2015 provides that a notice for a new opportunity cannot be published elsewhere until it has been published on Find a Tender Service (see sub-para (3)). Sub-para (4) provides that publication can take place in any event if the Council has not been notified of the publication on FTS within 48 hours. Sub-para (5) provides that the notices published through other channels **must only contain information which has been included in the Contract Notice published on FTS.**

		Either will notify successful bidder that the procurement is concluded and that the Contract Manager and Legal Team will be in contact to arrange contract mobilisation and contract signatures respectively.	
Contract Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Completion 	Upon conclusion of the procurement phase the Legal team will arrange for contract signatures	Legal Team
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract mobilisation 	The service / contract manager will ensure the contract details are listed on the corporate contracts register, and that contact is made with the contractor to mobilise the services/ works / goods.	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Management 	All contracts should be managed, from the mobilisation of the contract through the ongoing operation and management of the contract for the duration of the contract term. Service managers should prioritise the key strategic contracts and regularly monitor and report on their performance to ensure that these contracts are achieving the Corporate Priorities.	Service Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Review 	The phase concludes with a review of the performance of the contract, ahead of the contract expiry so that the procurement process can move cyclically into the need identification phase for future delivery of the service.	Service Manager



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Budget Monitoring Report (Q2 2023/24)**

Report Author(s): **Deborah Proctor (Interim Finance Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	To provide the Committee with an update on the forecast financial position for the Council for the financial year 2023/24, as at the end of the second quarter.
Report Summary:	<p>The Q2 forecast position for the year on the General Fund is an overspend of £488K compared to the revised budget of £7,586K for 2023/24. Actions to address and mitigate the forecast overspend position are presented within the report.</p> <p>The Q2 forecast for the HRA is an underspend of £73K, compared to a budgeted deficit of £391K.</p> <p>Spending on the Council’s HRA and General Fund Capital Programmes currently show significant slippage.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>That the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the contents of the Quarter 2 report and Appendices; and 2. Approves a supplementary budget for the essential temporary resources in the Finance Team (section 2.8).
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2690 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Bev Bull (Head of Finance /Section 151 Officer) (0116) 257 2649 bev.bull@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Deborah Proctor (Interim Finance Manager) (0116) 257 2823 deborah.proctor@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out in this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputation Damage (CR4) Economy / Regeneration (CR9)

Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	Senior Leadership Team
Background Papers:	1. 2023/24 Revenue Budgets, Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 – 2027/28 Capital Programmes – Full Council 23 February 2023 2. Budget Monitoring Report (Q1 2023/24) – PFDC 12 September 2023
Appendices:	A1. Reserves Movements A2. Capital Programme 2023/24

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2023, the Council approved its revenue and capital budgets for the general fund and the HRA.
- 1.2 This is the second monitoring report for the 2023/24 financial year and the report details the forecast financial outturn position for the year. Although economic conditions and inflationary pressures have started to ease, there is still considerable pressure on the Council's budgets and therefore the ability to deliver services within the revised budget.

2. General Fund Forecast Outturn Position 2023/24

- 2.1 At Quarter 2 (April to September 2023) the forecast outturn position for 2023/24 is a **£488K** overspend which represents a 6.4% variance of the revised revenue budget of £7.586m as shown in **Table 1** below.
- 2.2 It is important to note the 2023/24 budget was set utilising **£430K** of general reserve to balance the budget. Therefore, in total **£879K** use of general reserve is forecast in managing the 2023/24 budget position, demonstrating the Council's budget is not sustainable. Its expenditure is exceeding its funding on an ongoing basis. The budget setting 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan show this is forecast to continue each year. Urgent action is needed to address this position.

Table 1 - General Fund Budget Monitoring Position By Service

Service	Original Budget 2023/24	Revised Budget 2023/24	Forecast Outturn	Variance
	£	£	£	£
Senior Leadership Team	482,350	482,350	465,210	(17,140)
Finance & Resources (Including Corporate Budgets)	2,390,454	2,390,454	3,075,706	685,252
Law & Democracy*	757,652	730,162	808,875	78,713
The Built Environment	1,258,986	1,315,247	1,111,416	(203,831)
Community & Wellbeing (inc Depot)*	1,088,928	1,088,928	1,416,679	327,751
Customer Service & Business Transformation**	1,970,768	1,995,186	2,029,327	34,141
HRA Recharge	(1,433,803)	(1,433,803)	(1,433,803)	-
Capital Financing	1,017,100	1,017,100	600,595	(416,505)
Net Revenue Expenditure	7,532,435	7,585,624	8,074,005	488,381
Financed by:				
Funding	6,959,048	6,959,048	6,959,048	-
Earmarked Reserves	143,200	163,389	163,389	-
General Fund Reserve	430,187	463,187	951,567	488,381
Total Financing	7,532,435	7,585,624	8,074,005	488,381

*£32K of the £79K pressure on Law and Democracy and £118K of the £328K pressure on Community and Wellbeing relate to original budget setting errors and are shown in Table 2 below totalling £150K. Law & Democracy is showing a true budget pressure of £47K and Community & Wellbeing is showing a true budget pressure of £210K.

**ICT, Systems Admin & Corporate Projects are currently within Customer Services but will be reallocated within Finance & Resources for the Q3 report. The true budget pressure for Customer Services is £12K.

2.3 The principal reasons for the variances are summarised below in **Table 2**.

Table 2 – Principal Variances in General Fund Budget Monitoring Position

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Net cost of benefits	397	Mainly homeless costs for temporary accommodation plus other small movements on net cost of benefits
Swimming Pools & Leisure Centre	254	£243K income shortfall on the leisure management fee income as reported at Q1 and a £11K overspend external contractor costs.
Non service-specific	150	There was a £118k error in the detailed budget setting when the transfer of the Community Wellbeing function to Blaby was reflected (the cost of transferring the service to Blaby remains as previously

		presented and agreed by members). The full cost of staff in the Environmental Health Admin & Enforcement budget was also not fully reflected £32k. This was reported at Q1.
Pay Award	147	Pressure from Pay Awards being higher than budgeted.
Vacancy Target	119	Unachievable vacancy saving as reported at Q1.
Finance	123	Permanent salary staff savings off-set by interim agency costs on essential posts.
Selective Property Licensing Scheme	109	£100K overbudgeted for Private Landlord Property licences identified in Q1, £10K pressure from staff salaries, £1K overspend on supplies and services.
Brocks Hill Move	70	Moving costs, utilities and maintenance of new conferencing system compensated by savings in Bushloe.
Homelessness	(206)	£160K increased demand and cost pressures with emergency accommodation, £22K increased staff and misc. costs to provide the service, £(169)K additional grant funding (£144K Homelessness prev. Grant, £52K Homes For Ukraine, £39K Home Office Full Dispersal Grant), £(197)K increased Housing Ben receipts and recovery, £(22)K increased rental income.
Capital Financing	(417)	Savings in capital financing charges due to £(343)K MRP savings, £(29)K savings from interest payable due to slippage, £(45)K additional interest receivable due to interest rate increases. Increasing from £132K savings reported at Q1.
Other	(258)	Other variances under £70K (see Tables below).
Total	488	

- 2.4 Although easing, inflationary pressures continue to affect all services across the Council, such as substantially increased costs for contracts, utility costs, supplies and services, building material and repair costs.
- 2.5 The largest major variance is within the service area "Net Cost of Benefit" which is forecast an overspend of £397K. This variance is mainly homeless costs for temporary accommodation plus other small movements on net cost of benefits.
- 2.6 The Swimming Pools and Leisure Centre are expected to see a fall in income due to an income shortage and increased costs to run the Service by the contractor.
- 2.7 Another significant budget pressure of £123K has arisen within the Finance Service; most of this pressure is from agency costs in the provision of essential resources needed within the finance team.
- 2.8 In year actions are being identified and implemented to reduce the forecast overspend for 2023/24. SLT have agreed actions to be taken to reduce the level of forecast overspend for 2023/24: A vacancy freeze on non-essential posts and a freeze on non-essential, non-contractual, non-invest to save spend freeze.

- 2.9 The Business Rates Officer, System Support Officer, Regeneration Project Officer and Economic Regeneration Manager posts are currently vacant; the current forecast assumes this will be for the remainder of the year.
- 2.10 Internally within the Council, officers are taking various actions to maintain good financial control. Communication and engagement with the Senior Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team in respect of the budget position is on-going and the Finance service continues to implement the finance business partner approach which enables greater engagement with budget holders across the Council.
- 2.11 A supplementary budget is requested for the £123K cost of agency staff within the finance team for essential posts to meet the overspend identified. The supplementary budget was initially discussed and agreed with the PFD Chair, however following the recruitment process the costs are now over £50K for each post and therefore committee approval is required. The additional resources are required to enable the Council to meet its statutory financial responsibilities and provide additional support in managing the challenging financial position.
- 2.12 **Tables 3 i) to vii)** below analyse the variances at the Service level with explanatory notes.

i) Senior Leadership Team

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Senior Leadership Team	(17)	Savings from both Strategic Director posts.
Total	(17)	

ii) Finance & Resources (Including Corporate Budgets)

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Net cost of benefits	397	Mainly homeless costs for temporary accommodation plus other small movements on net cost of benefits.
Finance	147	Mainly due to agency staff cost pressures (essential posts).
Vacancy Target	119	Unachievable vacancy savings.
Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Brocks Hill Move	70	Moving costs, utilities and maintenance of new conferencing system compensated by savings in Bushloe.
Head of Finance, Revenues & Benefits	(24)	Due to New Burdens income and savings in admin post.
Corporate Management	4	Strategic Treasury management advice costs over budget.

Council Tax Support	4	Pressure from Pay Award.
Non-Domestic Rates	(31)	Staff vacancies saving on Business Rates post £(34)K and £3K pressure from Pay Award.
Total	685	

iii) Law and Democracy

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Selective Property Licensing Scheme	111	Mainly from underachieved income from Private Landlord Property licences.
Non service-specific	32	The full cost of staff in the Environmental Health Admin & Enforcement budget was also not fully reflected. As reported at Q1.
Election Expenses	16	Increased staff costs at polling station to assist with introduction of voter ID offset by gov't grants provided elsewhere (Finance).
Democratic Representation & Management	10	£8K Pay Increase Manager post, £3K Pay Award pressure, partly mitigated by £(1)K savings in supplies and services.
Environmental Health Administration / Enforcement	2	£5K House Cleaning & Clearance costs, £3K Pay Award pressure, partly mitigated by £(3)K Pub clearance recovery costs, £(3)K funeral costs recovered.
Health and Safety	2	£1,000 Pay Award pressure, £900 overspent on first aid mitigated by a small £(105) underspend on salaries because more first aiders recruited than expected.
Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Licensing Service	(39)	£1K Pay Award pressure, £(35)K salary recharged to grant funded housing insulation improvement scheme, £(5)K savings on software.
Alcohol and Entertainment Licences	(29)	£(7)K excess income on Premises new applications and £(22)K from annual charges.
Register of Electors	(16)	Savings achieved from postage recharges.
Taxi Licences	(7)	£(5K) higher than expected licence competency fee income and £(1)K income from HPI checks and £(1)K licence plate bracket sales.
Legal & Admin Service	(3)	Costs of legal costs offset by costs award made.
Total	79	

iv) The Built Environment

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Planning Control	30	Net budget pressure arising from agency support to update planning enforcement policies and procedures.
Building Control Section	15	Due to economic downturn and cost of living crisis there is a shortfall in anticipated costs resulting from contributions to the delegated Leicestershire Building Control Partnership.
Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Planning Section	3	Negligible overspend (permanent staff).
Other	2	Small value variances across the Built Environment.
Cleaning Contract	2	Unbudgeted travel costs in between council sites.
Homelessness	(204)	Mainly from additional homeless grants. (See Net Cost of Benefits in Finance where the impact of increased homelessness creates a budget pressure.)
Economic Development	(30)	£109K adverse due to salaries, some capitalisation not achieved, £5K projected overspend from Christmas lights costs (electricity), £4K pressure from Pay Award. These costs were mitigated by £(130)K vacancy savings on Economic Regeneration Manager and 2x Economic Project Managers, and £(18)K savings from Manager salary costs charged elsewhere.
Planning Policy	(21)	Overspend due to £37K Agency costs and shared salary costs, £4K pressure from Pay Award, mitigated by £(31)K savings in salaries from vacancies and £(31)K unbudgeted Grant income.
Total	(204)	

v) Community & Wellbeing (inc. Depot)

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Swimming Pools & Leisure Centre	254	£243K income shortfall on the leisure management fee income as reported at Q1 and a £11K overspend external contractor costs.
Non service-specific	118	Error in the detailed budget setting when the transfer of the Community Wellbeing function to Blaby was reflected (the cost of transferring the service to Blaby remains as previously presented and agreed by members). This was reported at Q1.
Refuse Collection	11	Cost pressure on hired plant for POPs vehicle.
Recycling Collection	10	£16K overspend in contractual overtime/agency costs, £10K Pay Award pressure, mitigated by £(16)K savings in supplies and services.

Garden Waste Collection	8	£20K unachieved income from Garden waste collections mitigated by £(12)K savings in stationery costs.
Street Cleansing	1	£(26)K salary cost saving vacant post, £21K unmatched income budget needs to be removed, £6K Pay Award pressure.
Fleet Management	(27)	£6K overspends in tyre costs from damage at recycling facility mitigated by £(33)K savings from lower fuel costs.
Facilities Management Holding Account	(21)	£(24)K Salary savings through vacancies and £3K pressure from Pay Awards.
Car Parks	(16)	Overachievement in income.
Grants	(11)	Fewer than expected grant payments to 3rd parties.
Crime and Disorder Partnership	(10)	Unbudgeted cumulative CSP funding for 2021-24 and £(84)K and £73K expenditure for OPCC Youth prevention work.
Other	11	A number of smaller variances.
Total	328	

vi) Customer Service & Business Transformation

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
ICT	66	£46K unbudgeted "Uniform" software, £30K for salaries that could not be capitalised, £18K overspend on hardware, £6K Pay Award pressure, partly mitigated by £(20)K savings on contractors costs, £(14)K misc. supply costs.
Human Resources	11	£11K overspend for professional services.
Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Head of Customer Services & Transformation	8	Pressure from salary costs.
Customer Service Improvement	2	Pressure from Pay Awards.
Systems Administration	(29)	£(32)K vacancy saving System Support Officer, £3K Pay Award pressure.
Corporate Projects	(15)	£(15)K staff savings.
Customer Services	(8)	Vacancy savings.
Total	34	

HRA Recharges

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
HRA Recharges	-	Not applicable – balanced position

vii) Capital Financing

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Capital Financing	(417)	Savings in capital financing charges due to £(343)K MRP savings, £(29)K savings from interest payable due to slippage, £(45)K additional interest receivable due to interest rate increases.
Total	(417)	

3. Sustainability Programme 2023/24

3.1 The budget for 2023/24 included the following savings in respect of the sustainability programme approved as part of the MTFs.

Table 4 - Sustainability Programme Savings

	2023/24
Service Reviews	50,000
Income Generation	15,000
Total 2023/24 Sustainability Programme Savings	65,000

3.2 The 2023/24 saving targets have been achieved as reported at Quarter 1. £50K was achieved through Regeneration Team Restructuring/review and £15K additional income has been achieved through licensing income process improvements.

4. Impact on General Fund Reserve.

4.1 The table below forecasts the General Fund Balance at the year-end based on the latest quarter 2 forecast and other known impacts on the reserve.

Table 5 - Forecast General Fund Reserve 31 March 2024.

Opening Balance	(1,412,772)
Use of reserve in setting the budget for 23/24	430,187
Supplementary Budget	33,000
Forecast overspend Q2	488,381
Sales Fees and Charges clawback as per Q1 report	198,670
Return from the Business Rates Pool 20/21 and 21/22 as per Q1 report	(732,194)

Re-purposing of earmarked reserves	(72,912)
Estimated Closing Balance	(1,067,640)

4.2 The above table demonstrates the Council has limited general fund reserves. The use of reserves in setting the budget and using the reserve to fund the in-year overspend is not sustainable. Both these actions reduce reserves further making the Council vulnerable to any future unforeseen budget pressures. This highlights the urgency and importance to take action to reduce the forecast overspend before the year ending 31 March 2024 and the importance in setting a budget within the resources available for future years. Further detailed analysis of Reserves movements are shown in **Appendix 1**.

5. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

5.1 The Housing Revenue Account opening balance as at 1st April 2023 on its main reserve was £1.418m. In 2023/24 the account has been forecast to have a budget deficit of £318K leaving an estimated HRA Reserve balance of £1.100m.

5.2 The position on the account as the end of Quarter 2 is set out in **Table 6** below.

Table 6 - HRA Position Quarter 2

	Revised Budget 2023/24 £'000	Forecast Outturn 2023/24 £'000
Net Cost of Services on the HRA	(356)	(388)
Capital Charges	747	706
Revenue Contributions to Capital Appropriations to Earmarked Reserves	-	-
	391	318
Actual Balance b/f HRA a/c	(1,418)	(1,418)
Budget Deficit in the Year	391	318
Balance c/f HRA a/c	1,027	1,100

5.3 The variance to budget at the end of Quarter 2 is a **£73K** underspend (£318K forecast spend against a budget of £391K). **Table 7** below shows the principal reasons for this performance.

Table 7 HRA Variance to Budget at Quarter 2

Service	Variance £'000	Reason for variance
Estate Management	20	Horsewell Lane development project management costs of £37K offset against savings of £(17)K from the consultancy budget.
Rents and Service Charges	19	Income from garage rents expected to be lower than budgeted. A review of our garage stock and how we can maximise this income is expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Communal Heating Charges	14	Expenditure on heating for sheltered scheme is higher than expected. Review of existing heating charges is ongoing.
Gas Service Repairs Contract	14	This is due to an inflationary linked increase to the annual contract from October.
Computer Software	11	Overspend due to inflationary linked increases to the annual licences and maintenance of the Housing IT system.
Repairs & Maintenance	(52)	Savings in void maintenance costs.
Capital Charges	(41)	Savings on capital charges.
Housing Tenancy Management posts	(37)	Saving on salaries after a restructure, vacancies which have now been recruited to.
Housing Maintenance posts	(14)	Savings from vacancies.
Communal Areas	(8)	Higher than expected electricity costs of £4K . Savings from day to day repairs of speech call door entry system of £(12)K .
TOTAL	(73)	

6. Capital Programme

- 6.1 The 2023/24 Capital Programme was set at Full Council in February 2023. Table 8 below shows a summary of the 2023/24 capital programme; the full capital programme is shown in **Appendix 2**.
- 6.2 The forecast outturn for the General Fund capital programme is £2.350m with significant slippage of £585K estimated by outturn. A significant reason for that is the new sports facilities schemes now being re-programmed for 24/25 - £495K.
- 6.3 The forecast outturn for the HRA capital programme is £2.311m with significant slippage of £3.004m estimated by outturn. The New Housing Initiatives scheme shown in the Table below accounts for £2.423m (81%) of the anticipated slippage with explanations provided.
- 6.4 There is a potential for this position to change in 23/24. This will be closely monitored, as the impact on Council borrowing requirements could be considerable if planned spend increases. This will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Table 8 – Capital Programme Summary

Fund	Revised Budget 2023/24 £'000	Spend and Commitments to Date £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast Variance to Budget £'000	Explanation
General Fund Schemes					
New Council Offices	563	881	925	362	Overspend as per report to Capital Sub Committee.
Vehicle Refurbishment	952	653	903	(49)	Order placed. Long lead time on vehicles, so delivery expected in the

					current FY, about December 2023
Sports Facilities	495	-	-	(495)	Scheme will slip to 24/25
Other	905	667	502	(403)	
Total	2,935	2,201	2,350	(585)	
Housing Revenue Account					
New Housing Initiatives	2,423	-	-	(2,423)	Unlikely to commence works this financial year. But project management costs of £49k are showing in HRA Estate Mngt currently until scheme commences.
Decarbonisation of Housing Stock	791	-	791	0	£277K of grant funding received for 23/24. £277K of Council funding required to match.
Housing Block Improvements	450	334	450	-	Expected to spend in full
Other	1,651	457	1,070	(581)	
HRA Scheme Total	5,315	791	2,311	3,004	
Total	8,250	2,992	4,661	(3,859)	

Statement of Movement on Reserves

	Opening Balance at 1st April 2023	Approved Contributions	Approved Withdrawals	Approved Balance at 30 September 2023	Requiring approval Contributions	Requiring approval Withdrawals	Forecast Closing Balance as at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>General Fund Earmarked Reserves</u>							
Contingency Reserve	-27,658			-27,658			-27,658
Budget Carried Forward	-27,051		27,051	0			0
Council Priority Reserve Balance (Corporate Challenge)	-58,400		58,400	0			0
Disabled Facilities	-22,450		22,450	0			0
Land Valuation Reserve	-1,000			-1,000			-1,000
COVID-19 Reserve	-44,683		43,600	-1,083			-1,083
Elections Reserve	-57,500		50,000	-7,500			-7,500
GF Cost Of Living Reserve	-41,738			-41,738			-41,738
Local Plan Reserve	-203,346			-203,346			-203,346
Total GF	-280,481	0	201,501	-78,980	0	0	-78,980
<u>General Fund Grants</u>							
Section 31 Grant Reserve	-306,000			-306,000			-306,000
Earmarked Revenue Grants Reserve	-403,876			-403,876			-403,876
Grounds Maintenance Reserve Balance	-256,480		34,800	-221,680			-221,680
Total GF Grants	-660,357	0	34,800	-625,557	0	0	-625,557
<u>General Fund Reserve</u>	-1,412,772	-72,912	463,187	-1,022,497	-732,194	687,051	-1,067,640
<u>Total General Fund Revenue Reserves</u>	-2,353,609	-72,912	699,488	-1,727,033	-732,194	687,051	-1,772,176
<u>General Fund Capital Receipts Reserve</u>	-331,236	0	65,000	-266,236			-266,236
<u>HRA Revenue Reserves</u>							
Major Repairs Reserve Balance	-1,296,381			-1,296,381			-1,296,381
Regeneration Reserve	-361,443			-361,443			-361,443
Budgets Carried Forward HRA Reserve Balance	-8,500		8,500	0			0
HRA Cost Of Living Reserve	-50,000			-50,000			-50,000
Total HRA	-1,716,324	0	8,500	-1,707,824	0	0	-1,707,824
<u>HRA Reserve</u>	-1,418,379		-8,500	-1,426,879		318,026	-1,108,853
Total HRA	-3,134,702	0	0	-3,134,702	0	318,026	-2,816,676
<u>HRA Capital Reserves</u>							
1-4-1 Housing Reserve	-1,059,354	0	0	-1,059,354	0	0	-1,059,354

OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Project Code Reference	Scheme	Budget Holder	Responsible Person	2023-24 Proposals	2022-23 Budgeted C/F	2023-24 Approved Budget	2021-22 Final C/F	Additions/Remov als/Transfers	Slippage to 2024/25	2023-24 Total Budget	Actual to 30th September	Variance	Forecast	Forecast Variance to Budget	Comments	
				£	£	£	£	£		£	£					
Funding Available B/F Estimated Additions In Year																
Total Funding Available																
Housing Revenue Account																
50003	Central Heating	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		35,000	285,000	26,500	(61,500)		250,000	91,525	(158,475)	250,000	(0)	Finalising the boiler replacement programme for 2023-24 with 80 - 100 properties remaining.	
50006	Front & Rear Doors	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		0	100,000	622	(100,622)		0	6,673	6,673	0	0	Carry over into next year, project provisionally suspended. We still need to get a contractor in	
50009	Fire Safety	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		0	0	5,633	(5,633)		0	0	0	0	0		
50016	Decent Homes Work	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates	1,500,000	50,000	300,000	(47,261)	577,743		830,482	25,733	(804,749)	250,000	(580,482)	Expect to spend in full.	
50017	Major Adaptations	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		0	200,000	23,254	(23,254)		200,000	143,731	(56,269)	200,000	0	Budget will be spent or committed by year end.	
50019	Fire Safety	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		0	200,000	80,655	(80,655)		250,000	133,416	(116,584)	250,000	0	Expect to spend in full.	
50021	Window Replacement	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		85,000	65,000	10,000	(75,000)		0	0	0	0	0	Unlikely to commence works this financial year.	
50029	New Housing Initiatives	Chris Eyre	Chris Eyre		2,430,000	13,225	(20,000)	2,423,225		2,423,225	0	(2,423,225)	0	(2,423,225)	There are no upgrades required to Asset Management.	
50030	Communal Heating System	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		0	250,000	0	(250,000)		0	0	0	0	0	Unlikely to commence works this financial year.	
50046	Kitchen Replacements Decent Homes, including Bathrooms 2018/19	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		0	0	(11,361)	11,361		0	48,681	48,681	0	0	Expenditure should be transferred to 50016.	
50047	Housing Block Improvements	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates		212,000	462,000	7,020	(19,020)		450,000	334,144	(115,856)	450,000	0	This might be suspended until the end of April due to not wanting to cut off electricity during the winter months we're just awaiting final confirmation. Discussions with contractors is ongoing.	
50048	Asset Management System Upgrades	Chris Eyre	Chris Eyre		0	0	23,420	(23,420)		0	0	0	0	0	There are no upgrades required to Asset Management.	
50049	Horswell Lane housing development, Modular Build	Chris Eyre	Chris Eyre		0	0	0	20,000		20,000	7,452	(12,548)	20,000	0	Consultancy costs, survey works.	
	Decarbonisation of Housing Stock	Chris Eyre	Chris Eyre		514,142	514,142	0	277,153		791,295	0	(791,295)	791,295	0	£277k of grant funding received for 23/24. £277k of allocated Council funding required to match this. Uncertain what exact spend will be in-year.	
	Stock Condition Survey	Chris Eyre	Darren Bates	100,000	0	100,000	0	0		100,000	0	(100,000)	100,000	0	We will use this to drive the capital programme going forward. This is going out to contractors so they can submit their expression of interest.	
Total - HRA				1,600,000	3,306,142	4,906,142	131,707	277,153		5,315,002	791,356	(4,523,646)	2,311,295	(3,003,707)		
General Fund - Service Delivery																
52002	Disabled Facilities Grant	Adrian Thorpe	Chris Eyre		0	0	0	0		0	568,132	568,132	0	0	Transfer to revenue	
52092	Oadby Pool Housing Project	Adrian Thorpe	Adrian Thorpe		36,000	36,000	0	0		36,000	21,462	(14,538)	36,000	0	Awaiting final pre-planning report to determine course of action with respect to site.	
54002	Greening The Borough				0	0	0	0		0	325	325	0	0	Transfer to Brocks Hill Capital Maintenance	
54010	Play Area Refurbishments	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	8,400	0	0		8,400	0	(8,400)	8,400	0	WIP - work may start in autumn/winter. Costs highly likely to rise.	
54017	Xmas Decoration Infrastructure	Adrian Thorpe	Mark Hryniw	7,500	0	7,500	0	0		7,500	7,468	(32)	7,500	0	Expect to spend in-year.	
54079	Local Authority Delivery 2	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	0	0	0		0	275	0	0	0	Should be revenue expenditure under cemeteries.	
54114	Car Park Resurfacing	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	21,976	0	0		21,976	0	(21,976)	21,976	0	Originally planned for Bushloe - may be earmarked for other parks. East str, Brocks Hill & parklands	
54133	Replacement RVC	David Gill	Brian Kew		0	212,560	0	212,560		212,560	212,560	0	212,560	0	Refuse vehicle now received and in service	
54147	Recycling Wheelie Bins	David Gill	Brian Kew		0	0	0	0		0	13,216	13,216	13,216	13,216	Impossible to predict costs but most likely to increase.	
54151	Air Monitoring Equipment	David Gill	Jon Wells	5,600	5,600	0	0	0		5,600	(800)	5,600	5,600	0	Nearly complete	
54154	Kilby Bridge Canal & Towpath	Adrian Thorpe	Ed Morgan		0	12,372	0	12,372		12,372	0	(12,372)	12,372	0	Residual costs. Project now complete	
54160	Peace Memorial Park Bowls Green- replace steps to bowling green	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	5,000	0	5,000		5,000	2,385	(2,615)	2,385	(2,615)	Completed in May '23	
54162	Vehicle Refurbishment	David Gill	Brian Kew/Mark Westkamp	510,000	415,000	925,000	27,103	(582,940)		369,163	70,403	(298,760)	320,000	(49,163)	Order placed. Long lead time on vehicles, so delivery expected in the current FY, about December time.	
54164	7.5 Tonne Box Lorry	David Gill	Brian Kew		0	0	0	72,708		72,708	72,708	0	72,708	0	£50k per vehicle for refurbishment - hopefully to start in Nov.	
54165	3.5 Tonne Drop side Van	David Gill	0		0	0	0	47,777		47,777	0	0	47,777	0	To be procured in year.	
54166	Two Small Vans	David Gill	Brian Kew		0	0	0	35,791		35,791	35,791	0	35,791	0	Housing van already delivered and for clinical waste van expected at the Depot week beginning 16/10. GRNV already.	
54167	23/24 Refuse Vehicles	David Gill	Brian Kew		0	0	0	214,104		214,104	214,104	0	214,104	0	Refuse vehicle now received and in service	
54169	South Wigston Litter Bins	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	0	0	335		335	0	0	335	0	SM to investigate the purchase and why it is capitalised. Should be in Cleansing.	
54169	Brocks Hill Additional Play Equipment	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	82,000	0	0		82,000	0	(82,000)	82,000	0	Work has gone to tender. Prices are back. Actual spend likely by end of calendar year.	
54176	Repairs to play area surface various play areas	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	12,730	0	12,730		12,730	0	(12,730)	12,730	0	Still in development for autumn/winter. To estimate costs due to damage in the various play areas.	
54578	Town Centre Wi-Fi	Adrian Thorpe	Mark Hryniw		0	23,752	0	23,752		23,752	0	(23,752)	23,752	0	Projected expected to complete in year.	
54581	Wigston Town Centre Car Parks	Adrian Thorpe	Adrian Thorpe		0	100,000	0	100,000		100,000	0	(100,000)	0	(100,000)	Match funding to levelling up fund bid submitted 2nd August 2022. Outcome of bid not successful.	
54582	Blaby Road Pavilion Sewage Pumping System	David Gill	Don Rudd		0	5,500	0	5,500		5,500	4,212	(1,288)	4,212	(1,288)	Installation completed	
54585	Wigston Cemetery - entrance drive resurfacing and disabled parking	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	12,000	0	12,000		12,000	0	(12,000)	12,000	0	Costs to be reconciled and the forecast remains to budget.	
54586	Repairs to Roll of Honour (All Saints Churchyard)	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	5,000	0	5,000	0	5,000		5,000	0	(5,000)	5,000	0	WIP - likely to be underbudget.	
54587	Flude's Lane	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook		0	20,000	0	20,000		20,000	0	(20,000)	20,000	0	£17,250 estimate / quotation for the work to be done. Work commenced week beginning 16/01/23	
56003	Customer Services				0	0	0	0		0	(146)	(146)	(146)	(146)	Cancelled PO	
56010	IT Replacement Programme	Bev Bull	Ben Wilson		0	6,515	(6,515)	0		0	(78)	(78)	(78)	(78)	Complete. Transferred to Brocks Hill. Cancelled PO.	
56044	New Income Management System	Bev Bull	Deborah Proctor		0	0	0	0		0	556	556	0	0	Journalled to 30303	
56055	Document Management System Software	Trish Hatton	Ben Wilson		0	6,454	0	6,454		6,454	(48)	(6,502)	3,000	(3,454)	Some minor spend expected	
56056	Server / Network Hardware Replacements	Trish Hatton	Ben Wilson		0	7,168	0	7,168		0	0	0	0	0	Obsolete IT project budget. Transferred to Brocks Hill	
56068	Upgrade Uniform Database	Adrian Thorpe	Jon Wells		0	0	0	0		6,550	6,550	6,550	6,550	6,550	Additional upgrade costs for Uniform system	
56069	Licensing Software Review Computer Software	David Gill	Jon Wells		0	0	0	7,808		7,808	7,808	7,808	7,808	7,808	Staffing costs for Uniform system upgrade work.	
56072	South Wigston Shop Fronts	Adrian Thorpe	Mark Hryniw		0	6,100	0	6,100		6,100	15,417	9,317	15,417	9,317	Castledine Motorbikes shop front replacement after car accident - S106 money.	
56076	Windows server migrations	Bev Bull	Ben Wilson		0	5,000	(5,000)	0		0	0	0	0	0	Obsolete IT project budget. Transferred to Brocks Hill	
56081	IT Transition	Bev Bull	Ben Wilson		0	0	0	0		6,730	6,730	0	0	0	Transition now complete. PO's raised to date shouldn't be in this CC but in appropriate revenue CC's.	
56085	New Council Offices	Bev Bull	Deborah Proctor	300,000	300,000	199,413	63,183	562,596		880,680	318,085	924,596	362,000	362,000	£28k supplementary for Café. £35.2k transferred from obsolete IT projects.	
56087	Oadby Depot Refurbishment	David Gill	Don Rudd		0	4,552	0	4,552		4,552	0	(4,552)	4,552	0	Costs have been coded directly to the different areas affected e.g. IT, Furniture, Depot. So need to reconcile the costs and compare to budget. To be done by end of Q2.	
56092	Laptop Renewal	Bev Bull	Ben Wilson		0	6,710	0	6,710		6,710	0	(6,710)	5,000	(1,710)	Will need Laptops on a 3 year cycle. BW to make a large bid for 24/25 instead of c/f budget amount year by year.	
56095	Transformation Salaries	David Gill	Brian Kew		0	0	0	7,712		7,712	7,712	0	0	0	Consultancy costs for waste. Move to revenue.	
56096	Capital Maintenance Brocks Hill	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	10,000	10,000	0	0	10,000		10,000	0	(10,000)	10,000	0	Additional minor works for Brocks Hill	
	Replacement of Grounds Maintenance Dennis bowling green mower	David Gill	Brian Kew	6,000	6,000	0	0	6,000		6,000	0	(6,000)	0	(6,000)	TBD	
	Replacement of Grounds Maintenance Vehicle FE09 XOT	David Gill	Brian Kew	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000		30,000	0	(30,000)	30,000	0	Initial plan was to replace dual-purpose vehicle estimated at 55k, however Grounds maintenance team still to make a decision.	
	Replacement of Grounds Maintenance Vehicle FG12 MVN	David Gill	Brian Kew	33,000	33,000	0	0	33,000		33,000	0	(33,000)	33,000	0	Now delivered.	
	Invest to Save	Bev Bull	Ben Wilson	300,000	300,000	0	0	300,000		300,000	0	(300,000)	65,000	(235,000)	£50k for transformation/improvement team, £12k for licensing service transformation, £3k for Outcome-Based Budgeting	
	Data Centre	Bev Bull	Ben Wilson		0	16,500	(16,500)	0		0	0	0	0	0	Obsolete IT project budget. Transferred to Brocks Hill	
	Website accessibility	Trish Hatton	Robert Hellwell		0	5,000	0	5,000		5,000	0	(5,000)	5,000	0	Working to make our website more accessible and easier to navigate. Should be complete this year.	
	Finance System Upgrade	Bev Bull	Deborah Proctor	80,000	80,000	0	0	80,000		80,000	0	(80,000)	0	(80,000)	On hold till Dec '23, so unlikely to spend this year.	
	New Internal Website	Trish Hatton	Robert Hellwell		0	10,000	0	10,000		10,000	0	(10,000)	0	(10,000)	Project Cancelled	
	New Facility at Uplands Park	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	145,000	145,000	0	0	145,000		145,000	0	(145,000)	0	(145,000)	Slip to 24/25	
	Cricket Nets at Uplands Park	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	40,000	40,000	0	0	40,000		40,000	0	(40,000)	0	(40,000)	Slip to 24/25	
	Football Goals	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	7,221	7,221	0	0	7,221		7,221	0	(7,221)	0	(7,221)	Slip to 24/25	
	Pitch Improvement Equipment	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	30,000	30,000	0	0	30,000		30,000	0	(30,000)	0	(30,000)	Slip to 24/25	
	Skatepark and Parkour or BMX facilities	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	220,000	220,000	0	0	220,000		220,000	0	(220,000)	0	(220,000)	Slip to 24/25	
	Residue of reassigned sports budgets held as hedge against cost inflation.	David Gill	Stuart Marbrook	52,779	52,779	0	0	52,779		52,779	0	(52,779)	0	(52,779)	Slip to 24/25	
	Multi use basketball / football court at Freer Park, Carlton Drive, Wigston	David Gill	Stuart													

Project Code Reference	Scheme	Budget Holder	Responsible Person	2023-24 Proposals	2022-23 Budgeted C/F	2023-24 Approved Budget	2021-22 Final C/F	Additions/Remov als/Transfers	Slippage to 2024/25	2023-24 Total Budget	Actual to 30th September	Variance	Forecast	Forecast Variance to Budget	Comments
				£	£	£	£	£		£	£				
	Unsupported Borrowing					1,140,471				3,412,523					
	Supported Borrowing									0					
	Grants & Contributions									277,153					
	Revenue Funding GF									0					
	Revenue Funding HRA									0					
	Open Spaces S106									495,000					
	South Wiston Regeneration									0					
	Usable S106 Interest Reserve					495,000				0					
	Usable Capital Receipts - FORUM									0					
	Usable Capital Receipts - OTHER					1,788,100				300,000					
	Capital Reserve									0					
	Contributions Unapplied Reserve									0					
	Software Implementation Reserve									0					
	Major Repairs Reserve					2,796,381				2,796,381					
	Regeneration Reserve									0					
	14-1 Reserve					969,290				969,290					
						7,189,242				8,250,347					
						0				0					
50001	Sale of Council Houses												1,362		
51901	Council House Sales												(142,800)		
55950	Sale of Equipment												(18,605)		
56091	Sale of IT Equipment												(100)		
													2,832,347		
													0		

Agenda Item 11



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information
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Report Title: **Treasury Management Mid-Year Report 2023/24**

Report Author(s): **Simon Ball (Senior Finance Business Partner)
Bev Bull (Head of Finance /Acting Chief Finance Officer and S151)**

Purpose of Report:	This report details the performance and activities of the authority's treasury management function for the financial year 2023/24 to 30 th September 2023.
Report Summary:	This mid-year report has been written to comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice and covers the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An economic update for the 2023/24 financial year as at 30 September 2023; • The Council's borrowing position for 2023/24; • The Council's investment portfolio for 2023/24; • The Council's capital position (including prudential indicators)
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report and appendices be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2690 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Bev Bull (Head of Finance /Acting Chief Finance Officer and S151) (0116) 257 2649 bev.bull@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Simon Ball (Senior Finance Business Partner) (0116) 257 2624 simon.ball@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out in this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable

Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Policy 2023/24 • Treasury Strategy 2023/24 • Investment Strategy 2023/24
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List of Investments (1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023) 2. Schedule of PWLB Loans (2023/24)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low-risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially, before considering optimising investment return.
- 1.2 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning to ensure the Council can meet its capital spending commitments. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans, or the use of longer-term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 1.3 Accordingly, treasury management is defined as: "The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."
- 1.4 Three reports are produced annually on treasury management in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) and the Council's own Treasury Management Policy Statement. These are the Treasury Management Strategy and Statement strategy, the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report (this report) and the Treasury Management Annual Report.
- 1.5 The Code requires the Section 151 Officer to ensure that the treasury management function operates in accordance with treasury management strategy and practices adopted by Council. During 2023/24 to date there are no issues of non-compliance with these practices that need be brought to Member's attention.

- 1.6 Under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, the Council is required to prepare a number of prudential indicators against which treasury management performance is to be measured.
- 1.7 The details of all borrowing and investment transactions for the year 2023/24 to 30 September 2023, together with the performance of the treasury management function against prudential indicators are given below.

2. Economic Conditions

- 2.1 The current global and national economic climate remains unstable. In October 2022 inflation peaked at 11.1% and as at October 2023 it was 6.7%. Whilst inflation has fallen during 2023/24, the high inflation levels during 2022/23 are embedded into the current and ongoing costs and the existing rates of inflation remain higher than the Bank of England inflation target of 2%.
- 2.2 The Bank of England have increased the bank rate from 4.25% at April 2023, the beginning of the year, to the current rate of 5.25%. At the last two Monetary Policy Committee meeting it was agreed to maintain the rate at 5.25%, previously for the past 14 meetings the rate had been increased, indicating the increases may have peaked. The bank rate impacts on the interest rate earned on investments and influences the interest rate on borrowing.

3. Borrowing

- 3.1 **Long Term** - The Authority is able to borrow on a long-term basis from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). At the beginning of the year the value of the outstanding loans was £18.062m, comprising £13.082m relating to the HRA, and £4.980m relating to the general fund. £44k of principal has been repaid in year to date, and no additional long-term borrowing was undertaken, leaving the balance at £18.018m. No additional long-term borrowing is expected this financial year.
- 3.2 **Short Term** (Less than 365 days in duration) - There was £15m of short-term borrowing outstanding at the start of the year, taken out in lieu of long-term borrowing, plus £1.006m of long-term borrowing reclassified to short-term, as the time until maturity fell under 365 days. £2m of borrowing has been repaid. An additional £5m of borrowing is forecast before year end, in order to finance the capital programme, resulting in a total outstanding balance at year end of £18m.
- 3.3 A summary of currently outstanding loan balances is given at **Appendix 1**.

3.4 Cost of Borrowing

Accrued interest on the loans to 30 September is as follows:

Loan £000's	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	Interest £000's
4,436	30/06/2055	2.66	60
500	29/03/2052	4.10	10
14,088	Various	Various	234
2,000	09/08/2023	1.95	14
8,000	24/01/2024	4.10	164
5,000	26/02/2024	4.20	105

3.5 Liability Benchmark

The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its historic and current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £3m required to maintain sufficient liquidity to manage day-to-day cash flow but minimise credit risk.

There are four components to the Liability Benchmark:

1. **External Borrowing:** the Authority's existing loans that are still outstanding in future years.
2. **Loans CFR:** this is calculated in accordance with the loans CFR definition in the Prudential Code and projected into the future based on approved prudential borrowing and planned MRP.
3. **Net Loans Requirement:** this will show the Authority's gross loan debt less treasury management investments at the last financial year-end, projected into the future and based on its approved prudential borrowing, planned MRP and any other major cash flows forecast.
4. **Liability Benchmark (or gross loans requirement):** this equals net loans requirement plus short-term liquidity allowance.

Liability Benchmark	2022/23 Actual £m	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Forecast £m	2025/26 Forecast £m	2026/27 Forecast £m	2027/28 Forecast £m
Loans CFR	40.1	42.1	43.0	42.7	42.4	42.1
External borrowing	34.1	18.0	16.9	15.8	14.7	13.6
Internal (over) borrowing	6.0	24.1	26.2	27.0	27.7	28.5
Balance sheet resources	-9.2	-9.2	-9.2	-9.2	-9.2	-9.4
Investments (new borrowing)	-3.2	14.9	17.0	17.7	18.5	19.1

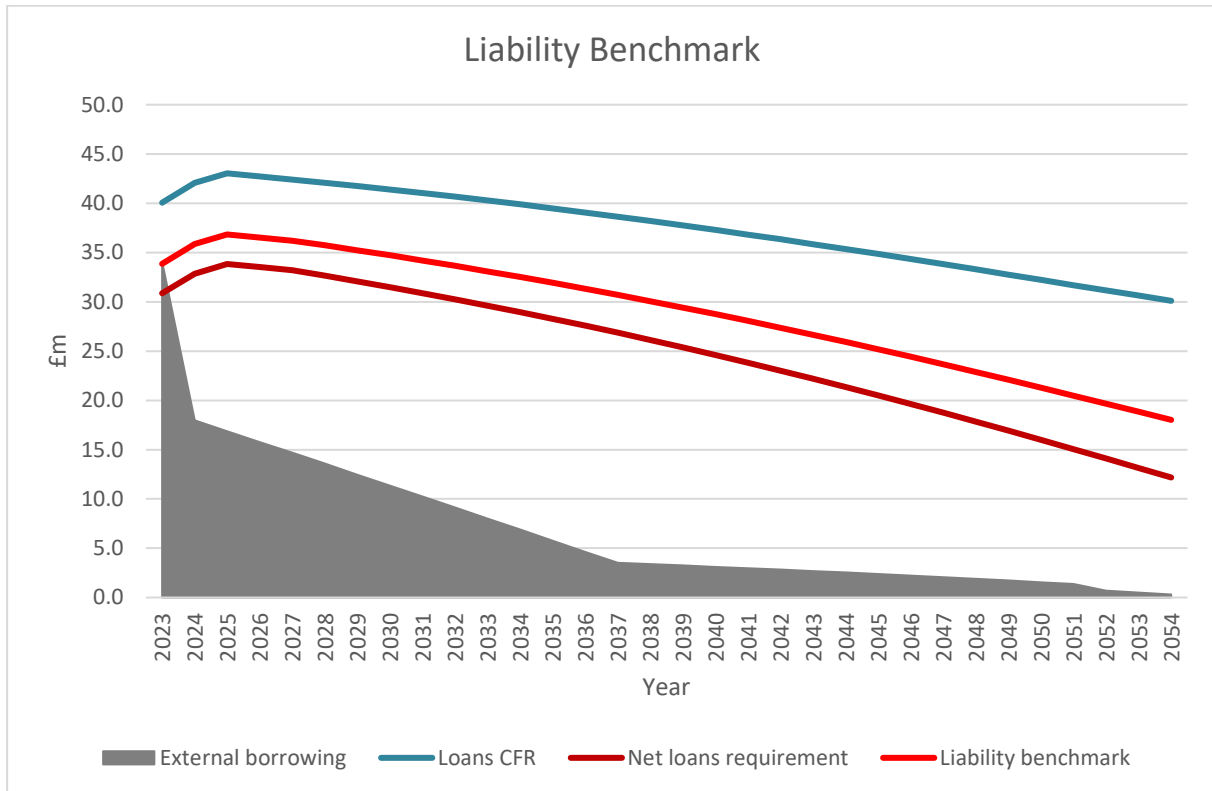
Treasury investments	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1
New borrowing	0.0	17.9	20.0	20.7	21.5	22.2

Net loans requirement	30.9	32.9	33.8	33.5	33.2	32.7
Liquidity allowance	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1
Liability benchmark	33.9	35.9	36.8	36.5	36.2	35.8

3.6 The benchmark assume the following from 2023/24 to 2025/26:

- Capital Expenditure funded by borrowing of £2.3m as reported in the Quarter 2 Financial Monitoring Report.
- Minimum Revenue Provision on new capital expenditure based on the Council's new MRP policy.
- No change in balance sheet resources.
- Existing loans of £16.2m are due to be repaid.

The Liability Benchmark for the next 30 years is presented below. This is a simplified model that assumes no capital spending after 2027/28



3.7 The liability benchmark shows that we have a borrowing need going forward. The gap between the external borrowing and the net loans requirement represents our need to borrow. Our current strategy is to manage our need to borrow through short term loans so the position assumes the current short-term loans are repaid, it is the intention to refinance these short term loan.

4. Investments

4.1 During 2023/24, the Council is often in a position where it often has temporary cash surpluses to invest. When considering investments the Council must consider the following factors;

- Security – the Authority has a counterparty list, based on credit ratings, within its Investment Strategy that is approved prior to the commencement of the financial year.
- Liquidity – because of the fluctuation of cash flows, there is always a need to have a mix of investments that are realisable when required;
- Yield – probably the least important consideration as often higher yields mean greater risks.

Given the current economic climate, and the volatility and uncertainty in the financial markets, security has to be the most important factor of the three listed above.

4.2 For 2023/24 surplus cash is invested in the following ways.

Special Interest Bearing Account – This account is held with National Westminster Bank plc. There is no limit on the size of the deposits, and it pays

interest at 1.45% on balances of up to £1m, and 1.70% on balances between £1m and £10m.

Money Market Deposits – Used for larger amounts, up to £1.5 million. The list of institutions approved for investment was agreed at Committee on 23rd February 2023. The investments fall into two categories;

- Money on Call – These investments run for a minimum of 7 days after which they can be recalled at any time. Interest rates are variable and can fluctuate during the life of the investment;
- Fixed Deposits – Investments which mature at a pre-arranged date. The interest rate is fixed for the life of the investment.

Debt Management Office Deposit Facility – This is the overnight deposit facility for the British government. There is no limit on the size of the deposits, and the maximum duration is six months. The current interest rate for one-day deposits is 5.17%.

- 4.3 The total accrued interest received to 30th September 2023 on temporary investments amounted to £69,599 (2022/23 full year £92,465). A summary of the total amount invested in 2023/24 to date is given at **Appendix 2**.

5. Prudential Indicators

- 5.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires Councils to comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities when carrying out their budgeting and treasury management activities. Fundamental to this is the calculation of a number of prudential indicators which provide the basis for management and monitoring of borrowing and investments. These indicators were agreed by Council on 23 February 2023.

- 5.2 **The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)** – This represents the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes, based on the cumulative value of capital expenditure not fully paid for. The CFR will change year on year in accordance with the value of capital spending.

- 5.3 The key control over treasury activities is to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing will only be for capital purposes. The Authority must ensure that net external borrowing does not, except for short periods, exceed the total of the CFR. A comparison of the estimate against the actuals is shown in the table below.

	2023/24 Original Estimate At Year End £000's	2023/24 Revised Estimate At Year End £000's
Gross Borrowing	34,474	35,474
Investments	0	0
Net Borrowing 31st March	34,474	35,474
Total CFR 31st March	41,146	42,064

The Section 151 Officer reports that the Council is expected to comply with the requirement to keep borrowing below the relevant CFR in 2023/24 and no difficulties are foreseen for the current or future years.

Borrowing Levels – The following two indicators control the overall level of borrowing;

- **The Authorised Limit** – This represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and needs to be set and revised by Members. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003;
- **The Operational Boundary** – This indicator is based on the probable external debt during the course of the year. It is not a limit and actual borrowing could vary around the boundary for short times during the year. It should act as a barometer to ensure the authorised limit is not breached;
- **The Authorised and Operational limits agreed by Council are as follows.**

	2023/24 Original Limit £000's	2023/24 Revised Limit £000's
Authorised Limit	45,000	45,000
Operational Boundary	40,000	40,000

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream – This indicator compares net financing costs (borrowing costs less investment income) to net revenue income from revenue support grant, business rates, housing revenue account subsidy, Council tax and rent income. The purpose of the indicator is to show how the proportion of net income used to pay for financing costs is changing over time.

	2023/24 Original Estimate %	2023/24 Revised Estimate %
General Fund	14.7	8.6
HRA	13.3	12.8

The above indicator shows that within the General Fund, financing costs were originally expected to be 14.7% of the net revenue income. We are now estimating 8.6% due to slippage in the capital programme resulting in borrowing taking place later in the year, and due to a change in the method utilised to calculate the Minimum Revenue Provision.

In the case of the HRA there is net interest payable which was expected to be 13.3% of the net revenue income. This is now estimated at 12.8%.

Limits on Activity – The following indicators constrain the activity of the treasury function to within certain limits, thereby reducing the risk of an adverse movement in interest rates impacting negatively on the Council's overall financial position.

- **Upper Limits on Variable Rate Exposure** – This indicator identifies a maximum Limit for variable interest rates;
- **Maturity Structures of Borrowing** – These gross limits are set to reduce the Council’s exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing;
- **Total Principal Funds Invested** – This limit is set to reduce the need for early sale of investments and is based on the availability of investments after each year-end.

	2022/23 Original Indicators		2022/23 Revised Indicators		2022/23 Actual Maturity Structure	
	%		%		%	
Fixed Interest Rates Limit	100		100		100	
Variable Interest Rates Limit	100		25		0	
Maturity Structure of Borrowing	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Under 12 Months	0	50	0	50	0	44
12 Months to 2 Years	0	50	0	50	0	3
2 Years to 5 Years	0	50	0	50	0	9
5 Years to 10 Years	0	100	0	100	0	16
10 Years & Above	0	100	0	100	0	28

The Prudential Code requires indicators to be set for the maturity structure of fixed borrowings only.

Schedule of PWLB Loans (HRA Self – Financing Settlement)

Principal Outstanding (£)	Rate of Interest (%)	Date of Maturity
1,006,333	2.82	20/03/2025
1,006,333	2.92	20/03/2026
1,006,333	3.01	20/03/2027
1,006,333	3.08	20/03/2028
1,006,333	3.15	20/03/2029
1,006,333	3.21	20/03/2030
1,006,333	3.26	20/03/2031
1,006,333	3.30	20/03/2032
1,006,333	3.34	20/03/2033
1,006,333	3.37	20/03/2034
1,006,333	3.40	20/03/2035
1,006,333	3.42	20/03/2036
1,006,333	3.44	20/03/2037
13,082,329	Total	

Schedule of PWLB Loans (General Fund)

Principal Outstanding (£)	Rate of Interest (%)	Date of Maturity
500,000	4.10	29/03/2052
4,436,422	2.66	29/06/2055
4,936,422	Total	

Schedule of Short Term Loans (General Fund)

Principal Outstanding (£)	Rate of Interest (%)	Date of Maturity
7,000,000	4.10	24/01/2024
7,000,000	Total	

Schedule of Short Term Loans (HRA)

Principal Outstanding (£)	Rate of Interest (%)	Date of Maturity
1,000,000	4.10	24/01/2024
5,000,000	4.20	26/02/2024
*1,006,333	2.70	20/03/2024
7,006,333	Total	

***PWLB Debt moved to short term debt as due within 365 days**

Total investments placed during the period
1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023

	Cumulative No. Of Investments To 30 September	Total Value Invested To 30 September	Average Interest Rate	Average Duration	Interest Earned (Accrued)
	£ 000's	£ 000's	%		£ 000's
British Clearing Banks					
National Westminster Bank PLC	105	40,311	1.45%	11 days	15
Local Authorities					
Derbyshire Country Council	1	3,000	4.25%	6 months	52
Government Bodies					
Debt Management Office	4	10,000	5.14%	2 days	3
	110	53,311			70

Agenda Item 12



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **2024/25 Draft Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Plan and 2024/25 – 2026/27 Draft Capital Programmes**

Report Author(s): **Bev Bull, (Head of Finance / Acting Chief Finance Officer -S151)**

Purpose of Report:	<p>To present the revised General Fund Annual Budget for 2024/25 and an updated MTFP for 2024/25 to 2026/27.</p> <p>To provide an update on the capital programme for 2024/25.</p> <p>To present the HRA Annual Budget for 2024/25.</p>
Report Summary:	<p>The report outlines the draft budget position for the 2024/25 year for the Council's General Fund, which is an anticipated deficit position of £1.267m.</p> <p>The report outlines an updated MTFP position for 2024/25 to 2026/27, which shows a cumulative gap of £6.883m.</p> <p>The report recommend that reserves are no longer used to balance the budget, noting the depleting reserve balance and that reserves will run out in 2025/26.</p> <p>The report recommends Service Delivery Changes – Financial Sustainability Plan to address the budget gap.</p> <p>The proposed Capital Programme for 2024/25 is presented which is as per the indicative capital programme with no new schemes being added.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>That the Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the content of the report and appendices; 2. Recommends to Council that the general fund balance reserve is no longer used to balance the budget; and 3. Recommends to Council that the Service Delivery Changes – Financial Sustainability Plan is approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2690 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>

	Bev Bull (Head of Finance /Acting Chief Finance Officer - S151) (0116) 257 2649 bev.bull@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out in the report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6) Organisational / Transformational Change (CR8)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	SLT 27/11/2023
Background Papers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2023/24 Revenue Budgets, Medium Term Financial Plan, 2023/24 – 2027/28 Capital Programmes – Full Council 23 February 2023 2. Budget Setting Approach for 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update – Full Committee 26 September 2023.
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analysis of 2024/25 budget gap movement. 2. MTFP 2024/25 to 2026/27 3. MTFP Budget Assumptions 4. Service Delivery Changes – Financial Sustainability Plan. 5. Draft Fees and Charges 6. Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2026/27.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2023, Full Council received a report to approve the 2023/24 budget, this included a five-year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) showing the forecast financial outlook for each year to 2026/27. At that time the MTFP forecast a deficit of £269k for 2024/25, and a total deficit over the MTFP of £2.653m before any sustainability programme savings.
- 1.2 During the year a number of budget workshops have been held with members where updates have been provided to members on movements to the MTFP position and an update was reported to Full Council in September 2023, when the budget approach for 2024/25 was agreed.
- 1.3 Following the detailed budget setting process for 2024/25 and the updating of the MTFP a significant deficit is forecast for 2024/25 and future years. The forecast deficit for 2024/25 is now 1.267m, and a total deficit over the MTFP of £6.883m.
- 1.4 The Council has, low and depleting reserves. Historically, the Council has utilised reserves to balance the budget, with a significant depletion of reserves. The reserves levels are now at their lowest level, and they cannot continue to be used to balance the budget.

2. 2024/25 Annual Budget

- 2.1 The budget process and principles approved by Full Council in Sept 2023, were the same principles followed by budget managers in setting their budgets. These were:
 - The 2023/24 revised budget will form the base budget for 2024/25.
 - Inflation assumptions are based on latest information, in respect of:
 - Salaries
 - Utilities
 - Fuel
 - Contracts (as per Contract terms)
 - Interest rates (investment/borrowing)
 - Growth/pressures on costs and reduced income, insofar as is possible, are off by making savings in other areas.
 - Budgets have been reviewed looking at historical budgets and actuals to identify budgets to offset pressures and create savings.
 - Savings have been built into the budget where efficiencies have been made, such as post being deleted, and contract reduced or ceased.
 - Income has been increased where income generation initiatives have been identified such as for Advertising and Sponsorship and Hire of the Civic Suite.
- 2.2 Star Chamber has taken place where the Leader, Deputy Leader, Chair of Policy, Finance and Development Committee, Chair of Services Committee and member of the opposition party received information from each Head of Service on their service areas and budgets. The members scrutinised the budgets and movements in budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 for all of the service areas.

- 2.3 Table 1 shows the revised budget gap/deficit following the detailed budget setting process for 2024/25 compared to the forecast position at February 2023. Appendix 1 analyses all the pressures and growth and the savings that have been identified, resulting in the revised gap.
- 2.4 The budget gap has increased by £998k to £1.267m in 2024/25.

Table 1 - 2024/25 Budget Gap

	MTFP - Approved Feb 2023	Budget Setting - November 2023	Movement in Gap
Net Expenditure 24/25	7,696,000	8,812,000	1,116,000
Funding 24/25	-7,427,000	-7,545,000	-118,000
GAP	269,000	1,267,000	998,000

3. 2024/25 to 2027/28 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

- 3.1 Table 2 below shows the MTFP budget gaps approved in the February budget report before any savings targets for the sustainability programme.

Table 2 – MTFP Forecast Budget Gaps – February 2023.

Financial Year	In-year gap	Cumulative gap
2023/24	£431,000*	£431,000
2024/25	£269,000	£700,000
2025/26	£810,000	£1,510,000
2026/27	£686,000	£2,196,000
2027/28	£457,000	£2,653,000

* The 2023/24 budget was set utilising £431k of general reserve to achieve a balanced budget.

- 3.2 The budget changes identified in the detailed budget setting process for 2024/25 are in the main permanent changes to budgets and therefore the impact is then ongoing throughout the MTFP. The MTFP has been updated to reflect the ongoing impact of these changes and the assumptions included in the MTFP have also been updated.
- 3.3 The updated MTFP summary 2023/24 to 2027/28 is shown in Appendix 2 and the MTFP assumptions are shown in Appendix 3. Table 3 below shows the updated MTFP budget gaps. The forecast deficit over the MTFP of £6.883m.

Table 3 – MTFP Forecast Budget Gaps – November 2023.

Financial Year	In-year gap	Cumulative gap
2023/24	£912,566	£912,566

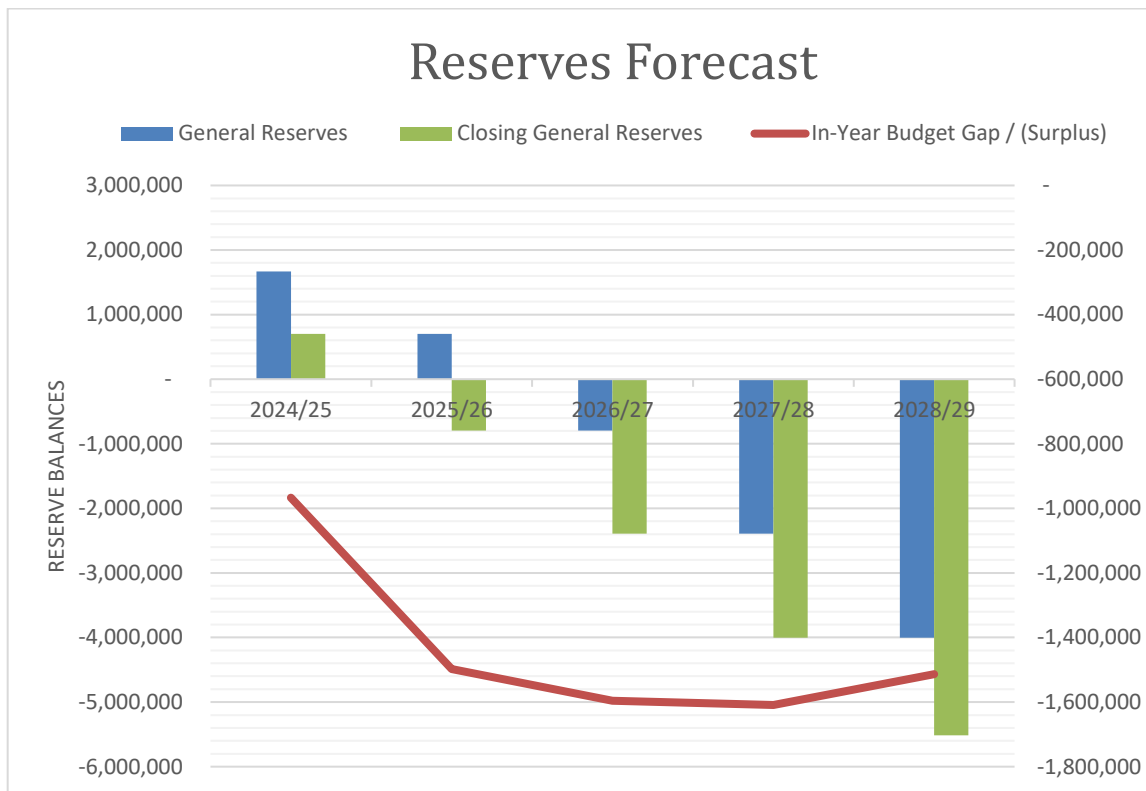
2024/25	£1,267,000	£2,179,566
2025/26	£1,498,000	£3,677,566
2026/27	£1,596,000	£5,273,566
2027/28	£1,609,000	£6,882,566

3.4 The impact of the forecast budget gaps on the General Fund Reserve Balance is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 – Forecast General Fund Reserve Balance 2023/24 to 2027/28.

General Fund Reserve	£
Opening Balance	-1,412,772
Use of reserve in setting the budget for 23/24	430,187
Supplementary Budget	33,000
Forecast overspend Q2	488,381
Sales Fees and Charges clawback as per Q1 report	198,670
Return from the Business Rates Pool 20/21 and 21/22 as per Q1 report	-732,194
Re-purposing of earmarked reserves	-72,912
Estimate of return from the Business Rates Pool 22/23 and 23/24.	-600,000
Estimated Closing Balance 31 March 2024	-1,667,640
2024/25 Budget Gap	1,267,000
Estimate of return from the Business Rates Pool 24/25.	-300,000
Estimated Closing Balance 31 March 2025	-700,640
2025/26 Budget Gap	1,498,000
Estimated Closing Balance 31 March 2026	797,360
2026/27 Budget Gap	1,596,000
Estimated Closing Balance 31 March 2027	2,393,360
2027/28 Budget Gap	1,609,000
Estimated Closing Balance 31 March 2028	4,002,360

3.5 The impact of the forecast budget gaps on the General Fund Reserve Balance is also shown in the chart below.



- 3.6 Both Table 4 and the chart show that if no action is taken to reduce the forecast budget gaps the Council will deplete reserve early in 2025/26.
- 3.7 The General Fund Reserve Balance is needed to provide resilience for unforeseen one-off pressures and shocks, reserve balances are not supposed to be used to balance the budget. Requiring the use of reserve in balancing the budget demonstrates the Council is not financially sustainable as its expenditure is exceeding its funding.
- 3.8 The Council has consistently utilised reserves to balance its budget. Between 2021/22 to 2023/24 amounts of between £100k up to £600k have been utilised each year to balance the budget. Previous budget reports also informed Council that there was significant depletion of reserves between 2014/15 and 2017/18 and that this was a trend that should not be reintroduced.
- 3.9 This suggests that the Council has been operating on a financially unsustainable basis.
- 3.10 The historic strategy of a reliance on reserves to balance the budget demonstrates that the Council has been spending beyond its means and not been operating on a financially sustainable basis. Urgent action is needed to move the Council to a financially sustainable position. The Senior Leadership Team's recommendations for delivering a balanced budget for 2024/25 are included at Appendix 4 - Service Delivery Changes – Financial Sustainability Plan.

4. Local Government Financial Outlook

- 4.1 The Council is part of the Local Government Funding system which is determined by the local government finance settlement. The settlement for 2023/24 was a one-year settlement, meaning understanding the funding position beyond 2023/24 is extremely difficult. The provisional financial settlement is expected around the 19th December 2023 and the budget position will be updated for the impact, it is not envisaged there will be any significant changes to the funding system for 2024/25.

4.2 On the 22nd November the Chancellor delivered his Autumn Statement. The statement does not contain any indications that there will be any changes to the Local Government Funding system.

4.3 Some of the relevant announcements included in the statement are detailed below:

- New powers to **de-couple the business rates multipliers** will be used from 2024-25. As we expected, the small business rates multiplier will be frozen, and the standard multiplier indexed (to 54.6p based on September CPI).
- **75% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) discounts** will continue for a further year.
- Local authorities will be “fully compensated for the loss of income from these business rates measures”.
- **Local Housing Allowance (LHA)** rates will be raised to the 30% percentile of local market rents from April 2024. No direct impact on local authorities but this should indirectly reduce pressure on temporary accommodation. *(At this stage it is not possible to calculate the impact this will have on reducing the pressure at OWBC, as more information becomes available it will be factored into the budget position).*
- **Long-term freeze in capital investment** in the public sector.
- Local authorities will be able to increase **planning fees for applications from larger businesses** (to recover the full costs) but will have to return fees if timelines not achieved.

4.4 Local government funding reforms were first announced in 2016 and there have since been a number of deferrals. The reforms include:

- A review of the Needs and Resources assessment (previously Fair Funding Review announced in 2016) is due to determine a new mechanism for allocating resources within the sector;
- The Business Rates Retention Scheme is due to be reset potentially removing all of the previously generated growth in the system
- A review of the New Homes Bonus

4.5 The potential impact of these changes represents significant uncertainty in terms of the financial resources available from 2025/26 onwards.

4.6 Council Tax is the largest source of funding to the authority, the ability to increase the level of Council Tax is restricted by the referendum limits set by Central Government. This has been set for 2023/24 and 2024/25 at the higher of £5 or 3%, beyond this period there is no certainty. The decision regarding the level of increase of the Council Tax within the referendum limits sits with the members of the Council.

Global and National Economics

4.7 The current global and national economic climate remains unstable. In October 2022 inflation peaked at 11.2% and as at August 2023 it was 6.7%. Whilst inflation has fallen during 2023/24, the high inflation levels during 2022/23 are embedded into the current and ongoing costs and the existing rates of inflation remain higher than the Bank of England inflation target of 2%.

4.8 The Bank of England have increased the bank rate from 4.25% at April 2023, the beginning of the year, to the current rate of 5.25%. At the last Monetary Policy Committee meeting it was agreed to maintain the rate at 5.25%, for the past 14 meetings the rate has been increased. The bank rate impacts on the interest rate earned on investments and influences the interest rate on borrowing.

Inflation and service demands

- 4.9 The high inflation rates have impacted on pay negotiations in 2022/23 and 2023/24 which has resulted in higher pay awards than previous years. Where the final pay award agreed differs to the budget assumptions this creates a budget pressure in year and an ongoing pressure as the pay awards are embedded in to the current and ongoing salary costs, this was the case in 2022/23 and 2023/24.
- 4.10 Energy and fuel inflation rates have been impacted by the Russian invasion off the Ukraine, the increases have reduced to since this time last year. This remains an area where prices are volatile.
- 4.11 The high levels of inflation are also impacting on the costs of supplies and contracts and are adding risk to the viability of some suppliers which increases the contract risk exposure.
- 4.12 The level of increases in pay awards, energy and fuel and general costs, which are being influenced by the high inflation in the economy, are in excess of the increases received in funding. This increases the budget gaps and requires additional savings to be found.
- 4.13 Demands on outcomes to be delivered are increasing, especially in specific areas such as providing temporary accommodation for the homeless. Increasing demands therefore increases the need for financial resources and requires the use of limited financial resources to be prioritised.

5. Sales Fees and Charges

- 5.1 The Council charges for a number of its services that are provided to the public. All fees and charges are reviewed on an annual basis as part of the budget process. Charges set by the Council are increased in line with inflation or other factors taken into consideration, in line with the Corporate Charging Policy:

- Statutory obligations
- Policies objectives of the Council;
- Local market research and competition (where relevant);
- The impact of price changes on activity level of demand;
- Changes in taxation;
- Budget position and any associated gap;
- The cost of providing the service.

- 5.2 Included at Appendix 5 is the draft proposed charge position, together with of explanation of changes to individual charges. This will be updated to reflect further changes that are agreed as actions to balance the budget.

6. Capital programme

- 6.1 An indicative capital programme for 2024/25 to 2026/27 was approved in February 2023 and the impact of this is incorporated into the capital financing charges included in the MTFP. This is included at Appendix 6.
- 6.2 A number of capital bids have been made as part of the budget setting process. The capital bids received do not identify any funding. This means they would be required to be funded through 'prudential borrowing'. This would increase the capital charges in the General Fund, as a 'Minimum Revenue Provision' (MRP) is required, which

effectively is a method of repaying the capital amount borrowed from revenue over the asset life and interest charges would also increase.

- 6.3 Due to the challenging financial pressures the Council is currently facing it is not recommended to approve any additional capital schemes to be added to the capital programme funded by 'prudential borrowing'. It is recommended a list of priority schemes should be approved with a view to them only progressing if capital receipts are received and/or other capital funding is identified. If capital receipts are received, the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chief Executive, Chair of PFDC, the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition will need to consider the use of the receipts in terms of the need to repay existing debt to reduce revenue costs or to commence priority capital schemes.
- 6.4 The capital bids received are outlined below; some require more information to enable the schemes to be prioritised. A prioritised list of schemes will be presented for approval in the February Budget report.

Brocks Hill Roof and Installation of Solar Panels £465k

During the course of refurbishing the Brocks Hill building, it came to light that the existing roof tiles to the building are degraded and require replacement. This did not form part of the scope of works or budget and it is to do with the existing fabric of the building. Given that the roof tiles currently remain watertight it was decided to leave the work to a later date. Once the tiles are replaced this will then enable solar panels to be fitted to the roof which will contribute towards the Council contribution towards the reduction of CO2 as set out in our Climate Change Strategy.

Fludes Lane - Continue resurfacing £150k

Aylestone Lane Allotments New Road/cart track road - £200k

Play Areas refurbishment programme -£150k

Willow Park Improvements - £95k

Pathway Improvement (various locations) - £40k

Cemetery Improvements - £30k

Wigston Road Allotment Improvements - £45k

A number of other small schemes.

7. **HRA** – To be included before meeting.

Analysis of movement in 2024/25 Budget Gap

Appendix 1

Major Growth/pressure	£ Amount	Service Area
Pay award 23/24 - ongoing impact	176,000	All
Unachievable vacancy factor	119,000	All
Incremental grade increases	82,000	All
Increase in pay award assumption 2024/25 from 3% to 4%	75,000	All
Increase in apprenticeship Levy	8,000	All
Net of all other smaller movements	74,000	All
Removal of capitalisation of Regen posts	110,000	Economic Development
Consultancy/professional fees budget created - to be used as no Regen Manager	10,000	Economic Development
Regen team salary increases to support team restructure - offset by removal of posts	8,000	Economic Development
Increases to the Building Control Partnership budget	17,000	Building Control
Net reduction in Planning Application Fees income	16,000	Development Control
Biodiversity Net Gain - Leicestershire County Council	16,000	Planning
Increased to fund OWBC contribution towards Joint Transport Study	11,000	Planning
Increase in costs of temporary accommodation	19,000	Housing
Selective Licensing Income Reduction	125,000	Selective Property Licensing
Community and Wellbeing budget error from 23/24	97,000	Community and Wellbeing
Change in Leisure Operator Contact Fee	65,000	Community and Wellbeing
Net impact of Bushloe/Brockshill change	82,000	Corporate Assets
Cost increases in corp assets	72,000	Corporate Assets
Assistant Corporate Asset Manager post - off set by post removed in savings list.	48,000	Corporate Assets
Unbudgeted costs of contractual arrangements and hired staff	37,000	Refuse and Recycling
Reduction in white goods income - one off. Reduction in use of service due to cost of living crisis expect to increase in future years.	10,000	Refuse and Recycling
Inflation in Fleet Maintenance Costs	24,000	Fleet Management
Regulatory Services Apprentice Post	20,000	Environmental Health
Customer Services Post - Receptionist post	15,000	Customer Services

Increase in croner contract HR Support - one off as contract ends in 2025/26	10,000	HR
Housing Benefit Pressure - mainly around temp accom costs	402,000	Finance
Interest costs increased on borrowing due to delay on capital receipts	155,000	Finance
Interim Resources Finance - one off	71,000	Finance
Removal of a Commercial Investment Income budget	41,000	Finance
Increase in insurance cost	12,000	Finance
Removal of capitalisation of IT salaries	85,000	ICT
Software Licence Inflation	14,000	ICT
Total Growth /Pressures	2126000	

Major Savings identified	£ Amount	Service Area
Increased Income/Funding		
Increase on rental income from temporary accommodation	-60,000	Housing
Additional grants - temp accommodation support	-100,000	Housing
Additional income on personal charges on temp accom	-20,000	Housing
Funding identified for Town Centre Manager	-16,000	Economic Development
Increase in New Burdens Grant Income	-28,000	Finance
Grant Income From Decarbonisation Scheme	-39,000	Environment Strategy
Admin and Management recharge to UKSPF	-19,000	Economic Development
Removal of posts		
Removal of Business Rates Officer - vacant post	-31,000	Finance
Removal of System Support Officer - vacant post	-42,000	Finance
Removal of Revs and Bens temporary staffing budgets	-61,000	Finance
Removal of Regeneration Manager - vacant post	-64,000	Economic Development
Removal of Regeneration Project Officer - vacant post	-38,000	Economic Development
Removal of Corporate Asset Apprentice Post	-24,000	Corporate Assets
Removal of Corporate Projects staff budgets following restructure	-13,000	Corporate Projects
Contracts ceased/reduced		
Ceasing IT network support contract - work to be completed in house	-20,000	ICT
Ceasing Fraud Contract - work to be completed in house	-13,000	Finance
Reduction in Mobile Phones - reduce number of phones	-5,000	ICT

Removal of budget for Wi-Fi enhancement budget - work completed a	-10,000	ICT
Removal of Security Improvement budget - work was completed as par	-10,000	ICT
Reduction in photocopier lease charges	-10,000	Finance
Income Generation Projects		
Sponsorship ad Advertising Income	-7,000	Communications
Catering Concession at Brocks Hill	-32,000	Corporate Assets
Hire of Civic Suite	-3,000	Corporate Assets
Other Savings		
Minimum Revenue Provision Review	-269,000	Finance
Savings across Customer Services, Service Improvement, HR and Comn	-18,000	Customer Services
Removal of overtime budget and vacant Cleaner post following restruct	-19,000	Cleaning Services
Printing and Stationary	-20,000	Refuse and Recycling
Workshop/depot Sundry Savings	-19,000	Workshop/depot
Total Savings	-1,010,000	

Changes to funding	£ Amount	Service Area
Reduction in Business Rates Tariff following national revaluation	-83,000	Finance
Use of Grounds Maintenance	-35,000	Corporate Assets
Total Funding Changes	-118,000.00	

Net movement	998,000.00	
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Item	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Forecast Outturn	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Net Revenue Expenditure						
Locally generated income	- 3,100,000	- 3,100,000	- 3,046,000	- 3,088,000	- 3,149,000	- 3,212,000
Recharge from HRA	- 1,430,000	- 1,430,000	- 1,469,000	- 1,469,000	- 1,469,000	- 1,469,000
Pay related costs (incl pension)	8,160,000	8,410,000	8,680,000	8,870,000	9,054,000	9,241,000
Capital financing / MRP	1,020,000	600,000	903,000	813,000	823,000	833,000
Other Supplies, Services & Contracts	2,890,000	3,600,000	3,744,000	3,763,000	3,916,000	3,988,000
Total Net Revenue Expenditure	7,540,000	8,080,000	8,812,000	8,889,000	9,175,000	9,381,000
Funding						
Contribution from reserves (Earmarked Reserve)	- 140,000	- 160,000	- 35,000	- 35,000	- 35,000	- 35,000
Council Tax	- 4,440,000	- 4,440,000	- 4,597,000	- 4,753,000	- 4,920,000	- 5,092,000
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit - Ctax	- 20,000	- 20,000	-	-	-	-
Retained Business Rates	- 2,300,000	- 2,300,000	- 2,593,000	- 2,603,000	- 2,289,000	- 2,342,000
Collect Fund (Surplus)/Deficit - Brates	110,000	110,000	-	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	- 260,000	- 260,000	- 258,000	-	-	-
Revenue Support Grant	-	-	-	-	335,000	303,000
Lower Tier Services Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-
Services Grant	- 60,000	- 60,000	- 62,000	-	-	-
Total Funding	- 7,110,000	- 7,130,000	- 7,545,000	- 7,391,000	- 7,579,000	- 7,772,000
In-Year Budget Gap / (Surplus)	430,000	950,000	1,267,000	1,498,000	1,596,000	1,609,000
Cumulative Budget Gap / (Surplus)			1,267,000	2,765,000	4,361,000	5,970,000

Budget Assumptions in the MTFP

Appendix 3

	Budget Assumptions 2024/25	Budget Assumptions Future Years
<u>Net Revenue Expenditure</u>		
Pay costs	Aligned with 2024/25 budget (4% pay award).	3% 2025, 2% thereafter. NB percentages here to reflect total organisational percentage increase, not percentage pay award for staff.
Pension employer rates (attached)	As per Leicestershire LGPS Pension Fund.	As per Leicestershire LGPS Pension Fund for 2025/26. The assumed 3% increase year on year as per 2023/24 to 2025/26.
Members Allowances	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	Remain static
Other Supplies, Services & Contracts	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	Increased by CPI forecast
Recharge from HRA	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting. Based on previous year +2%	As per 2024/25 - no uplift due to this area needing a full review.
Other grant income	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	Increased by CPI forecast
NDR	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	Increased by CPI forecast
Locally generated income	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	2% in line with BoE inflation target
Leisure contract	Aligned with renegotiated position with SLM	Aligned with renegotiated position with SLM
Insurance	As per newly tendered contracts	Increased by CPI forecast
HB Payments	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	Maintaining at 2024/25 level
Fuel	Aligned with 2024/25 detailed budget setting	Maintaining at 2024/25 level - OBR forecasting slight reduction
Capital financing / MRP	As per detailed MRP and interest forecast workings.	As per detailed MRP and interest forecast workings.
<u>Funding</u>		
Services Grant	As per provisional Local Government Finance Settlement	Assumed to continue for 2024/25, then discontinued as funding reform implemented

Revenue Support Grant	As per 2023/24 no RSG -NB CTAX grant rolled into RSG but that included in service area not funding.	As 2024/25
Retained Business Rates	As per 2023/24 forecast model less the reduction in tariff following revaluation adjustment. Will be updated when Provisional Settlement received.	As per latest Pixel funding model
New Homes Bonus	As per 2023/24 amount. Will be updated when Provisional Settlement received.	2024/25 assumed to be the last year as this funding stream is expected to be reviewed.
Council Tax	As per 2023/24 forecast model, Base growth of 0.6% p.a. Maximum increases (2.99%). Will be updated following Council Tax base setting and when Provisional Settlement received.	Base growth of 0.6% p.a. Maximum increases (2.99%).
Contribution from reserves (Earmarked Rese	Contribution of EMRs 2024/25	Use of Grounds Maintenance Reserve
Collect Fund (Surplus)/Deficit - Brates	This will be calculated when funding is reviewed once the Provisional Settlement received.	Surplus/deficit only applies to current year
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit - Ctax	This will be calculated when funding is reviewed following the Council Tax base setting and when Provisional Settlement received.	Surplus/deficit only applies to current year

Description	Saving (£)	Service Area	Notes
Bin Swaps - Commence Charge	-12,000	Refuse and Recycling	£30 per bin
Bulky Waste Charge Increase	-15,000	Refuse and Recycling	Increase to £40 per bulky collection of 3 items.
Green Waste Increase	-110,000	Refuse and Recycling	Increase in charge from £50 to £60
Alternative Weekly Collections Waste	-120,000	Refuse and Recycling	Half year saving
Car Park Permit Charge Increase	-80,000	Corporate Assets	Increase in permits by 100% to £150 for residents and £300 to non-residents
Car Park Hourly Rate Increases	-165,000	Corporate Assets	Increase in up to 2 hourly rate to £1.50, up to 4 hour to £4 and over 4 hours to £6.
Car Park Hourly Rate Increases - Leisure Centre	-14,000	Corporate Assets	Introduce 2 hours charge for £1 and up to 4 hour charge to £2 and all day £6
Reduce 'Our Borough' publication	-15,000	Customer Service and Transformation	publication will be digital and hard copies to public sites
Helping Hands	-58,000	Community and Wellbeing	Cancel Contract - OWBC fund a Financial Inclusion Officer to support residents.
Community and Wellbeing Partnership	-97,000	Community and Wellbeing	Cancel Contract - deliver in house with existing resources
Service Transformation	-507,000	All	Service delivery reviews to be concluded early 2024/25
Reduce pay award assumption	-76,000	All	
Total Savings to balance the Gap	-1,269,000		

Appendix 5

To Follow

To Follow

Agenda Item 15



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Organisational Strategy (2023)**

Report Author(s): **Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director)**

Purpose of Report:	To present a draft Organisational Strategy for the PFDC to consider for approval.
Report Summary:	This draft Organisational Strategy sets out a vision for the type of organisation the Council needs to become to deliver the Corporate Strategy and to continue to thrive, given the financial limitations and the external environmental constraints which the Council faces.
Recommendation(s):	That the Organisational Strategy as set out at Appendix 1 to this report be approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Anne Court (Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service) (0116) 257 2602 anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Sal Khan (Interim Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2635 sal.khan@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Trish Hatton (Head of Customer Service and Transformation) (0116) 257 2700 trish.hatton@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Strategic Objectives:	<p>Our Council (SO1)</p> <p>Our Communities (SO2)</p> <p>Our Environment (SO4)</p> <p>Our Partners (SO5)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision)</p> <p>Customer & Community Focused (V1)</p> <p>Resourceful & Resilient (V4)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	<p>Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1)</p> <p>Political Dynamics (CR3)</p> <p>Reputation Damage (CR4)</p> <p>Regulatory Governance (CR6)</p> <p>Organisational / Transformational Change (CR8)</p>
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report.

Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leadership Team • Corporate Management Team • Council employees via staff newsletter
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Organisational Strategy

1. Introduction to the Organisational Strategy

- 1.1. This Organisational Strategy sets out a vision for the type of organisation the Council needs to become to deliver the Corporate Strategy and to continue to thrive, given the financial limitations and the external environmental constraints which the Council faces.
- 1.2. The strategy provides an overarching framework for the future development of the Council as an organisation based upon a set of principles that are both relevant and necessary.
- 1.3. The strategy and its principles are intended as a guide to ensure that the Council can marshal efforts and resources to provide a persistent focus on continued improvement in outcomes, value for money and therefore increasing public value, enabling the Council to become more sustainable in future years.

2. Organisation Vision

- 2.1. The vision for the future shape of the Council is to be one of:

A more focused council with an efficient support function, concentrating resources on council service delivery in innovative ways to a set of activities agreed by Members and Officers.

3. Organisational Principles

Section 3 of the strategy sets out the six key organisational principles required of the Council in order to achieve the vision. These are:

- Sustained in our focus on outcomes.
- Strong in providing leadership.
- Confident with the right sort of partnership working.
- Confident with change and improvement.
- Confident with information.
- Being accountable.

4. Implications for Services

In delivering on the stated vision and associated principles there also exist underlying service characteristics common to all services within the authority. Section 4 of the strategy states that these are:

- Customer shaped, delivering value for money,
- Being professionally guided,
- Able to work across authority functions and organisations,
- Creative, seeking excellence in innovation and the application of organisational learning.

5. Supporting Outcomes

There are five key organisational drivers underpinning the delivery of the organisational vision within the context of reinvigorated service requirements. Section 5 of the strategy suggests that these are:

- Our workforce,
- Our elected members
- Our systems, processes and technology,
- Our assets,
- Our customer access arrangements.

6. Conclusions and Timescales

- 6.1. It is suggested that the strategy will run until June 2027 and all underpinning strategies that are due for a refresh or need to be written will incorporate the principles of the Organisational Strategy.
- 6.2. There will be a need to ensure that as the requirements from and the demands of Local Government continue to change that the principles considered in this strategy and the underpinning business strategies continue to remain relevant and appropriate.
- 6.3. This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure the content and approach is still appropriate and fit for purpose.

Draft Organisational Strategy 2023

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

1. Introduction

Purpose of the Strategy

This Organisational Strategy for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council sets out a vision for the type of organisation the Council needs to become to deliver the Corporate Strategy and continue to thrive, given the financial limitations and the external environmental constraints which the Council faces.

The strategy provides an overarching framework for the future development of the Council as an organisation based upon a set of principles that are both relevant and necessary. We are at a time of major challenge and change within the authority due to local, regional, and national factors.

The strategy and its principles are intended as a guide to ensure that the Council can marshal efforts and resources to provide a persistent focus on continued improvement in outcomes, value for money and therefore increasing public value, which will also make the Council more sustainable in future years.

Organisational Vision:

The vision for the future shape of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council is to be one of:

A more focussed council with an efficient support function, concentrating resources on council service delivery in innovative ways to a set of activities agreed by Members and Officers.

This proactively supports the Council's vision: **"Our Borough – The place to be"**.

and more specifically the Council's agreed purpose which is to:

"Provide a sustainable council by listening, being engaged, and putting our customers first enabling us to focus on local needs and priorities".

The organisational vision is designed to describe an organisation that is capable of meeting the agreed purpose of the Council which is to "provide a sustainable council by listening, being engaged, and putting our customers first enabling us to focus on local needs and priorities".

This is namely an organisation that better meets the needs of its residents and customers, providing value for money in an environment of significant public finance constraints and limited financial resources.

2. Scope of the Strategy:

The organisational strategy does not sit in isolation but is both an overarching strategy underpinned by a further set of corporate business strategies and a strategy which underpins the Corporate Strategy and the Council's Constitution.

Table 1 – Council Values and Council Business Strategies

Council Business Strategies	Council Values and Behaviours
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Corporate Vision
People Strategy	Corporate Strategy (WIP)
Customer Experience Strategy	Constitution – Members' Code of Conduct
Human Resources Strategies & Policies	Constitution – Officer and Member Relations
Procurement Policy	Officer's Code of Conduct
Risk Management Strategy	
ICT Strategies and Policies	
Sustainability Programme inc. Asset Review	
Economic Regeneration Strategy	

The strategies listed on the left-hand side of Table 1 are translated into priorities and activities through the Council's annual business planning process, driving the development of service plans to reflect the implementation of the corporate plan.

Diagram 1 – The Positioning of the Organisational Strategy



3. Organisational Principles:

The key principles required of Oadby and Wigston to achieve the vision are listed below:

Sustained in our focus on outcomes -

The Council exists to improve the lives of our residents and customers, and we are driven by a sustained organisational focus on the outcomes delivered to those customers.

This means working (sometimes with others) to modify the shape of services to better achieve continuous and measurable improvement based on well-founded customer intelligence.

Services will be flexible enough to share resources depending on shifts in customer demand and will work collectively to serve residents rather than focus on working in silo-environments.

Strong in providing leadership –

Effective public value and community leadership needs to be supported by strong organisational leadership. The organisational strategy requires the development of leadership skills and capacity at all levels in the organisation including councillors.¹

For officers,

Initiatives such as the People Strategy and its constituent parts will help to deliver this aspiration, seeking to engender leadership capacity as part of a core competency framework for OWBC's staff.

Increasing knowledge around our "generic competencies" will support leadership by valuing innovation, financial management, risk taking and public value. It will develop more entrepreneurial managers capable of working in new and challenging ways set within a strong and appropriate risk management framework.

For members,

Detailed training workshops are provided as part of the Councillor Induction Programme which provide a solid foundation for a broad understanding of Council business.

Regular briefing and training sessions are also undertaken to assist with policy formation.

The Council's adopted "Buddying System" provides each Councillor with direct access to a dedicated senior officer.

Committee Chairs are provided with the opportunity to have detailed briefings on agenda items and topics which are pertinent to the running of the specific committee. In some cases, regular briefing and training sessions will be held on subject matters.

Specific training is provided for those members who need it and hold a role attracting a special responsibility allowance.

¹ The recently developed Member and Officer Commitment will be pivotal to the success of this.

The Leader of the Council undertakes political responsibility for proposing and directing the overall strategy, budget, policy arrangements and service reviews; Members contribute to the formation of the Council's policies, budget setting and service delivery.

Strategy development, budget setting, policy arrangements and service delivery all require significant amounts of senior and professional officer contribution.

Leading the authority is very much a partnership between politicians and officers. It is a well-established convention that effective policies and strategies cannot be developed and implemented without co-production and ownership from both parties.

Confident with (the right sort of) partnership working -

The Council already has a good track record in working in partnership with positive examples seen with the Police, Leicestershire County Council, neighbouring Borough and District Councils and the Third Sector.

In delivering better outcomes and value for money to our customers, it is recognised that we cannot operate in isolation. Rather, such outcomes can only be achieved in partnership with public, private, and voluntary organisations, whereby sometimes the most effective role of the council is to facilitate and support other organisations who are better placed to deliver particular services to the community and, where there is a clear benefit, sometimes taking the lead role on behalf of others. Similarly, we may decide to cease certain partnership arrangements if there are no clear benefits to the Council or the borough.

Following a challenging appraisal of selecting the right partners for the right service, we recognise the importance of partnership working and by not duplicating service delivery we provide improved services and to create efficiencies and cost savings.

Confident with change and improvement -

Change and improvement no longer sit apart from the everyday activity of the Council. Our Customer Experience Strategy and our success with the Customer Service Excellence awards recognises the importance of self-challenge and change on an ongoing basis, pro-actively setting out to improve ways of working and raise attainment across all priority areas of council activity.

This will be further embodied through our service review programme. We will continue to drive out waste and non-value activities throughout the Council and provide opportunities for multi-skilling our workforce which will enhance our customer-focused service delivery and also increase the public value that is delivered.

Of significant importance is the need for all officers to be able to work much more flexibly to meet new organisational and external challenges. This could mean learning new skills, taking on temporary internal secondments to specific projects and working more regularly in a portfolio² management arrangement.

Confident with information -

The organisational vision seeks an organisation that is capable of absorbing, assimilating, and sharing information as a key means of directing strategies and achieving outcomes across functions

² From a Project Management perspective (<https://www.apm.org.uk/resources/what-is-project-management/what-is-portfolio-management/>)

and services. With a confidence with information comes an organisational ability to better understand and meet the needs of our customers, as well as provide better value for money to those customers by redirecting resources to areas of high need and demand.

Our reliance on information and information management grows on a regular basis and we will utilise national and regional surveys and benchmarks as well as our own 'customer insight' information sources to improve our customer knowledge.

Being accountable -

In achieving better service outcomes for its customers, we recognise accountability as a strength. Only through clear and accountable ways of working can the organisational vision be owned and shared by all.

4. Implications for Services:

In delivering on the stated vision and associated principles, there also exist underlying service characteristics common to all services within the authority. All services must be:

Customer shaped, delivering value for money:

Customer service information must provide a central basis to enable services to better understand and meet the needs of their customers. Through our mechanisms, such as DASH, services must be able to differentiate between and target customers within a corporate framework of consistently high standard customer care, whilst delivering value for money and therefore increasing public value.

The Service Review Project may require the redefining of the differing roles between the corporate support and frontline service delivery in relation to customer contact between customer service and service delivery professionals across all Council functions.

The use of Demand Capture, Service Reviews, ICT, Project Management and Workforce Planning may necessitate a total redesign in service delivery to meet these requirements.

Being professionally guided:

While recognising the need to be customer shaped, there remains a key role for service areas to maintain the position of professional brokers of information. This is relevant across all areas of the Council and is not restricted to traditional professions. Workforce planning will ensure that we manage skill gaps effectively and are proactive in the training provided.

Able to work across authority functions and organisations:

As stated in the overarching principles, one of the most fundamental on-going organisational changes is the need to work beyond current operational boundaries. These may be internally, within our existing team structures or even across external organisational boundaries. It is increasingly clear that a failure to work in this way is a failure to provide maximum value for money and outcomes for our residents and customers.

Creative, seeking excellence in innovation and the application of organisational learning:

Leadership at all levels and in all roles within the Council, innovation, creativity, and the sharing of knowledge must be celebrated as key values in service delivery. The entrepreneurial application of organisational (and partner-wide) resource represents a key tool in leveraging added value and therefore better meeting the needs of our customers in times of cost pressures and an ever-changing environment.

5. Supporting Outcomes:

There are five key organisational drivers underpinning the delivery of the organisational vision within the context of reinvigorated service requirements. For Oadby and Wigston, these are:

Our Workforce:

- Share the Council's values.
- Being appraised (including flexible working issues) and trained.
- Support new professions (such as Customer service, Project Management, Digital).
- Are dynamic and where appropriate, maybe shared with partners.
- Have communications and liaison skills.
- Ability to transfer skills (personally and to others).
- Are technically and technologically fluent.
- Agile and flexible.

Our Elected Members:

- Share the Council's values.
- Significantly and positively contribute to Policy development.
- Support and challenge service delivery in a constructive manner.
- See the bigger picture, do not get bogged down in operational detail.
- Have communications and liaison skills.
- Are technologically fluent.

Our systems, processes, and technology:

- Provide information to shape service delivery.
- Are an enabler of change.
- Provide the basis for effective project management.
- Provide the cohesion in a complex and flexible organisational environment.
- Are standardised, reliable technology platforms with ability to tailor.

Our assets:

- Where appropriate are leveraged to maximise value.
- Could be more flexible assets.
- May sometimes not be our first choice if it is more advantageous to make better use of partner arrangements.

Our customer access arrangements:

- Are simplified across the Council.
- Keep pace with digital opportunities.
- Drive value-for-money services.
- Provide intelligence gathering and customer insight.
- Drive service development and improvements.
- Recognise and accommodate, where appropriate, the differing needs of different customer groups.

6. Conclusions and Timescales:

The strategy will run until June 2027 and all underpinning strategies that are due for a refresh or need to be written will incorporate the principles of the Organisational Strategy. Strategies and policies will be revised.

There will be a need to ensure that as the requirements from and demands of Local Government continue to change that the principles considered in this strategy and the underpinning business strategies continue to remain relevant and appropriate.

This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure the content and approach is still appropriate and fit for purpose.

Agenda Item 16



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 05 December 2023	Matter for Information
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Report Title: Standards & Ethical Indicators (Q2 2023/24)

Report Author(s): David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer)

Purpose of Report:	To receive the figures for local determination of complaints and ethical indicators for Q2 2023-24.
Report Summary:	The report provides information in relation to Member Complaints, Corporate and Ombudsman Complaints, Freedom of Information Requests and Anti-Social Behaviour Reports and Resolutions.
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report and appendix be noted.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Anne Court (Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service) (0116) 257 2602 anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk David Gill (Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer) (0116) 257 2626 david.gill@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2)
Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Political Dynamics (CR3) Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.

Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Standards and Ethical Indicators (Q2 2023/24)

1. Information

- 1.1. Regular reporting about the Council's activities under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 is a statutory requirement under the oversight regime of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner. This report to Members covers the quarter 2 (Q2) of 2023/24.
- 1.2. The report also contains other matters which Officers considered would be of interest to Members, including the number and disposal of Member Complaints, the number of Corporate and Ombudsman complaints, the number of Freedom of Information requests and the number of anti-social behaviour reports and resolutions.
- 1.3. The quarter 2 report for 2023/24 is attached at **Appendix 1** for Members' information.



OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS AND ETHICAL INDICATORS

QUARTER 2 REPORT

2023/2024

1. Introduction

This is the quarterly report to the Policy Finance and Development Committee detailing both the figures for the Ethical Indicators and the figures for the Local Determination of Complaints process for 2023/2024.

For clarification purposes the months covered by the quarters are as follows:

Quarter 1 – 1 April to 30 June
Quarter 2 – 1 July to 30 September
Quarter 3 – 1 October to 31 December
Quarter 4 – 1 January to 31 March

The report is split into two parts for ease of reference; Part 1 refers to the local determination of complaints, part 2 is the table showing the ethical indicators figures.

The report will enable the Policy Finance and Development Committee to build up a picture over time of how many complaints are received and where these are coming from. The parts of the Code of Conduct which have been breached will also be recorded to enable training to be targeted effectively.

2. Part 1 – Local Determination of Complaints

The Monitoring Officer received 0 complaints in Quarter 2 of 2023/2024.

2.1 Source of Complaint

Not applicable

2.2 Assessment Sub-committee Decisions

There have been No Assessment Sub-committee meetings in this quarter.

2.3 Timeliness of Decision

The Standards for England Guidance stated that the Assessment Sub-committee should complete its initial assessment of an allegation “within an average of 20 working days” to reach a decision on what should happen with the complaint. The Council has taken this standard and adapted it under the new rules to aim to hold an Assessment Sub-committee within 20 working days of notifying the parties that informal resolution is not possible.

2.4 Review Requests

There have been no review requests in this quarter. Review requests can only be made following a decision of ‘No further Action’ by the Assessment Sub-committee where there is submission of new evidence or information by the complainant.

2.5 Subsequent Referrals

None

2.6 Outcome of Investigations

One formal investigation was concluded in this period with no further action being taken on the substantive complaint.

2.7 Parts of the Code Breached

This section is intended to show where there are patterns forming to enable the Policy Finance and Development Committee to determine where there needs to be further training for Councillors. Targeting training in this way makes it more sustainable and, hopefully, more effective.

So far this year, the following areas of the code were found to have been breached:

Not applicable

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG1	Objections to the Council's Accounts	Head of Finance	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG2	Follow up Action relating to reaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (Members)	Head of Law & Democracy	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG3	Disciplinary Action relating to breaches of the Member / Officer Protocol (Staff)	HR Manager	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG4	Number of Whistle Blowing Incidents Reported	Head of Law & Democracy	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG5	No. of Recommendations made to improve Governance Procedures/Policies		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG6	No. of Recommendations Implemented		0	0	0	0	0		0	

Corporate Complaints

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG7	No. Corporate Complaints received	Policy, Compliance, and Data Protection Officer	37	56	29	48	32		53	
	No. Corporate Complaints escalated to L2		9	9	5	10	5		6	
	No. Corporate Complaints escalated to Ombudsman		2	1	3	1	0		0	
LG7a	No. Corporate Complaints Resolved at L1		26	47	24	38	27		47	
	No. Corporate Complaints Resolved at L2		7	9	5	10	5		6	
LG7b	No. Corporate Complaints where compensation paid		1	0	2	1	0		0	
	Service Area		Licensing	-	Housing	Council Tax	-		-	
LG8	No. Ombudsman complaints received		2	1	2	1	0		0	
	Service Area		-	N/A (General OWBC)	-	Waste	-		-	
LG8a	No. Ombudsman complaints resolved		0	1	0	1	0		1	
LG8b	No. Ombudsman complaints not yet determined by the Ombudsman		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG8c	No. Ombudsman complaints where compensation paid		0	0	1	0	0		0	

Freedom of Information Act Indicators

Ref	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG9a	No. of FOI Requests Compliant	Policy, Compliance, and Data Protection Officer	181	178	116	175	112		172	
LG9b	No. of Non-compliant FOI Requests		11	10	8	7	8		16	
LG9c	No. of FOI Requests still open and within the 20 working days		0	0	0	0	7		0	
LG9d	No. of FOI Requests withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		4	7	2	1	2		1	

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2022/2023	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
LG10	No. of Directed Surveillance Authorisations granted during the quarter	Head of Law & Democracy	0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10a	No. in force at the end of the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10b	No. of CHIS recruited during the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10c	No. ceased to be used during the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10d	No. active at the end of the quarter		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10e	No. of breaches (particularly unauthorised surveillance)		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10f	No. of applications submitted to obtain communications data which were rejected		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10g	No. of Notices requiring disclosure of communications data		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10h	No. of authorisations for conduct to acquire communications data		0	0	0	0	0		0	
LG10i	No. of recordable errors		0	0	0	0	0		0	

Anti-Social Behaviour Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
	No. of Complaints Registered	Head of Law and Democracy	24	1/21	17/34	4/27	11/14		3/17	
	No. of Disposals		5	1/4	3/10	1/6	6/8		2/1	
	No. of Complaints still Open		1	1/0	4/0	4/4	5/2		2/0	
	No Further Action (where suspect identified)		3	0/1	1/8	0/4	0/3		0/4	
	No Further Action (no suspect identified)		17	0/17	13/22	3/17	5/8		1/13	

Blue text – Housing

Red text – ASB Officer

ASB Officer Q1 2023/2024 – 2 suspects given a disposal who are named on the same ASB report.

Food Safety Inspections

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer responsible for providing information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024	2022/2023	2023/2024
BPE31	No. of high-risk Inspections	Head of Law & Democracy	3	1	2	3	4		1	
	No. of medium/low inspections		N/A	8	N/A	25	56		56	
	No. new business registered		14	37	9	10	8		13	
	Outstanding medium low risk inspections from 2022.		N/A	30		0				
	No. of high-risk Inspections Completed		3	1	2	3	1		4	
	No. of medium risk/low inspections Completed/ closed		N/A	3	23	27	40			
	No. of new business triaged		13	26	7	14	7			

	No. of Inspections Outstanding								
	High risk	0		0	0	3		0	
	Medium risk	5		N/A	3	16		0	
	New businesses	9		3	0	1		0	
	D's 2022	2			**4				

- High risk are A/B risk rating businesses. Medium/ Low are C/D's. **4 premises were found which had not pull through due to an issues with its scoring.
- New businesses continue to receive a triage call to assess their activities, if High risk then a physical inspection is selected to be carried out. Low risk is not being carried out now but remain under review.

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