



TO COUNCILLOR:

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

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

P Joshi
J Kaufman
K J Loydall
I K Ridley (Chair)

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

Meeting: Policy, Finance & Development Committee
Date & Time: Tuesday, 2 December 2025, 7.00 pm
Venue: Civic Suite 2, Brocks Hill Council Offices, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JJ
Contact: Democratic Services
t: (0116) 257 2775
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Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Oadby
25 November 2025

Anne E Court
Chief Executive



Meeting ID: 2947

<u>ITEM NO.</u>	<u>FIRST AGENDA UPDATE</u>	<u>PAGE NO'S</u>
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8. Sundry Debtor and Revenues Write Offs (Q2 2025/26)

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Report of the Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer and the Revenues & Benefits Manager

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Report of the Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer

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Report of the Safety & Resilience Officer

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Agenda Item 8



**Policy, Finance and
Development
Committee**

**Tuesday, 02
December 2025**

**Matter for
Information and
Decision**

Report Title: Sundry Debtor and Revenues Write Offs (Q2 2025/26)

**Report Author(s): Joy Burton (Revenues & Benefits Manager)
Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the status of debts written off under delegated powers.
Report Summary:	Under delegated powers the Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer can write off amounts up to and including £5,000, and amounts between £5,000 and £10,000 in consultation with the Chair of PFDC. This report highlights the amounts written off up to Quarter 2 of 2025/26.
Recommendation(s):	That the Committee notes the contents of the report and appendix.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2759 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Joy Burton (Revenues & Benefits Manager) (0116) 257 2681 joy.burton@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1)
Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) "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 at paragraphs 2-6 of 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:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	None.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of debts written off under delegated powers.
- 1.2 Under the policy, amounts owed by a single debtor under £5,000 may be written off by the Chief Finance Officer. Amounts above £5,000 but below £10,000 are delegated for write off to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Policy, Finance and Development Committee (PFDC) Chair. The writing off of debts above £10,000 may only be approved by PFDC.
- 1.3 Every effort is made to recover a debt owed to the Council before it is considered for write off. Where appropriate, recovery and enforcement options have been taken or where the Council is legally prohibited from pursuing, debts are considered for write off in line with the Council's Corporate Debt Policy. Examples where debt recovery is prohibited by law include:
- Bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order is in place,
 - Deceased – No assets within the estate,
 - Debtor Absconded/no trace,
 - Company in liquidation/dissolved or ceased trading with no assets,
 - Severe hardship and/or serious health issues or
 - Statute barred i.e. the Council cannot legally pursue the debt as there has been six years since the debt fell due and no action has been taken to collect the debt.
- 1.4 In some cases, it is uneconomical to collect an outstanding debt because the costs associated with recovering the debt exceed the income recoverable.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 Write offs relating to Quarter 2 (2025/26) as approved by the Chief Finance Officer (S151) are set out below.

Type of Debtor	Write offs to date less than £5,000 (by S151 Officer under delegated powers)	Write offs to date £5,001 - £10,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Amounts written off over £10,001 approved by Members	TOTAL
Council Tax	£158,172.06	£25,214.11	£0.00	£183,386.17
Non-Domestic Rates	£13,232.23	£14,188.15	£0.00	£27,420.38

Housing Benefit Overpayments	£1,874.29	£0.00	£0.00	£1,874.29
Total	£173,278.58	£39,402.26	£0.00	£212,680.84

2.2 The amounts detailed in the above table are shown below by category and the reason for write off.

3. Council Tax

3.1 In Q2 (2025/26) there are currently no Council Tax Debts over £10,000 for which Committee's approval for write off is sought.

3.2 The amounts written off under delegated powers in accordance with the thresholds are outlined in the Corporate Debt Policy are as follows:

Council Tax	Total No of Accounts	Write offs to date less than £5,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Write offs to date less than £10,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Total
Bankruptcy	6	£3,977.68	£0.00	£3,977.68
Debt Relief Order	35	£38,287.27	£18,543.68	£56,830.95
Closed Account – Recovery Exhausted	22	£16,710.09	£0.00	£16,710.09
Individual Voluntary Arrangement	63	£78,534.15	£6,670.43	£85,204.58
Old Debt – Unable to Trace	27	£15,487.10	£0.00	£15,487.10
Small Balance	51	£301.79	£0.00	£301.79
Statute Barred	17	£4,401.47	£0.00	£4,401.47
Uneconomical/ Unethical to Pursue	1	£472.51	£0.00	£472.51
TOTAL	222	£158,172.06	£25,214.11	£183,386.17

4. Non-Domestic Rates (NDR)

4.1 There are no NDR cases of over £10,000 for which Committee's approval for write off is sought.

4.2 The amounts written off under delegated powers in accordance with the thresholds outlined in the Corporate Debt Policy are as follows:

Non-Domestic Rates	Total No of Accounts	Write offs to date less than £5,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Write offs to date £5,001 - £10,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Grand Total
Absconded	3	£5,176.14	£0.00	£5,176.14

Agreed with Management/Error	2	£2,607.18	£8,202.56	£10,809.74
Insolvent Dissolved	6	£5,389.32	£5,985.59	£11,374.91
Small Balance	1	£0.02	£0.00	£0.02
Un-Economic to Collect	2	£59.57	£0.00	£59.57
TOTAL	14	£13,232.23	£14,188.15	£27,420.38

5. Sundry Debtors

- 5.1 There are no Housing Benefit overpayments over £10,000 for which committee approval for write off is sought.
- 5.2 The amounts written off under delegated powers in accordance with the thresholds outlines in the Corporate Debt Policy are as follows:

Housing Benefit Overpayment	Total No of cases	Write offs to date less than £5,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Write offs to date £5,001 - £10,000 (by s151 Officer under delegated powers)	Grand Total
Debt Relief Order	1	£122.15	£0.00	£122.15
No Trace/Recovery Exhausted	2	£411.80	£0.00	£411.80
Not Economical to Collect	2	£1,090.17	£0.00	£1,090.17
DHP – non-recoverable	1	£250.17	£0.00	£250.17
TOTAL	6	£1,874.29	£0.00	£1,874.29



Policy, Finance and Development Committee	Tuesday, 02 December 2025	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **2026/27 Draft Revenue Budgets, Medium Term Financial Plan and 2026/27 - 2030/31 Draft Capital Programmes**

Report Author(s): **Simon Ball (Finance Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	<p>To present the revised General Fund Annual Budget for 2026/27 and an updated MTFP for 2026/27 to 2030/31.</p> <p>To provide an update on the capital programme for 2026/27.</p> <p>To present the HRA Annual Budget for 2025/26.</p>
Report Summary:	<p>The report outlines the draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2026/27 which is a balanced budget with no use of the general fund reserve.</p> <p>The draft five-year Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 shows a forecast cumulative surplus of £870k.</p> <p>The report presents the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 26/27.</p> <p>The report also sets out draft Capital project proposals.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>That the Committee:</p> <p>A. Note the contents of the report; and</p> <p>B. To note the intention to increase Housing Rents, Garages and Service Charges by a minimum of 4.8%, pending the outcome of the Rent Convergence review currently underway.</p>
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2759 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Simon Ball (Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer) (0116) 257 2694 simon.ball@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 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:	None.
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025/26 Revenue Budgets, Medium Term Financial Plan, 2025/26 – 2029/30 Capital Programmes – Full Council February 2025 • Budget Setting Approach for 2026/27 and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update – Full Council 23 September 2025
Appendices:	None.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2025, Full Council approved a report setting the 2025/26 General Fund budget, the five-year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), the 2025/26 HRA budget and the 25/26 General Fund and HRA capital programmes. At that time the MTFP showed a surplus for 2025/26 and a deficit over the MTFP of £1,157K.
- 1.2 During the current financial year work has continued to deliver the sustainability plan and the associated savings to ensure that the budget is balanced. In light of the current increase in the pay award, inflation on contracts and uncertainty around the Government settlement it is forecast that further savings will be required throughout the life of the MTFP.
- 1.3 The Council has followed a detailed budget setting process for 2026/27 and has updated the MTFP forecast. The budget for 26/27 has been balanced utilising the savings achieved through the 24/25 and 25/26 financial years and the sustainability plan. The current proposed changes in local authority funding set out in the Fair Funding Review results in the MTFP forecasting surplus from 2026/27 to 2030/31 totalling £870K prior to any increases in fees and charges or further sustainability plans.

2. The General Fund Budget

- 2.1 The draft general fund budget, taking into account Salary increases, inflation assumptions, contract rises, and other known changes is £8,895,424 an increase of £1,162,642 from the previous year's budget.

General Fund	Budget 2025/26	Draft Budget 26/27	Variance
	£	£	£
Employee Expenses	8,437,678	8,999,640	561,962

Premises Expenses	597,600	636,645	39,045
Supplies and Services	2,310,974	2,430,375	119,401
Transport	284,500	318,600	34,100
Banking & Schemes	2,524,535	2,739,929	215,394
Capital	969,000	955,300	(13,700)
Income	(7,391,505)	(7,185,065)	206,440
Net Revenue Expenditure	7,732,782	8,895,424	1,162,642

- 2.2 Employee Expenses are the most significant movement between years due to the additional staff required to deliver the food waste project. 3% has been built in for 26/27 as a forecast for the Local Government pay award.
- 2.3 Inflationary increases have been applied to Supplies and Services and Premises Expenses where required.
- 2.4 Income has been adjusted to reflect achievable budgets where required, Fees and Charge increases have been proposed and will be reflected within the final budget.

3. Winter Budget

- 3.1 As of the time this report was published, the 2025 budget was still awaited, and its exact contents are unknown. The late publishing of the Policy Statement has also made forecasting for the draft budget very difficult.
- 3.2 Indicative announcements regarding the Fair Funding Review and associated financial modelling suggest that we will be able to balance the budget for 26/27 and achieve a surplus over the lifetime of the MTFS, although we will need to wait for the final settlement announcement in December before being able to ascertain the final picture.

4. Council Tax 2026/27

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Council Tax is increased by 2.99%, this recognises the deficit across the MTFP and equates to an additional £215k of funding to support essential services.
- 4.2 The Tax base for 25/26 is 18,852 and increase of 257.8 properties when compared to last year.
- 4.3 Any Surplus/Deficit on the Council tax during 25/26 will affect the Council Tax precepts for 26/27. The current forecast is a surplus of £25k.

5. Business Rates (NNDR) 2026/27

- 5.1 The Business Rates position will be updated in January on completion of the NNDR1 which forecasts the position for 26/27.

6. Funding Position 2026/27

- 6.1 The overall funding position for 2026/27 is set out in Table 2

(Continues overleaf)

Table 2 – 2026/27 Draft Budget Funding Position

	Funding 25/26	Funding 26/27
	£	£
Earmarked Reserves	514,239	(145,000)
Retained Business Rates	(2,434,256)	(1,758,502)
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit – BR	178,840	(210,577)
Extended Producer Responsibility	(855,239)	(874,972)
NI increase funding	(72,628)	0
New Homes Bonus	(236,500)	0
Council Tax – OWBC	(4,864,982)	(5,079,858)
Collection Fund Bal – CTax	(56,245)	(25,130)
Revenue Support Grant	0	(1,716,308)
Green Plant and machinery	(7,351)	0
Total Financing	(7,834,122)	(9,810,346)

6.2 Although the outline of the Fair Funding Review was announced on 20 November, we are still analysing the various changes, and we will not have full clarity over the exact allocations of funding until the provisional settlement is published in mid-December. The numbers included are estimates, based on the work done by Pixel Financial Management.

6.3 New Homes Bonus and grants like the NI increase have all been rolled into the Revenue Support Grant.

6.4 There is currently no information on Extended Producer Responsibility beyond 2026/27.

7. Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31

7.1 The Draft MTFP has been updated to include salary increases, inflationary increase, contract changes and known changes to services.

7.2 The below table demonstrate the budget gap from 26/27 to 29/30 and its effect on the General fund reserve balance. It does not apply any annual increases in fees and charges but does assume a 2.99% increase in Council Tax.

7.3 Government funding has been assumed at the current amounts although it is the Government's intention to provide a multiyear settlement which we will reflect in the final budget.

	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
	£	£	£	£	£
Salaries	8,999,640	9,176,174	9,356,238	9,539,904	9,727,243
Supplies & Services	3,771,168	3,232,138	3,294,544	3,358,198	3,423,124
Utilities	372,280	390,894	410,439	430,961	452,509
Insurances	237,240	249,102	261,557	274,635	288,367
Income	(3,606,904)	(3,471,304)	(3,471,304)	(3,471,304)	(3,471,304)
Selective Licensing	(400,000)	(200,000)	(150,000)	(100,000)	(450,000)
Leisure Management	(478,000)	(478,000)	(478,000)	(478,000)	(478,000)
	8,895,424	8,899,004	9,223,474	9,554,393	9,491,939
Earmarked Reserves	(145,000)	0	0	0	0

Retained Business Rates	(1,758,502)	(1,816,478)	(1,875,410)	(1,935,304)	(1,876,367)
Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit – BR	(210,577)	0	0	0	0
EPR	(874,972)	0	0	0	0
Council Tax – OWBC	(5,079,858)	(5,319,386)	(5,563,335)	(5,810,481)	(6,074,214)
Collection Fund Bal – CTax	(25,130)	0	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(1,716,308)	(1,727,121)	(1,729,049)	(1,708,512)	(1,688,142)
Total Funding	(9,810,346)	(8,862,985)	(9,167,794)	(9,454,297)	(9,638,723)
Budget Gap	(914,922)	36,019	55,680	100,096	(146,784)
General Fund Balance	(2,556,328)	(2,520,310)	(2,464,630)	(2,364,534)	(2,511,318)

7.4 The Table shows the increasing levels of reserves over the term of the MTFP.

7.5 In order to ensure that we can continue to provide services we need to ensure that the budgets are balanced annually. Although the indicative funding suggests a balance budget over the lifetime of the MTFS, there are deficits in specific years. Once the Finance settlement is known a more accurate forecast can be presented to ensure that plans are in place to balance these years.

7.6 Use of increasing fees and charges, contract management, invest to save schemes and full recovery of costs where possible will be considered to ensure that the budgets are balanced annually.

8. Housing Revenue Account 2026/27

8.1 Table 6 shows the 2025/26 revised budget and the draft 2026/27 proposed budget for the HRA.

Table 6 - Housing Revenue Account Draft Budget 2026/27

HRA	Revised Budget 2025/26	Draft Budget 26/27	Variance
	£	£	£
Employee Expenses	1,177,400	1,389,070	211,670
Premises Expenses	1,228,100	1,277,969	49,869
Supplies and Services	269,300	255,400	(13,900)
Banking & Schemes	761,400	761,400	0
Capital	1,580,000	1,580,000	0
Income	(6,336,100)	(6,546,700)	(210,600)
Corporate overheads	1,391,300	1,433,000	41,700
Net Revenue Expenditure	71,400	150,139	78,739

8.2 The draft budget for 26/27 is £150k deficit which is £79k more than 25/26. This will be met from the HRA Contingency Reserve.

8.3 The assumption for rental and garage rental is a minimum increase of 4.8%, in line with the national rent increase formula of CPI in September + 1%, pending the outcome of the rent convergence review. The rent convergence review could result in a further increase in housing rent charges.

- 8.4 Employee expenses increased £211k. This is due to three new posts; Asset Management and Information Officer, Housing Inspector – Damp and Mould, and Compliance Assistant; along with a 3% assumption for the pay award. These posts are required due to the work involved in the Regulation of Social Housing inspection.

9. HRA Medium Term Financial Plan

- 9.1 The HRA Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 is forecasting to be in surplus for all but the first year of the MTFP.

10. Capital Programme 2026/27

- 10.1 An indicative capital programme for 2026/27 to 2028/29 was approved in February 2025 and the impact of this is incorporated into the capital financing charges included in the MTFP.
- 10.2 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 either be required to be funded through 'prudential borrowing', or through the use of capital receipts. The use of borrowing 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. As such the use of capital receipts is preferred, with £4.15M of receipts expected by the end of 25/26.
- 10.3 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.

Vehicle Refurbishment - £285K

A refuse collection vehicle has reached the end of its life and requires replacement. Another will have its life extended two years through refurbishment. This is in line with the 10 year replacement plan that was approved as part of the 25/26 budget setting process.

Boiler Replacement at Parklands Leisure Centre - £118K

To replace the existing two aging gas boilers with smaller modular boilers, and a like for like replacement of the water heater with provisions to allow future connection to the already installed PV panels. The existing units, installed during the 2015 refurbishment, are becoming increasingly inefficient and prone to maintenance issues. These upgrades will deliver improved energy efficiency, reduce operational risks, and enhance the overall resilience of the Centre's heating and hot water systems.

Replacement of Play Park Equipment - £150k

To replace play equipment that is at the end of its useful life and is no longer safe for use.

IT Replacements – £66K

The Council started its journey to move its IT services in house in late 2020, and the project transition phase was completed in 2021. Since then, there has been no requirement for a capital investment of any hardware, however we have now entered the period where physical hardware, that is due to be end of life, will need replacing. This process began in 2025/26 and will continue through 2026/27 and future years.

This is to replace end of life or damaged equipment across the following key areas:

- Laptop Replacement – 25% of workforce
- Mobile Phones – 50% of workforce
- Apple Mac Mini – To manage Apple products across the whole estate
- Server room replacement and maintenance
- Accessories – Replace keyboards, mouse and/or other minor end user devices.

Footfall Counter - £14K

There is an investment to save project to replace the existing footfall counters in the three town centres with a replacement with lower running costs. This should save circa £8K per year.

Christmas Decorations - £8K

New electricity points are needed to ensure the lights continue to operate, as the network of electrical points installed is now at capacity. Also, additional icicle lights are needed to cover areas that have not already been covered.

Agenda Item 13



**Policy, Finance and
Development
Committee**

**Tuesday, 09
September 2025**

**Matter for
Information and
Decision**

Report Title: Event Booking & Venue Hire Policy (2025)

Report Author(s): Zach Bradford (Safety & Resilience Officer)

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to approve the Event Booking and Venue Hire Policy 2025.
Report Summary:	<p>The Event Booking and Venue Hire Policy 2025 (as set out at Appendix 1) provides a clear framework for delivering safe, compliant, and well-managed events on Council-owned land, property, or managed assets. It sets out a transparent and proportionate approval and review process that balances community benefit with effective risk control.</p> <p>The Information Sheet for Event Booking and Venue Hire (Appendix 2) ensures that the Ask, Check, Decide protocol is documented and followed.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>A. That the Event Booking and Venue Hire 2025 Policy (as set out at Appendix 1 to this report) be approved; and</p> <p>B. That the Information Sheet for Event Booking and Venue Hire (as set out at Appendix 2 to this report) be approved.</p>
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Anne Court (Chief Executive Officer / Head of Paid Services) (0116) 257 2602 Anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2642 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Ben Wilson (Head of Neighbourhood Services) (0116) 257 2711 ben.wilson@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Zach Bradford (Safety & Resilience Officer) (0116) 257 2866 zach.bradford@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>Customer & Community Focused (V1)</p> <p>Resourceful & Resilient (V4)</p>
Report Implications:-	

Legal:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 2 of this report.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 2 of this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Key Supplier / Partnership Failure (CR2) Reputation Damage (CR4) Failure to Respond to a Significant Incident (CR7)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 2 of this report.
Health and Safety:	The implications are as set out at paragraph 2 of 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"> • Equality Act 2010 • Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 • Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023) • Crime and Disorder Act 1998 • Human Rights Act 1998
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Event Booking & Venue Hire Policy (2025) 2. Information Sheet for Event Booking and Venue Hire

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Attached to this report at **Appendix 1** is the Event Booking and Venue Hire 2025 Policy which provides a clear framework for Officers who are responsible for the management of venue hire and events to ensure safe, compliant, and well-managed events on Council-owned land, property, or managed assets are held.
- 1.2 This version of this report expands upon the previous policy that was in place.
- 1.3 Attached to this report at **Appendix 2** is the Information Sheet for Event Booking and Venue Hire. This ensures that the Ask, Check, Decide protocol is followed and documented.

2. Information

- 2.1 The legal implications of having this policy in place are that it provides a clear framework for compliance with key pieces of legislations as outlined above. It reduces the chances of a successful legal challenge by ensuring a transparent, documented approval and refusal criteria and ensures enforceable contract terms that protect the Council and hirers.

- 2.2 The legal implications of not having this policy in place are that it potentially exposes the Council to non-compliance with current and future statutory duties, increases the likelihood of ad hoc or inconsistent decisions that could be subject to legal challenge and leaves the hirers subject to undocumented arrangements.
- 2.3 The financial implications of having this policy are that it will mitigate the risk of unexpected costs for things like legal claims or emergency responses and will allow the Council to apply cost-recovery mechanisms fairly and transparently.
- 2.4 The financial implications of not having this policy are that it leaves the Council vulnerable to unbudgeted liabilities from accidents, security incidents or non-compliance events.
- 2.5 The health and safety implications of having this policy are that it ensures a qualitative risk assessment process is followed using the Ask, Check, Decide framework.
- 2.6 The health and safety implications of not having this policy are that it would hamper the Council's ability to demonstrate "due diligence" and the Council may not be able to demonstrate a formal risk assessment process.
- 2.7 The human rights implications of having this policy are that it balances the freedom of expression and assembly with public safety by setting clear booking and refusal criteria, it would support the Equality Act duties by ensuring venues are accessible and hire terms do not discriminate against protected groups.
- 2.8 The human rights implications of not having this policy risks arbitrary or ad hoc refusals that could breach the Human Rights Act, it may inadvertently block legitimate community or political events, undermining free speech and it leaves equality and inclusion commitments unenforced potentially disadvantaging vulnerable or marginalised communities.

Event Booking and Venue Hire Policy

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1. Background

- 1.1. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council reserves the right in its absolute discretion not to hire its venues;
 - To any organisation or individuals that do not conform to the values (Equality, Fairness and Inclusivity) of the Council, or that are banned or proscribed by law;
 - Or, for political rallies, or for demonstrations which incite hatred or violence or any breach of criminal law and/or spread hatred and intolerance;
- 1.2. Furthermore, the Council reserves the right to refuse to grant, or cancel, permission with immediate effect:
 - If any or all parts of the event are considered by the Council, in its reasonable opinion, to be dangerous, offensive, noxious, illegal or which may become a nuisance to the Council or any other occupiers in the areas (or any neighbouring property) where the event is held;
 - If the organisers are found to have falsely represented the event at the time of booking but are subsequently found to breach the principles set out here.
 - Or, if the Council is not satisfied that the safety of the buildings and the public can be ensured.
- 1.3. No individuals or groups will be denied the opportunity for access to Council managed properties unless there is a justifiable reason to do so within the spirit of this policy.
- 1.4. This policy provides a clear, consistent framework for booking and managing events, venue hire, and use of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council-owned spaces and equipment.

- 1.5. Events play a vital role in fostering community cohesion, supporting local businesses, and promoting cultural and recreational activities across the borough.
- 1.6. Recent demand for events has increased alongside rising expectations around safety, accessibility, and sustainability.
- 1.7. The council's Corporate Assets, Marketing and Health and Safety team oversees permissions, risk management, and compliance with relevant legislation and corporate standards.
- 1.8. This policy applies to events and activities on council-owned land, venues, and assets; including those organised directly by the council and does not cover private property.
- 1.9. The objectives of this policy are detailed in Section 2 and flow directly from the need to balance community benefit with effective risk control, equitable access, and alignment with corporate priorities.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. The objectives of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Event and Hire Policy are to:
 - Support safe, compliant and well-managed events that protect attendees, staff and communities.
 - Stimulate the local economy by attracting visitors, increasing footfall in town centres and supporting local businesses.
 - Ensure equitable access for all participants by embedding inclusive design, accessibility measures when designing and planning modifications or implementing new structures.
 - Promote environmental sustainability through waste minimisation, carbon-reduction practices and guidance on eco-friendly event delivery when requested.
 - Provide a transparent and proportionate, approval and review process that balances community benefit with effective risk control.
 - The Council will work with organisers to ensure events adhere to inclusive design principles and the requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

3. Definitions

- **Events** refer to any organised public or private gathering taking place on Oadby and Wigston Borough Council-owned land, properties, or using Council-managed assets. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Community festivals and fairs
 - Conferences and seminars
 - Religious or faith-based gatherings
 - Cultural, recreational, or sporting activities
 - Commercial product launches or promotions
 - Political and campaigning meetings (subject to Section 1 conditions)

- **Radicalisation:** occurs when a person adopts extreme views or beliefs that justify violence or terrorist activity. Prevent covers all forms of terrorism, irrespective of ideology.
- For further clarity on what constitutes terrorism or extremist messaging, see “Terrorism and Extremism” at [Educate Against Hate](#)

4. Prevent

4.1. Prevent is the government’s safeguarding programme to stop individuals from being drawn into terrorism or supporting extremist causes. It ensures that those vulnerable to radicalisation are offered timely interventions and that communities are resilient to extremist influences.

4.2. Statutory Duty

- Under the [Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015](#), local authorities are “specified authorities” required to have due regard to the Prevent duty in all day-to-day functions, including venue hire and events management.
- The [Prevent duty guidance for England and Wales \(2023\)](#) sets out how organisations must identify and mitigate risks of radicalisation.

4.3. Definitions and Scope

4.3.1. Oadby & Wigston Borough Council’s Role

- Embed Prevent awareness in the booking and approval process (see Section 5: Venue Hire/Event Booking Guidance).
- Refuse bookings by proscribed or extremist groups, or those whose activities conflict with the Council’s values on equality, fairness and inclusivity.
- Collaborate with partners, Leicestershire Police, the Channel programme, health services, education providers and voluntary sector organisations to share information and manage local risks.

4.3.2. Staff and Partner Responsibilities

- All staff involved in events and venue hire must read this policy and apply the principles in screening and due-diligence checks.
- During booking Officers must assess organiser profiles and event content for potential extremist links or messaging.
- Escalate any concerns to the Council’s Prevent lead, Head of Service or Legal Services and follow the referral process outlined in Section 6.

4.3.3. Supporting Communities

- Work proactively with community groups and faith organisations to build resilience against extremist narratives.
- Signpost organisers to guidance, funding and support for community-led interventions that counter radicalisation.

4.3.4. Further Information

- [Prevent Duty Guidance](#)
- 4.4.** By meeting these obligations, the Council ensures its venues and resources remain safe, inclusive and not open to exploitation by extremist actors.

5. Venue Hire/Event Booking Guidance

- 5.1.** This guidance offers good practice to help Oadby & Wigston Borough Council staff and hirers mitigate risks associated with venue bookings. It sits alongside the standard booking process and relevant safeguards.
- 5.2.** Please use either the Information Sheet for Event Booking and Venue Hire or Customer Service's DASH form to ensure the below information is gathered to make a decision.
- 5.3. Ask: Establish What's Planned and Who's Involved**
- 5.3.1. Request organiser information**
- Full name, trading names, postal address, telephone, email
 - Website URLs and social-media profiles
- 5.3.2. Confirm commitment to equality and diversity**
- Ask if they have an equality policy that challenges discrimination
 - If not, require subscription to the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy
- 5.3.3. Gather event details**
- Title, theme, agenda and content overview
 - Names and biographies of speakers or performers
 - Expected audience size and demographic profile
 - Promotion materials (e.g., draft flyers, posters, social-media adverts)
- 5.3.4. Clarify format and location**
- Public access or invite-only?
 - If organiser is based outside the borough, ask rationale for choosing this venue
- 5.4. Check: Conduct Due Diligence**
- 5.4.1. Review online and media presence**
- Scan organiser and speaker websites, blogs, news articles, social posts
- 5.4.2. Verify official registers**
- [Proscribed organisations list on GOV.UK](#)
 - [Charity Commission register](#) (for charities)
 - [Companies House](#) (for limited businesses)
- 5.4.3. Seek references**
- Contact previous venue hosts or local authorities

- Request written feedback where available

5.4.4. Leverage Council and partner resources

- Consult the Council's Prevent lead
- Consult the Council's Legal team
- Consider referral to [Leicestershire Police Prevent Team](#)

5.5. Decide: Risk-Based Acceptance or Refusal

5.5.1. For low-risk bookings, proceed with standard hire agreement

5.5.2. For higher-risk or contentious events:

- Escalate to Head of Service for final approval
- Impose additional controls (e.g., increased stewarding, content restrictions)

5.5.3. Higher-risk or Contentious Events may include, but are not limited to:

- Events featuring speakers with a known history of inflammatory or extremist remarks
- Topics likely to provoke significant public debate or protest
- Mass gatherings requiring extensive crowd or traffic management
- Events promoted via non-traditional or encrypted digital platforms
- Requests made by unfamiliar or newly established organisations with limited public footprint
- Activities involving sensitive political, religious or cultural themes
- Decision makers should consider both content and context, consulting the Legal and/or the Councils' Safeguarding lead.

5.5.4. Communicate decision and any special conditions in writing

5.5.5. Retain all correspondence and evidence for audit purposes

6. Prevent Referrals

6.1. A Prevent referral can be made by anyone who is concerned that they, or someone they know, may be susceptible to radicalisation or at risk of involvement in terrorist or extremist activity. This applies to colleagues, family members, friends or professionals at any point during the event planning or delivery process.

6.2. When to Make a Referral

- You observe behaviour or conversation suggesting extremist ideology or support for terrorism.
- You suspect someone is being groomed or exploited to adopt radical views.
- You identify materials (online or printed) promoting extremist messages.

6.3. How to Make a Prevent Referral

- Contact Leicestershire Police Prevent Team:
 - Call 101 and ask for extension 2541
 - [Online](#)
- If you need confidential advice, ring the National Police Prevent Advice Line on 0800 011 3764.
- In an emergency or if life is at risk, always dial 999.

6.4. Child Protection and Safeguarding

- If your concern relates to the exploitation or radicalisation of a child or young person, report immediately to Children's Social Care:
 - [Online](#)
 - Out-of-hours children's duty team: 0116 305 0005

6.5. All staff and organisers should keep a record of any Prevent concern raised, including the date, time, nature of concern and referral outcome. This ensures transparency, enables audit, and supports vulnerable individuals with the earliest possible intervention.

6.6. In addition to Prevent-related risks, Council staff and organisers must remain vigilant to wider safeguarding concerns particularly involving vulnerable adults. Any suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation should be reported following the Council's Safeguarding Adults procedures:

- [Safeguarding Adults Board – Leicestershire](#)
- Contact Leicestershire Adult Social Care: 0116 305 0004
- Emergency safeguarding concerns should be escalated via 999

7. References

- Statutory guidance issued under S29 of the [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) makes explicit reference to the 'use of local authority resources' and outlines expectations of partnership working and that 'local authorities should ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views' through the establishment of a responsible booking policy for public venues
- As a responsible authority under the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#), the council also has a statutory duty to work in partnership with other agencies to reduce and prevent crime. Maintaining public order is a priority for a local authority and the police, therefore when an event poses a risk to the public, there are grounds to review and reconsider venue hire. Where the property is not under local authority control, they can provide advice to the property owners/occupiers
- The [Human Rights Act 1998](#) sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that everyone in the UK is entitled to. In some limited situations, certain freedoms are qualified meaning that public authorities may interfere with them. This is only possible where the authority can show that its action has a proper basis in law, and is necessary and 'proportionate' to protect public safety, public order, health or morals, the rights and freedoms of other people

- The [Equality Act 2010](#) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act as well as to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people

Information Sheet for Event Booking and Venue Hire

Please complete all applicable sections of this for each venue hire or event on behalf of the organisation or organiser. Please consult the Event Booking and Venue Hire Policy for more information.

Ask – What’s planned and who’s planning it

1. Who is the individual or organisation booking the event?
 - Ask for their name and any associated names they operate under.
 - Ask for their address and a phone number
 - Get details of the individual or organisations website and associated websites
2. Do they implement a policy that promotes equality and diversity and challenge all forms of discrimination? Or will they agree to their event in subscribing to Oadby and Wigston Borough Councils equality and diversity policy?
3. Ask for details of the event including: theme, title, agenda, content, speakers, expected audience numbers and demographics, details of how the event will be promoted (ask for copies of flyers/posters), is the event open to the public or is it invite only? If the customer is not a local resident, establish why they are holding an event in this area?

Check

Undertake due diligence to confirm what you’ve been told and find out more

1. Run a check on the individual/organisation/speakers by:
 - Viewing their websites, articles or speeches
 - Considering what other people are saying about them (articles/blogs)
 - Check the government list of known terrorist groups (Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations)
 - If a charity, check their number at **gov.uk**
2. Ask for a reference from a venue provider previously used by the individual/organisation
3. If you are still concerned with, the answers provided by the customer, speak to your manager or the OWBC Prevent Lead or you can contact the Leicestershire Police Prevent Team

Decide

Do you let the event go ahead? Please complete the box at the bottom of this page and retain all information relating to this booking.

Low Risk or Higher Risk.

If it is Higher Risk, then please escalate this to the Head of Service for a final decision. If it is Lower Risk, proceed with the standard higher agreement.

Name of Officer Completing this Form	Role of Officer Completing this Form	Risk Level	Date of Completion