



Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

TO COUNCILLOR:

G S Atwal
L A Bentley
Miss A R Bond
G A Boulter (Chair)
J W Boyce

Mrs L M Broadley
F S Broadley (Vice-Chair)
D M Carter
Ms K M Chalk
Mrs L Eaton

Mrs S Z Haq
Dr T K Khong
K J Loydall
R H Thakor

Dear Councillor et al

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the **SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE** to be held at the **COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON** on **TUESDAY, 21 MARCH 2017** at **7.00 PM** for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Wigston
16 March 2017

Mark Hall
Chief Executive

ITEM NO.

AGENDA UPDATE

PAGE NO'S

9. Review of Pest Control Service

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**Service Delivery
Committee**

**Tuesday, 21 March
2017**

Matter for Decision

Title: Review of Pest Control Service

Author: Paulette Samuels (Environmental Health Team Leader)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides an internal review of the current Pest Control Service regarding domestic pests together with an assessment of the available options for consideration by Members regarding future service provision.
- 1.2. There are three available options listed in the recommendations and these are discussed in paragraph 8 of the report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommend that the Committee choose from the following three options:
 - 2.1. To continue the service as it is currently being delivered.
 - 2.2. To consider providing services on the current basis but with an enhanced focus on service development, and maximising income generation. This should ensure that the service at least breaks even with the aim of achieving a profit margin of 10%.
 - 2.3. To discontinue the service entirely and consider outsourcing it in totality.

3. Background

Pest Control is a non-mandatory function of local authorities delivered in a variety of ways ranging from being completely outsourced, to an income-generating service, charging competitive market rates for treatments, revisits and, in some cases, specialist advice. Most local authorities target those pests considered a public health risk such as rats and mice. It is important to note that treatment is a separate issue to enforcement of statutory pest control legislation as that remains a duty of the Council.

In that respect, the Council has specific duties under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, namely to take steps to ensure that the Borough is kept reasonably free from rats and mice and in particular to:

- From time to time carry out inspections;
- Destroy rats and mice on land the Council owns or occupies; and
- Enforce duties of owners and occupiers to keep other land free from rats and mice.

The Council does not have to undertake pest control itself and, if it chooses to do so, there is no requirement to offer this service free of charge. Powers and duties regarding public health pests are included in other environmental legislation, such as the Food Safety Act, Public Health Acts, and Housing Acts.

In partnership with Severn Trent the Council also undertakes sewer baiting to assist in the proactive management of the rodent population in the Borough.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council advertise their pest control provision on the corporate website as covering "domestic rodents, squirrels in premises, wasps, bed bugs/fleas, cockroaches and pest identification".

Fees and charges were amended with Committee approval in June 2016 to raise the fees in line with neighbouring authorities.

The personnel responsible for delivering the service are not solely employed in this function alone. They also provide a supporting role to other services such as carrying out dog patrols and management of stray dogs in the Borough as well as offering general support to the Environmental Health (EH) team. The main person delivering the pest control service is the Environmental Health (EH) Technician (Pest Control) who has been employed by the Council since March 2009. However other Officers are trained to deliver and support this area of work during periods of absence due to leave or sickness.

Future service developments may include the introduction of Public Space Protection Orders for dog fouling covering the open spaces within the Borough. The EH Technician is earmarked to provide the necessary patrols and enforcement. However, this is very much in its early stages of development.

4. Financial Review

The full cost of providing the pest control service in-house is difficult to accurately identify because it varies according to seasonal demand. However, we have assumed a 60/40 split between pest control and stray dog duties. There are some costs that would remain in the absence of an in house pest control service and would have to be absorbed elsewhere into other budgets/cost centres.

The following table summarises the current position assuming approximately 60% of EH Technician's time is spent on pest control. The other 40% would roughly split as 30% on Stray Dogs/Dog Fouling patrols and responses and the other 10% in support of delivering other EH functions in times of staff shortages and increased workload:

Expenditure Head	Estimated Cost of Service 2016/17	Minimum Saving	Maximum Saving
	£	£	£
Manpower	28,000	21,000	34,980
New Equipment	0	-	0
Equipment Baits Poisons & Insecticides	1,400	1,400	1,400
Protective Clothing	100	50	50
Telephone and Alarm System	200	-	0
Transport Recharge	3,400	700	2,730
Wasps Nest Income	(8,900)	(8,900)	(8,900)
Rodent Control Income	(9,100)	(9,100)	(9,100)

Other Pests Commercial (Sewer Baiting)	(2,800)	(2,800)	(2,800)
Camera Surveys	0	0	0
Depot Recharge	780		0
Central Support	7,550		0
NET COST OF SERVICE	20,630	2,350	18,360

The figure of **£18,360** represents the **maximum** projected saving from no longer delivering the service in-house.

5. Service Delivery

The Customer Service Centre (CSC) provides administrative support to the Pest Control Service by virtue of booking appointments for treatments and collecting payments. Last year they booked over 350 treatments.

Pest Control Enquiries recorded on the CRM (Period: Jan 1 2016 - 30 Dec 2016)	
Type of Enquiry	Number
Book a pest control treatment	366
Book an additional treatment	29
Cancel a treatment	7

6. The Leicestershire Picture

Local Authority	Service Delivery Model	Treatments
Blaby DC	None	None.
Hinckley & Bosworth BC	In-house	Rats, Mice, Wasps, flies, moths, cockroaches, bed bugs, carpet beetles, ants (commercial properties only).
Charnwood BC	In-house	Rats, Mice Fleas, cockroaches, bed bugs, squirrels, wasps. (Information Sheets on web).
North West Leicestershire DC	In-house	Rats, Ants (inside), bed bugs, bees, fleas, mice, wasps.
Melton DC	In-house	Rats, mice, cockroaches, carpet beetles, bed bugs, wasps, fleas, flies, moths.

Harborough DC	Outsourced to Midland Environmental Services	Rats, Mice, Wasps, bees, bed bugs, fleas, cockroaches, squirrels, birds.
Oadby and Wigston BC	In-house	Rats, Mice, Wasps, bed bugs, fleas, cockroaches, squirrels and pest identification.

7. Case Study – Brighton and Hove

Brighton and Hove have developed a pest control service they describe as “sustainable, environmentally friendly and self-funding”¹ It has been reported that “income generated by Brighton and Hove City Council through its pest control services has risen by 279% over the last 6 years.”² This article further reported that the Council’s pest control income increased from £17,265 to £35,708.83 between 2009/10 and 2010/11. It jumped by 25% to £44,960.75 in 2011/12, and a further 21 % to £54,444.86 in the nine months from April to December 2012. These increases were attributed to ‘the introduction of new charges for some pest-control treatments such as rats and mice and an increase in existing charges.’

Roy Pickard, Environmental Health Manager – Brighton and Hove stated: “To generate additional income, we had to expand the services we offered. New services included carpet moth treatment, humane mouse trapping, break back traps for rats, self-help insect treatments for customers on low incomes, a fox repellent advice service, a service for removing squirrels from lofts, wildlife management, and pest-proofing.”³

8. Options

It is considered that there are 3 viable options for the pest control service and these are discussed below:

- 1. Option One:** Continue to provide the present service as it currently stands.

Given that the projected savings range from £2,350 - £18,360 there is scope to break if the projected outturns are realised throughout 2017/18 and the vehicle used for both pest control and stray dogs is retained.

- 2. Option Two:** Continue the same service provision with enhancements and the provision of additional services to service delivery

If this is selected then further steps could be taken to improve the current service provision:

- Developing the trusted ‘brand’ of the Council through advertising the new services on our Web site and utilising our Letterbox circular to further publicise the pest control service,

¹ Environmental Health News, December 2016/January 2017, p. 20

² The Argus. 11th February 2013. ‘Pest control income increases for Brighton and Hove City Council’ (downloaded 19/12/16)

³ Environmental Health News, December 2016/January 2017, p. 21

- Seek commercial contracts to offer expert advice on pest control management whilst being mindful of our statutory responsibilities to take enforcement action where necessary.
- Obtain customer feedback via satisfaction surveys conducted primarily with customers who have accessed the service since the new charges were implemented in June 2016.

As shown in the case study of Brighton and Hove above it should be possible to increase revenue by offering additional services and a 10% profit margin is considered achievable. It is anticipated that the revised service if approved could be implemented as from June 2017.

3. Option Three: Discontinue the Pest Control Service

If this option is selected, then further points would need to be considered including:

- Not providing any service at all, as is the case at Blaby DC.
- Tender out the service through a competitive process with delivery of the pest control service by a third party provider, as is the case at Harborough DC.
- Seek advice from both local authorities to determine which model best suits the needs of Oadby and Wigston.
- The overall savings of this option would be in the region of £18,000. However, there would be an additional cost to the service for a replacement vehicle to continue with the delivery of the stray dog service.
- There may be a detrimental effect on the control of pests and impact on the public's perception of the Council.

- 9 Option Two appears to be the most practical solution as it allows the current service to continue and should generate additional income to make the service self financing with the aim of achieving a 10 % margin.

The service would then be reviewed periodically, going forward, to ensure ongoing viability in accordance with the Councils' Corporate Priority of effective service provision.

Background Documents:-
None.

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Implications	
Financial (CR)	CR1: Decreasing Financial Resources - There is a need to make the service more cost effective.
Legal (AC)	No significant implications.
Risk (SG)	CR4: Reputation Damage - Damage to the Council's reputation by withdrawing the in-house service.
Equalities (SG)	No significant implications. An Initial Screening is attached to this report.
	Equality Assessment:-
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial Screening <input type="checkbox"/> Full Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable



Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL

EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

Name of Policy/Function:		This is new
Review of Pest Control Service	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This is a change to an existing policy
		This is an existing policy, Function, not previously assessed
		This is an existing policy/function for review

Date of screening	7 March 2017
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1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

This changes how infestations of pests i.e. rats are dealt with.

2. Are there external considerations?

e.g. Legislation/government directive etc

These changes do not arise from specific government policy.

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

Borough residents with pest problems.

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

To save the Council money.

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

No – none planned.

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.

None have been highlighted in the report.

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	Neutral
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral
Age	Neutral
Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Religion/Belief	Neutral
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral

8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?

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

No.

9. Are there any human rights implications?

No.

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

No.

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

i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation

Not at present.

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

No.

13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?

N/A

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 Paulette Samuels Date 07/03/2017
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Countersigned by Stephen Glazebrook Date 07/03/2017
(Head of Service)

Please forward an electronic copy to: veronika.quintyne@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
(Community Engagement Officer)

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