



# Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

## TO COUNCILLOR:

G A Boulter (Chair)	Mrs E M Connell
Mrs S Z Haq (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs J M Gore
L A Bentley	K J Loydall
J W Boyce	R H Thakor
F S Broadley	Mrs S A Dickinson
D M Carter	Mrs L Eaton
Miss M V Chamberlain	Mrs R C Kanabar

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the **SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE** to be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Wigston on **TUESDAY, 8 JULY 2014 COMMENCING at 7.00 pm** for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Council Offices  
Wigston  
30 June 2014

Chief Executive

## AGENDA

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE  
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY 11 MARCH  
2014, COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillor G A Boulter – Chair  
Councillor Mrs S Z Haq – Vice Chair

Councillors J W Boyce, R F Eaton, D M Carter, Mrs J Gore, K J Loydall, R  
Thakor, Miss M V Chamberlain

Officers in Attendance: Mrs A Court, L Marshall, J Lee, Mrs A Pathak-Mould and  
Miss S Basten

Min Ref	Narrative	Officer Resp
50.	<b><u>APOLOGIES</u></b>  Apologies for absence received from Councillors L A Bentley and F Broadley.	SB
51.	<b><u>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES</u></b>  None.	
52.	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b>  None.	
53.	<b><u>MINUTES – 21 JANUARY 2014</u></b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2014 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.	SB
54.	<b><u>ACTION LIST – 21 JANUARY 2014</u></b>  Members agreed that the final three points in the action list should have a target date of June 2014.  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Committee noted the action list, page 10.	SB

55.	<p><b><u>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	SB
56.	<p><b><u>STIMULATING ECONOMIC INVESTMENT IN OADBY, WIGSTON AND SOUTH WIGSTON</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Director of Services as set out in report pages 11 to 12, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members noted the report.</p>	
57.	<p><b><u>APPROVAL AND ISSUE OF STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING WITHIN THE BOROUGH</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Building Control Manager as set out in report pages 13 to 26, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Committee heard that the purpose of the report is to introduce a protocol that speeds up the process of application for street naming and numbering. Alongside this, the Council would implement a charge scheme whereby charges are set for the different types of application expected for this service.</p> <p>When asked, Members agreed that consent for delegated authority should be given to the Building Control Manager for street naming and numbering without the need to apply to Committee in the first instance.</p> <p>The Committee heard details of the charges the Council are proposing for this service; however these must first be approved by the Policy, Finance and Development Committee.</p> <p>When asked, the Building Control Manager reassured Members that although it is unclear from the report, individuals as well as developers and agencies can apply to have a street named. Consideration would be given to those individuals provided that a justifiable reason is given for their request and that it is in line with protocol.</p> <p>The Committee heard that the Council are responsible for selecting the latter part of the street name, for example Street, Road or Avenue. Should a request be made for a particular street name inclusive of the latter part, justification</p>	

	<p>would be required owing to national guidance prior to any decision being made.</p> <p>A Member recommended that methods of dispute resolution are included as part of the protocol.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members:-</p> <p>(1) approved the delegation of the powers for street naming and numbering within the Borough to the Building Control Manager in consultation with the Chair of this committee.</p> <p>(2) approved the Street Naming and Numbering Protocol.</p> <p>(3) recommended to the Policy, Finance and Development committee that charges are to be introduced for the administering of the scheme.</p>	
58.	<p><b><u>ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Interim Head of Environmental Development and Operational Services as set out in report pages 27 to 28, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Committee heard that the Council already operate a service for the scattering of ashes at both cemeteries in Oadby and Wigston, therefore they would impose the same fees and charges for Brocks Hill. The Council are proposing to use the top meadow at Brocks Hill which will include a designated area for memorial trees and benches. When asked, the Interim Head of Environmental Development and Operational Services confirmed that the Council will consider whether this area is to be fenced off.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the Council must first consult with funeral directors in reference to the site location and accessibility, and consider legally whether the ground needs to be consecrated given its proposed use.</p> <p>Members noted that a protocol should be introduced detailing how the land will be used owing to the ongoing maintenance and conservation of this area.</p> <p>The Interim Head of Environmental Development and Operational Services informed the Committee that a short report detailing the proposed charges and fees for the Councils trade waste service must be approved by the Policy,</p>	

	<p>Finance and Development Committee. He detailed the process of the trade waste collection and the benefits to the Council.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <p>(1) Members noted the progress being made in relation to environmental development and operations activities within the Borough.</p> <p>(2) details of the income received for Trade Waste and the scattering of ashes at Brocks Hill is reported to future Service Delivery Committee meetings.</p>	
<p><b>59.</b></p>	<p><b><u>FUTURE WASTE COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Interim Head of Environmental Development and Operational Services as set out in report pages 29 to 32, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Committee heard that the Council is not currently in a position to extend food waste collections borough wide. The proposal of a split vehicle to collect this waste is not viable under the current budget therefore additional resource and vehicles would be required in order to facilitate this collection.</p> <p>The Committee were informed of the options the Council were exploring in order to carry out food waste collections borough wide including the modelling undertaken by the Waste Resources Action Group (WRAP).</p> <p>Members suggested that the Council forms a task and finish group to assist with this process.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members:</p> <p>(1) note the key findings from the WRAP modelling exercise as detailed in paragraph four of the report.</p> <p>(2) agree to a route optimisation exercise being undertaken in conjunction with consultation with staff on delivery options and a further report to be brought back to the Service Delivery Committee on completion of that exercise.</p>	
<p><b>60.</b></p>	<p><b><u>UPDATE ON HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and</p>	

	<p>appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 33 to 67, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Community made reference to Appendix 1 which is the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. The Committee heard this document needs to be complex in order to withstand any challenge and will be continually reviewed to ensure best use of resources in terms of stock.</p> <p>The Committee were informed of the Council's responsibilities under the Localism Act 2011, particularly in regard to 16 to 17 year olds who are homeless and letting larger properties which are detailed within the report.</p> <p>The Head of Community informed the Committee of the new service the Council has implemented for mutual exchanges in order to maximise accessibility for all.</p> <p>Members recommended that Officers arrange a seminar to gain a better understanding on this policy. Members were informed that it is a district wide policy therefore the Council are guided by other districts in determining affordability for which a national index will be used.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members</p> <p>(1) approve the updates to the Allocations Policy as set out within this report.</p> <p>(2) arrange a seminar on the Housing Allocations Policy.</p>	
61.	<p><b><u>HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT (HRS) FOR OLDER PEOPLE</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 68 to 69, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Committee were reminded that Leicestershire County Council (LCC) currently holds the contract for housing related support, including the provision of funding which is to be procured elsewhere by 2015.</p> <p>The Committee were informed that the Council has the opportunity to put forward our own proposals in relation to providing this service locally, dependant on the feasibility and cost for in house service as opposed to that offered by LCC.</p>	

	<p>Members requested that detailed figures are brought to the Committee as part of the report, for consideration.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <p>(1) Members agree to accept a formal Notice of extending the current contract that is due to be received in April 2014 (following LCC cabinet approval) to extend the contract period to September 2015.</p> <p>(2) a review of the current provision of service delivery in relation to the Housing Related Support services be commenced with a view to exploring the feasibility and cost implications of an in-house provision as an alternative option to be put to LCC.</p>	
62.	<p><b><u>DELIVERY OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 70 to 74, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Community informed the Committee of the review the Council is undertaking of its caretaking service and how the Council can best deliver this. The Committee also heard that consultation will be carried out with residents and members of the public and feedback will be given to Members accordingly.</p> <p>The Head of Community also provided an update on the capital works programme.</p> <p>The Director of Services gave a brief update on the progress with Boulter Crescent and confirmed that a report will be brought back to Committee if required.</p> <p>The Committee heard details of the Community Performance Charter as displayed on the Council’s website.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members:</p> <p>(1) note the report</p> <p>(2) note the review of caretaking services</p>	
63.	<p><b><u>DISCHARGE OF HOMELESSNESS DUTY – EXCEPTIONAL CASES ONLY</u></b></p>	



	<p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 75 to 86, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Community detailed the two categories which are classed as exceptional cases for the purpose of the Council's homelessness duty, being significant rent arrears and high levels of anti-social behaviour, alongside the Council's powers under the Localism Act 2011.</p> <p>Members recommended that a report is brought back to this Committee in 12 months time detailing how many times the Homelessness Policy has been used.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Members approved the amendments to the existing policy as outlined in the report.</li> <li>2. That an update report is brought to the Committee in 12 months in respect of the Homelessness Policy.</li> </ol>	APM
64.	<p><b><u>FUTURE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LOCAL PARTNERSHIP GROUP</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 87 to 89, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Committee were reminded of the Locality Partnership Group between Blaby and Oadby and Wigston, particularly in reference to children and young people.</p> <p>The Head of Community outlined the opportunities available to the Council as part of the review for this partnership, in order to focus on what is right for the children and young people of Oadby and Wigston and to allow Members to consider future projects for such.</p> <p>Members recommended that a report which clearly defines the decision maker, the budget to be spent including where it is sourced from and how it is governed, is brought back to this Committee.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members:</p> <p>(1) note the report</p>	AC

	<p>(2) accept the proposal that the Service Delivery Committee take on the governance responsibilities for the LPG during its transition period from April 2014 to March 2014.</p> <p>(3) A report is brought back to a future meeting setting out financial and governance arrangements.</p>	
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**Meeting closed 8:29 p.m.**

**Service Delivery Committee – 8 July 2014**

**ACTION LIST – ARISING FROM MEETING ON 11 MARCH 2014**

<b><u>Min. No.</u></b>	<b><u>Title</u></b>	<b><u>Action To be Taken</u></b>	<b><u>Officer</u></b>	<b><u>Target Date</u></b>
44.	Empty Homes	Target of 3 homes per year to be put back to use be reported to July committee following postponement from March	APM	July 2014
45.	Disabled Facilities Grant	Report on pertinent statistics including average level of grant and number of grants	APM	July 2014
49.	Review of Temporary Accommodation	Further more detailed report	APM	July 2014
57.	Street Naming and Numbering	Charges be recommended to PFD Committee	AC	Completed
59.	Future Waste Arrangements	Task Group be convened	MH	Completed
60.	Housing Allocations Policy	Seminar to help Members gain a better understanding on the Policy	APM	October 2014
63.	Discharge of Homelessness Duty	Update Report in 12 months in respect of the Homelessness Policy	APM	March 2015
64.	Future Governance of Local Partnership Group	A report which defines the decision maker, the budget, and governance is brought to Committee.	APM	July 2014

# Agenda Item 7



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**8 July 2014**

**Information**

Title: **Provisional Committee Budget Outturn Report –  
2013/14**

Author: **John Dickson - Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer)**

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## **1 Introduction**

This report provides Members with details of the committee's provisional outturn position for capital and revenue for 2013/14 along with the outturn for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Council's full outturn position will be reported to the Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 22 July 2014.

## **2 Recommendations**

That Members:

- (1) Note the reported outturn positions.
- (2) Note the requested revenue and capital carry forwards as set out in Appendix 5.

## **3 Information**

The outturn position is still only provisional because at the time of writing, the Council's Statement of Accounts had neither been fully completed nor scrutinised by the Council's external auditors. As a result of audit, some technical adjustments may be necessary.

### General Fund

In February 2013, the Council approved a 2013/14 General Fund budget for this committee of £3.571 million. These estimates were later revised to £3.458 million which were approved at Council in February 2014. The provisional outturn position for 2013/14 is £3.450 million which represents a £8,000 under spend for the financial year as compared to the revised estimate. The variances for each service are detailed in Appendix 1.

The provisional outturn position figures shown in the attached appendices have been adjusted to remove those technical accounting adjustments such as depreciation and impairment that would normally be shown in the statutory year end Statement of Accounts, which do not affect the balance

on the General Fund. This makes the figures comparable to the approved budgets for the year.

The headline reasons for the variance are explained below.

- Continued adjustment and re-alignment of organisational structures led to a reduction in establishment cost of £129,000 across the committee. However, to compensate for some of these vacancies there was an increase in costs of £68,000 as a result of the use of hired staff and others being transferred into services.
- Due to market fluctuations recycling disposal income was below that anticipated for the year. Some recyclates such as paper and glass performed well bringing in respectively £26,000 and £25,000 more income than expected. In the case of card and plastics a depressed market led to lower than expected income of £30,000 and £54,000 respectively.

Other headline variances (Over £5,000) are shown in Appendix 2 of this report.

#### Housing Revenue Account

In February 2014 the revised forecast for the HRA was that a contribution would be required from balances of £86,700 leaving a balance of £939,914 at 31 March 2014. However, the provisional outturn position has been influenced by the following main issues.

Firstly, it has been necessary to reschedule the commencement of major Housing capital schemes due to external challenge on the award of contract to the chosen tenderer. Whilst it is too early in the programme to predict potential changes to the work schedules, there have now been more vacancies than anticipated together with certain cost savings, which will make it possible for the contract to now be a three block programme. This would enable the contractor to take advantage of good weather and move the programme forward to catch up on the delays already experienced. However, as a result of the delay, £717,000 of budgeted revenue funding set aside for these works in 2013/14 was not required which has contributed to a provisional saving in year for the Housing Revenue Account. This funding will now be required in 2014/15 and will be carried forward in balances.

The other major saving in the year relates to revenue repairs and maintenance. It was identified that a number of works that would normally be covered by Planned Maintenance could usefully be covered by the current "Whole Unit" capital refurbishment contracts enabling an efficiency saving of £132,000 on the revenue budget. Future, Planned Maintenance budgets are also to be reviewed. Additionally, some of the adaptations work was moved to the capital programme creating a further saving of £41,000.

Finally, a variance of £455,000 for depreciation which is a required technical accounting entry is adjusted for elsewhere within the Housing Revenue Account resulting in a neutral effect on balances.

All of the above major variances result in a surplus of £870,658 for the year with a closing balance of £1,897,272. This represents a £957,358 under spend against the revised budget.

Full details of the HRA provisional outturn position are given at Appendix 3.

Capital Programmes (Housing and Non-housing)

The revised capital programme for this committee included Housing schemes with a budgeted cost of £1,571,590 and General Fund schemes of £1,207,613. The total budgeted programme is £2,779,203. The provisional outturn for Housing is £646,186, an under spend of £925,404, and for the General Fund £1,014,315 which represents an under spend of £193,298. The total under spend on the programme is £1,118,702

The major under spends, primarily within Housing schemes, in the year were either as a result of considered re-scheduling of works within rolling contracts that cover a number of years or because of external contractual challenge which delayed the programmes. More detail is provided within a further report included on the agenda of this committee.

The reasons for these variances are given in Appendix 4.

Carry Forwards

Details of requested carry forward budgets for both revenue and capital have been included at Appendix 5. These will be reported to the Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 22 July for approval.

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Background Papers: Report to Council on 21 February 2013 – Budget Proposals and Associated Strategies  
Report to Council on 25 February 2014 – Budget Proposals 2014/15

<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	Incorporated within the body of the report
Risk	CR1 Decreasing Financial Resources CR9 Economy
Equalities (KG)	Not applicable
Legal (KG)	No significant implications

**Service Delivery Committee (General Fund) Provisional Outturn Summary 2013/14**

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Service Head</b>	<b>Original Budget 2013/14 £</b>	<b>Revised Budget 2013/14 £</b>	<b>Actual 2013/14 £</b>	<b>Variance Revised vs. Actual (Under) / Over £</b>
14001	Environmental Health Admin/Enforcement	313,590	315,170	243,196	(71,974)
14003	Energy Conservation Act 95	260	250	0	(250)
14004	Environmental Protection	10,800	10,470	3,039	(7,431)
14005	Infectious Diseases	400	380	396	16
14006	Pest Control Service	(3,340)	(3,350)	4,144	7,494
14007	Dog Control Service	9,110	9,130	11,289	2,159
14008	Private Housing	1,300	(1,610)	(3,188)	(1,578)
14101	Community Development	144,720	147,360	130,918	(16,442)
14102	Health Promotion	3,060	3,060	5,247	2,187
14103	Grants	66,390	66,440	69,045	2,605
14104	Recreation and Leisure	46,510	46,640	53,926	7,286
14106	Multicultural	1,810	1,820	868	(952)
14201	Homelessness	57,320	54,310	47,789	(6,521)
14203	Day Centres	12,000	12,000	14,536	2,536
14204	Improvements for People with Disabilities	1,280	1,270	953	(317)
14206	Boulter Crescent Community Flat	4,870	4,870	3,626	(1,244)
20001	Allotments	12,000	16,390	23,708	7,318
20002	Sports Grounds	211,250	202,590	165,589	(37,001)
20003	Parks and Open Spaces	136,270	131,960	110,060	(21,900)
20004	Wigston Fields (The Poplars)	2,660	3,800	1,985	(1,815)
20005	Peace Memorial Park Pavilion	13,710	14,530	14,983	453
20006	Golf Course	55,820	47,170	50,334	3,164
20007	Swimming Pools	467,230	419,290	398,367	(20,923)
20008	Leisure Centre	13,670	15,280	4,447	(10,833)
20009	Water Charges Day centre	(3,800)	(3,420)	(1,337)	2,083
20101	Closed Churchyards	6,330	7,280	7,124	(156)
20102	Cemeteries	9,540	21,510	54,005	32,495
20201	Brocks Hill Country Park	169,080	190,740	251,216	60,476
20202	Biodiversity	15,880	16,410	13,239	(3,171)
20301	Land Drainage	3,510	3,580	4,901	1,321
20401	Public Conveniences	42,540	41,970	64,404	22,434
20501	Car Parks	122,630	117,800	119,240	1,440
20601	Borough Engineering	107,490	106,170	111,710	5,540
20701	Street Cleansing	511,160	498,110	494,976	(3,134)
20801	Refuse Collection	548,370	535,910	515,197	(20,713)

**Service Delivery Committee (General Fund) Provisional Outturn Summary 2013/14**

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Service Head</b>	<b>Original Budget 2013/14 £</b>	<b>Revised Budget 2013/14 £</b>	<b>Actual 2013/14 £</b>	<b>Variance Revised vs. Actual (Under) / Over £</b>
20802	Recycling	832,760	835,900	786,345	(49,555)
20803	Recycling Disposal	(429,140)	(462,520)	(354,970)	107,550
20804	Waste Minimisation	51,920	29,020	28,538	(482)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,570,960</b>	<b>3,457,680</b>	<b>3,449,843</b>	<b>(7,837)</b>

**Holding Accounts**

19901	Environmental health	79,170	76,630	52,886	(23,744)
29901	Mechanics Workshop	99,570	96,870	103,032	6,162
29902	Oadby Depot	80,300	68,960	115,020	46,060
29903	Grounds Maintenance Holding Account	398,470	392,840	327,010	(65,830)
29905	Client Services	436,720	419,820	414,308	(5,512)
70000	Fleet Manage Training Exps	32,253	19,850	23,440	3,590



## Service Delivery Committee (General Fund) Provisional Revenue Outturn Position 2013/14

Cost Centre Code	Service Head	Expense Head	Original Budget 2013/14 £	Revised Budget 2013/14 £	Actual 2013/14 £	Variance Revised vs. Actual (Under) / Over £	Comments
14001	Environmental Health Administration/Enforcement	Salaries	264,090	264,090	186,811	(77,279)	Vacancies in Departmental Structure
14001	Environmental Health Administration/Enforcement	Hired staff	0	0	8,404	8,404	Hired staff required to cover vacancies
14101	Community Development	Salaries	98,300	98,300	89,524	(8,776)	Vacancies in Departmental Structure
14101	Community Development	Grant Income	0	0	(7,140)	(7,140)	Grant to cover salary costs
14104	Recreation and Leisure	Salaries	34,490	34,490	42,334	7,844	Work relating to Leisure Contract
14201	Homelessness	Emergency Accommodation	23,000	23,000	5,169	(17,831)	Reduction in use of bed and Breakfast
14201	Homelessness	Benefit payments Emergency Accommodation	(21,670)	(21,670)	(3,718)	17,952	Reduction in use of bed and Breakfast
20002	Sports Grounds	Electricity	5,640	16,040	1,594	(14,446)	Incorrect meter reading caused overestimation of costs
20002	Sports Grounds	Contract Cleaning	16,270	13,650	8,646	(5,004)	Review of cleaning arrangements not carried out as planned
20002	Sports Grounds	Grounds Maintenance Recharge	171,620	169,140	142,587	(26,553)	Vacancies within Grounds Maintenance Service
20003	Parks and Open Spaces	Grounds Maintenance Recharge	109,950	108,370	91,753	(16,617)	Vacancies within Grounds Maintenance Service
20007	Swimming Pools	Legal Fees	7,500	7,500	118	(7,382)	Not required in 2014/15
20008	Leisure Centre	Share of Profits	(35,000)	(35,000)	(25,808)	9,192	Surplus on leisure contract lower than in previous years
20102	Cemeteries	Other Faith Burials	4,400	4,400	12,125	7,725	Greater demand
20102	Cemeteries	Burial Rights Garden of Remembrance	(18,650)	(18,650)	(12,688)	5,962	Reduced demand
20201	Brocks Hill Country Park	Salaries	125,770	125,770	151,806	26,036	New Assistant Ranger
20401	Public Conveniences	Electricity	4,280	4,280	(1,457)	(5,737)	Incorrect meter reading caused overestimation of costs
20401	Public Conveniences	Contract Cleaning	9,120	9,120	16,500	7,380	Review of cleaning arrangements not carried out as planned
20401	Public Conveniences	Maintenance Contracts	7,530	7,530	26,113	18,583	New contract not negotiated until 2014/15
20501	Car Parks	CPE Contracts	58,000	58,000	47,957	(10,043)	Cost lower than anticipated
20501	Car Parks	Car Parking Fees	(24,950)	(24,950)	(19,363)	5,587	Parking income lower than expected
20701	Street Cleansing	Salaries	279,190	279,190	293,298	14,108	Transfer of staff from another service
20801	Refuse Collection	Hired staff	42,850	42,850	37,236	(5,614)	Lower requirement than expected
20802	Recycling	Salaries	391,050	391,050	362,168	(28,882)	Vacancies in Establishment
20802	Recycling	Hired staff	47,350	47,350	72,508	25,158	Required to fill vacancies above
20802	Recycling	Sacks & Bags	95,840	95,840	106,241	10,401	Larger demand for bags than originally estimated
20803	Recycling Disposal	Hired staff	159,060	159,060	179,827	20,767	Staffing required to cover sickness
20803	Recycling Disposal	Use of Hired Plant	0	0	5,096	5,096	Hired plant required to cover breakdowns

**Service Delivery Committee (General Fund) Provisional Revenue Outturn Position 2013/14**

Cost Centre Code	Service Head	Expense Head	Original Budget 2013/14 £	Revised Budget 2013/14 £	Actual 2013/14 £	Variance Revised vs. Actual (Under) / Over £	Comments
20803	Recycling Disposal	Recycling Credits	(281,150)	(281,150)	(270,632)	10,518	Garden waste credits lower than budgeted for
20803	Recycling Disposal	Sales - Paper	(170,570)	(170,570)	(196,294)	(25,724)	Sales great than expected
20803	Recycling Disposal	Sales - Card	(46,570)	(46,570)	(15,789)	30,781	Price of card lower than expected
20803	Recycling Disposal	Sales - Glass	(12,260)	(14,860)	(40,521)	(25,661)	Price great than expected
20803	Recycling Disposal	Sales - Plastics	(97,150)	(97,150)	(43,481)	53,669	Price of plastic lower than expected
20803	Recycling Disposal	Sale of Commercial Recycling	(30,000)	(30,000)	0	30,000	Scheme not started until 2014/15
20804	Waste Minimisation	Promotion & Education	9,640	9,640	3,298	(6,342)	Work reduced as external funding below not available
20804	Waste Minimisation	External Funding Income	(9,640)	(9,640)	0	9,640	Funding no longer available

**Holding Accounts - Completely Recharged into the Services Above**

29902	Oadby Depot	Contract Cleaning	0	0	11,440	11,440	Review of cleaning arrangements not carried out as planned
29903	Grounds Maintenance Holding Account	Salaries	266,100	266,100	210,820	(55,280)	Vacancies within the establishment
29905	Client Services	Salaries	326,430	242,970	250,846	7,876	Extra post funded by Waste Grant
29905	Client Services	Hired staff	0	83,460	96,585	13,125	Cost of interim arrangements at depot

**Housing Revenue Account Provisional Outturn Report 2013/14**

Service Head	Original Budget 2013/14	Revised Budget 2013/14	Actual 2013/14	Variance	Explanation
	£	£	£	£	£
Housing Revenue Account	(3,550,310)	(3,526,260)	(3,979,918)	(453,658)	Depreciation -£455,000, Provision for Bad Debts - £19,000, Rent, +£5,000, Council Tax on Void Properties +£20,000
Estate Management	776,370	770,190	777,297	7,107	Salaries -£7,000, Hired Staff +£16,000, External Contractors Fees -£11,000, Tenant Involvement - £6,000
<b>Older Persons Services and Community Care :</b>					
Churchill Close	10,730	10,490	(4,867)	(15,357)	Emergency Warden -£22,000, Support Grant +£3,000, Gas +£3,000
Marriott House	18,670	18,950	31,330	12,380	Support Costs +£6,000
William Peardon Court (Kings Drive)	23,340	23,420	38,657	15,237	Salaries +£3,000, Support Costs +6,000, Support Grant +£3,000
Communal Services	145,230	144,720	108,323	(36,397)	Emergency Warden -£10,000, Grounds Maintenance -£20,000, Central Control System - £3,000
Housing Support Officer	3,590	4,170	9,703	5,533	Central Support Charges +£2,000, Support Grant +£3,000
<b>Caretakers Services :</b>					
Elizabeth Court	25,760	25,760	28,897	3,137	
Bennett Way	15,180	15,160	16,968	1,808	
Boulter Crescent	25,340	25,300	25,126	(174)	
Burgess St, Maromme Sq, Junction Rd	14,760	14,760	17,413	2,653	
<b>TOTAL SUPERVISION &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>(2,491,340)</b>	<b>(2,473,340)</b>	<b>(2,931,070)</b>	<b>(457,730)</b>	
<b>REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE</b>	1,316,690	1,310,850	1,074,093	(236,757)	General Repairs -£150,000, Voids -£27,000, Adaptations -£41,000, Service Repairs -£17,000
<b>NET COSTS OF SERVICES</b>	<b>(1,174,650)</b>	<b>(1,162,490)</b>	<b>(1,856,977)</b>	<b>(694,487)</b>	
Capital Charges	524,190	524,190	523,231	(959)	
<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(650,460)</b>	<b>(638,300)</b>	<b>(1,333,746)</b>	<b>(695,446)</b>	
Appropriations	725,000	725,000	463,088	(261,912)	Depreciation Adj +£455,000, Revenue Contribution to Capital -£717,000
<b>DEFICIT / (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>74,540</b>	<b>86,700</b>	<b>(870,658)</b>	<b>(957,358)</b>	
<b>HRA DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) BOUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>(1,026,614)</b>	<b>(1,026,614)</b>	<b>(1,026,614)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>DEFICIT / (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>74,540</b>	<b>86,700</b>	<b>(870,658)</b>	<b>(957,358)</b>	
<b>HRA DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>(952,074)</b>	<b>(939,914)</b>	<b>(1,897,272)</b>	<b>(957,358)</b>	

## Service Delivery Committee Capital Programme 2013/14 Provisional Outturn

Scheme	2013-14 Revised budget £	2013-14 Expenditure £	Variance (under) / over £	Comments
<b>Housing Revenue Account</b>				
Boulter Crescent Phase 1 - Whole Unit Refurbishment	872,000	398,460	(473,540)	This contract straddles three financial years and commenced later than originally planned. We are also delivering the outstanding year 10 items of the original decent homes programme alongside this work.
Central Heating	313,316	22,965	(290,351)	Boulter being upgraded under main contract, therefore subject to similar delays
Kitchens & Bathrooms	66,971	27,754	(39,217)	Boulter being upgraded under main contract, therefore subject to similar delays
Car Hard standings	30,000	459	(29,541)	Delays due to lack of necessary permits and moving street furniture e.g. lampposts and parking restrictions.
Fire Safety Work	35,368	3,903	(31,465)	Boulter being upgraded under main contract, therefore subject to similar delays
Decent Homes Work	75,000	46,227	(28,773)	
Major Adaptations	141,305	138,385	(2,920)	
Orchard Upgrade	37,630	8,033	(29,597)	To be completed in 2014/15
				<b>(Note: Whilst the budgets above are arranged in this manner for accounting and budgetary control purposes, the work is actioned across these budgets on a "Whole Unit" basis.</b>
<b>Total - HRA</b>	<b>1,571,590</b>	<b>646,186</b>	<b>(925,404)</b>	
<b>General Fund - Service Delivery</b>				
Disabled Facility Grants	411,582	406,662	(4,920)	Demand-led
DEC Grant Expenditure	64,600	53,680	(10,920)	Grant to be carried forward into 2014/15
Disabled Access/facility Improvements	0	0	0	No Council building requiring adaptations in 2014/15
Blaby Road Park	387,852	273,422	(114,430)	Main Scheme now complete
Brocks Hill Natural Cemetery	50,000	0	(50,000)	Scheme no longer viable
Weekly Collection Support Scheme - New Waste Vehicles	122,071	150,679	28,608	100% grant funded scheme to continue into 2014/15
Disposal Shed Doors	10,160	12,030	1,870	Scheme complete
Notice & Information Boards	8,000	5,317	(2,683)	Residual works to complete scheme
Cemeteries - Memorial Safety	890	2,464	1,574	More spent before year end than originally envisioned
Car Park Enforcement Improvements	32,000	0	(32,000)	Scheme to be reviewed for 2014/15
Small WEEE & Film Adaptations - Picking Line	2,550	2,450	(100)	
Additional Bay Areas - Oadby Depot	21,730	21,731	1	
Aylestone Lane Allotments - Flood Alleviation	8,250	8,255	5	
Brocks Hill Pathway Resurfacing	51,200	49,145	(2,055)	Residual works to complete scheme
Bus Shelter Roofs	0	6,207	6,207	Grant funded
Car Park Infrastructure Improvements	5,616	5,973	357	
Lucas Marsh Pond Silt Clearing	11,112	1,400	(9,712)	Works more complex than originally envisioned due to potential environmental impact.
Vehicle Camera System	20,000	0	(20,000)	To be reviewed as part of the Waste Grant Scheme
Terex 860 Hoe Loader	0	14,900	14,900	Funded from Plant and Equipment Reserve
<b>Total -Service Delivery General Fund</b>	<b>1,207,613</b>	<b>1,014,315</b>	<b>(193,298)</b>	
<b>TOTAL SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	<b>2,779,203</b>	<b>1,660,501</b>	<b>(1,118,702)</b>	

## Revenue Grants Carried Forward 2013/14 to 2014/15

Budget Code	Expenditure Narrative	Budget £	Spend £	Requested Carry Forward £	Reason for Carry Forward
20201 5190	Brocks Hill Wild Meadow Grant	1,578	1,233	345	Meadow to be finished 2014/15
63025	Sports Commissioning Budgets working budget	36,000	32,600	3,400	Schemes planned for 2014/15

## Capital Budgets Carried Forward 2013/14 to 2014/15

Budget Code	Scheme Narrative	Budget £	Spend £	Requested Carry Forward £	Reason for Carry Forward
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u></b>					
50002	Boulter Crescent Whole House Refurbishment	872,000	398,460	473,540	This contract straddles three financial years and commenced later than originally planned. We are also delivering the outstanding year 10 items of the original decent homes programme alongside this work.
50003	Central Heating	313,316	22,965	290,351	Partially committed to cover year 10 decent homes upgrades and whole house approach. Would also support move from reactive to planned boiler replacements
50004	Kitchens and Bathrooms	66,971	27,754	39,217	Will be needed to complete year 10 decent homes work alongside main Boulter Crescent funding.
50007	Car Hard standings	30,000	459	29,541	Some of this work has already been delivered in 2014/15 having taken place late because of permits and moving street furniture e.g. lampposts and parking restrictions. Would support programme to concentrate on Holmden Ave following new development increasing traffic in street.
50010	Fire safety Work	35,368	3,903	31,465	Boulter Crescent being upgraded under main contract - no separate programme but fire service shortly to review.
50017	Major Adaptations	141,305	138,385	2,920	Already enough referrals to commit all of the 2014/15 budget.
50016	Decent Homes Work	75,000	46,227	28,773	This budget is being used for previously refused work - normally by a previous tenant - when the tenancy changes the home becomes non decent (having complied previously based on the work having been offered and the tenant having refused).
50018	Orchard Upgrade	37,630	8,032	29,598	Required for continuing project
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>					
<b>Service Delivery Committee</b>					
52002	Disabled Facilities Grant	411,582	406,661	4,921	Demand led
52003	DEC Grant Expenditure	64,600	53,680	10,920	Remaining DEC Grant unspent. Ring-fenced
54009	Notice & Information Boards	8,000	5,317	2,683	Residual works to complete scheme
54013	Car Park Enforcement Improvements	32,000	888	31,112	Changes to parking arrangements already approved by Members and already committed to reduction in enforcement.
52015	S106 Blaby Road Park	1,180,130	1,065,700	114,430	Project is nearing the end but will still run into 2014/15
54020	Brocks Hill Pathway Refurbishments	51,200	49,145	2,055	Residual works to complete scheme
54102	Lucas Marsh Pond Silt Clearing	11,112	1,400	9,712	Works still continuing on the scheme
54006	Weekly Collection Support Scheme programme	1,343,000	173,000	1,170,000	Remainder of Budget for 2013/14. scheme to carry on in 2014/15

# Agenda Item 8



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**8 July 2014**

**Information**

Title: **Committee Budget Review – April to May 2014**

Author: **John Dickson - Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer)**

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## **1 Introduction**

This report provides Members with details of the budgetary position for the committee at 31 May 2014 for both capital and revenue. Both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account are covered.

## **2 Recommendations**

That Members note the current positions.

## **3 Information**

Currently, there is no predicted change to the committee's General Fund budget for 2014/15 of £3,237,910.

The Housing Revenue Account and the capital programmes also show no variation to the budgets approved in February. The spend to date for the capital programmes of both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account is shown in Appendix 1 attached to this report.

No requested carry forward budgets from 2013/14 are included in these figures as these still require approval by the Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 22 July 2014.

Members are asked to note that this report is very early in the financial year. Therefore, only the first two months are available for proper consideration.

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Background Papers: Report to Council on 25 February 2014 – Budget Proposals 2014/15

<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	Incorporated within the body of the report
Risk	CR1 Decreasing Financial Resources CR9 Economy
Equalities (KG)	Not applicable
Legal (KG)	No significant implications

## Service Delivery Committee Capital Programme 2014/15

Scheme	2014-15 Total Budget	2013-14 Expenditure	Variance (under) / over	Comments	
	£	£	£		
<b>Housing Revenue Account</b>					
Boulter Cresecent - Whole Unit Refurbishment	2,760,000	3,831	(2,756,169)	Whole unit refurbishment, part of three-year rolling programme. Now fully committed.	
Central Heating	100,000	0	(100,000)		
Heating, Ventilation and Insulation	75,000	0	(75,000)		
Front & Rear Doors	75,000	1,448	(73,553)		
Car Hardstandings	20,000	0	(20,000)		Full spend expected
Fire Safety Work	10,000	4,383	(5,617)		Full spend expected
Decent Homes Work	50,000	5,000	(45,000)		Full spend expected
Major Adaptations	120,000	0	(120,000)		Full spend expected
Orchard Upgrade	2,370	0	(2,370)		Full spend expected
Asset Management Software	38,000	0	(38,000)		Full spend expected
Customer Profiling Software	5,000	0	(5,000)		Full spend expected
Arbitas Software Upgrade	10,000	0	(10,000)		Full spend expected
Scheme Based CCTV	30,000	0	(30,000)		Full spend expected
Housing Options Case Management System	5,000	0	(5,000)		Full spend expected
<b>Total - HRA</b>	<b>3,300,370</b>	<b>14,661</b>	<b>(3,285,709)</b>		
<b>General Fund - Service Delivery</b>					
Disabled Facilities Grant	143,000	1,590	(141,410)	Dependent on demand	
Disabled Access/Facility Improvements	15,369	0	(15,369)	Dependent on demand	
Disposal Shed Doors	8,840	0	(8,840)	Project will complete this year	
Play Area Refurbishments	57,580	0	(57,580)	Full spend expected	
Cemetaries - Memorial Safety	25,000	0	(25,000)	Full spend expected	
Small WEEE & Film Adaptations - Picking Line	37,450	0	(37,450)	Full spend expected	
External Bay Roofs - Oadby Depot	5,000	0	(5,000)	Project will complete this year	
Additional Bay Areas - Oadby Depot	18,270	0	(18,270)	Project will complete this year	
Grand Union Canal Footbridge	55,000	0	(55,000)	Full spend expected	
Wigston Cemetary Wall	6,750	0	(6,750)	Full spend expected	
Digital Scanning Equipment	10,500	0	(10,500)	Full spend expected	
Bassett Centre Hand-Back Refurbishment	50,000	0	(50,000)	Full spend expected	
Brocks Hill Building Revelopment	50,000	0	(50,000)	Full spend expected	
Brocks Hill Sewer Line	12,500	0	(12,500)	Full spend expected	
Upgrading of Allotment Roads	20,000	0	(20,000)	Full spend expected	
New Floor at Ellis Park Pavillion	12,500	0	(12,500)	Full spend expected	
Extensions to Gardens of Remembrance	15,000	0	(15,000)	Full spend expected	
Reconnecting with Nature	30,000	0	(30,000)	Full spend expected	
Leisure Facility Redevelopment	10,000,000	0	(10,000,000)	Full spend expected	
<b>Total -Service Delivery General Fund</b>	<b>10,572,759</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>(10,571,169)</b>		
<b>TOTAL SERVICE DELIVERY</b>	<b>13,873,129</b>	<b>16,252</b>	<b>(13,856,877)</b>		

# Agenda Item 9



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**8 July 2014**

**Matter for  
information**

Title: Delivery of Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Author: **Anita Pathak Mould  
Head of Community**

## 1. Introduction

This report is to provide an update to the Service Delivery Committee on the delivery of the HRA Business Plan approved in April 2012 including a commentary on activities and performance for the financial year end 2013/14

## 2. Recommendations

Members to note the updates contained within the Business Plan and in particular the introduction of the procurement and market testing for specific housing functions.

## 3. Information

### Tenants Charter

All Service Charters including performance charters are now being placed on the Boroughs website. It was agreed that this Committee is to receive exception reports of performance matters related to Landlord services. Below is a brief report on where targets have not been fully met.

- **Rent Arrears:** The year end position improved following a joint arrears initiative with the Benefits Team. This will be closely monitored during the second year of the welfare reforms so that any issues can be identified early.

Target 99%			
	November 2013	February 2014	March 2014
% Rent Collected	97.03%	97.8%	98.25%
Total Arrears	£118,77.30	£112,842.20	£91,549.41

- **Lettings:** The number of re-lets has increased as a consequence of Welfare Reform. Higher priority was given to those tenants who were not eligible for transfers to smaller properties. A change in policy has enabled further flexibility to enable those people who are looking for the right move at the right time, and consequently there has been an increase in some long term tenancies coming to an end. These



properties have needed more works to bring them up to current re-let standards.

Target for Routine voids 4 Weeks			
Major voids reported if over 12 weeks			
Type of void	January 2014	February 2014	March 2014
Void (routine)	6	7	8
Void (major)	13	13	15
Total	17	20	22

- Voids: Works to two major repairs voids are about to be undertaken
  - Falmouth Drive- a 3 bedroom property it is anticipated that work will commence in the next few weeks to carry out remedial works to correct major structural defects. This has been a very complex project due to the specialist nature of works and has involved structural engineers, consultants and the identification of a suitable specialist contractor to undertake the work. Such work is associated with the complexity of subsidence and the property sinking into the foundations. There have also been uncertainties leading to delays in funding the work with disposal being considered as an option. However, we are now in a position to proceed with the structural remedial works to restore the property bringing it into a safe and habitable condition.
  - St Peters Path – A supported housing one bedroom bungalow - similar time line and issues to the case above.
  - There are three other properties in St Peters Path that require remedial work. However, these are not voids but are tenanted properties and before undertaking any works on these three properties, consultations with the tenants has been necessary. 2 out of the 3 tenants agreed and we now have arrangements in place for the third property. To ensure best value and efficiencies, it is planned for the works to start simultaneously on all of these 4 properties at St. Peters Path.

### **Update on Capital Programme 2013/14**

#### **Refurbishment works at Boulter Crescent**

The Policy Finance and Development Committee approved the successful contractor, on 4 February 2014, and an update to this committee was provided at the end of March 2014.

Works commenced on site on 28 April 2014, following the contract let in mid April. Currently the contractors are working on 2 blocks, 10 flats (6 and 4 in the two blocks) and completion is anticipated in mid July. This will then lead to second phase for two more blocks, again 10 properties.

In the first phase there have been no major tenant concerns and dialogue continues with those who are currently decanted and with those who are being identified for the next phase.

A successful clean up operation was organised just prior to the first moves taking place encouraging all tenants to “spring clean”. It also enabled both the newly appointed Housing Team Leader and Housing Officer to meet with the community and forge relationships.

Feedback from tenants, who are currently in temporary decant accommodation, is good reflecting the hard work of both the contractors Tenant Liaison Officer and our own Project Officer who have worked very closely together to achieve success of the first phase decants.

It is too early in the programme to predict any changes to schedules. However, as there have now been more vacancies together with certain cost savings, it is anticipated that the second phase will consist of a three block programme. This would enable work to take advantage of good weather and move the programme forward to safeguard against any delays. This will, of course, be subject to consultations with the Finance Manager who is part of the project team. Members will be aware that duration of this program is over a 2 year period with an anticipated 8/9 week turnaround of work in each phase. Good progress of this project continues.

Communication has been maintained with all residents and the Build a Better Boulter Residents Association and surgeries at the Boulter Crescent Community flat are being covered by the newly appointed Housing Officer and Rents Officer.

### Other Sites

In addition to the above major Capital Works Programme, during the last financial year the following works, under the Capital Programme, were moved forward.

- Queen Street and King Street, Oadby,- all surveys are now complete and following a slight delay due to the withdrawal of funding from the energy companies, a programme of works have been agreed and the tender process has now commenced.
- 5 show flats delivered within the Capital Programme at Boulter Crescent
- Long standing lease obligations to shop fronts at Brabazon Way, Oadby completed
- A small number of planned boiler replacements have been completed and this is to now develop into a larger programme
- Voids inspected and kitchen and bathroom replacements were completed at properties previously refused during the last planned works program as part of the Decent Homes Programme. (DHP). Also as part of the voids works which were previously refused under (DHP), a total of 6 properties have been completed

- Other replacement works completed where previously refused under the DHP
- Blown double glazed window replacements catch up programme – now undertaken on a responsive basis.
- Upgrade of CCTV at William Peardon Court, Wigston
- Upgrade and remedial works at Chartwell House, Oadby including security fencing at rear of site and addressing long term parking issues by working closely with County Council to improve signage and marking out of parking spaces
- Preparation for a cost effective door replacement programme as the doors became defective during a 10 year guarantee period during which time the national door company collapsed leaving us to replace these doors. Trial of 5 doors completed and further market evaluation to be carried out with a phase of 30 to 50 doors out of some 700 doors that require replacement and ensuring that efficiencies are measured during contractual works.
- 5 car hard standings delivered and an ongoing programme including 13 to be complete all Council owned houses in Holmden Avenue, Wigston to coincide with heavier traffic flows following a new development at the college site.
- Major aids and adaptations to be undertaken and an ongoing programme with around a year waiting time. Urgent cases will be done more quickly as will be stair lifts and through floor lifts.

In addition, to above, the Maintenance team is also responsible for delivering capital works at the Council offices which have included tree works, Portable Appliance Testing (PAT). The team have also assisted with the programme leading to vacate and demolition of the huts and various internal cyclical programmes/upgrades following the various internal office moves.

In financial terms a total of £646,185 capital works was delivered from the HRA in 2013/14 for capital programmes for the above planned works and a further £45,793 for Council offices a total of £691,978.71

### Capital spend outturn

The HRA capital budget for 2013/14 was £2,565,960 which included a brought forward figure of £261,960 from 2012/13.

The year 2013/14 was the 9 year of the Decent Homes Programme which included the huge project we have embarked upon at Boulter Crescent. This project is being completed on a whole home approach which in this instance is a complete strip to the external shell.

The complex change in approach launched the largest works / decanting programme the Council has ever undertaken. The change took time as it was decided to underpin tenant consultation with show homes and a trial build. As a result an 'in-year' decision was made to carry forward £994,370 as the main delivery would occur 2014/16. Most of this related to Boulter Crescent (£939,000). The procurement process was then challenged pushing the start

date back still further outside of our control. Therefore, at year end a further £925,404 was available to carry forward of which £473,540 related to Boulter.

Boulter Crescent is now well underway and year 10 (2015/16) projects will commence much earlier in the year than in recent years.

Work to bring forward year 10 projects, once it was decided to delay the start of Boulter Crescent project, also faced delays due to government cutting of ECO insulation grants which meant revision of works and tenders.

In addition, the housing management IT system upgrade commenced later in the financial year due to departure of staff and the project is now near completion, anticipated to go live at the end of July.

### **Affordable Housing**

#### **Canal Street, South Wigston**

As reported to this committee previously, to supply 12 rented units, consisting of 2 much needed one and two bed roomed accommodation with a registered provider. A new planning permission was granted on 23 January 2014 and the scheme went on site in February 2014. Section 106 agreements is being finalised and the handover, is anticipated in April 2015. The Council will receive 100% nomination rights for all first lettings.

#### **Kirkdale Development (Bennetts Way)**

For the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable housing Programme (AHP) for 2015/18 the Council has shown support to a private builder and a registered provider (RP) to bid for grants to the Homes and Community Authority to deliver 40 affordable homes in South Wigston. We will work with the RP to ensure that appropriate mix of properties are delivered with 100% nomination rights to all first lettings. The support is for affordable housing only.

### **Housing Related Support (HRS)**

Members were provided with a report at the last meeting advising them of the Leicestershire County Council (LCC) intention to extend the supporting people contract for HRS:

Notification was received in April 2014 following County Council Cabinet approval to extend the contract until September 2015.

Confirmation of above and proposals for options were reported to Service Delivery Committee at the last meeting.

Under this proposals Districts can provide local solutions for service provisions where the most cost effective option is to have local agreements and arrangements for services. The Housing Team have been working closely with

the County to look at options for our locality and to determine how we can deliver services in the future particularly those in our sheltered schemes.

Officers are reviewing the current services and working with residents, staff and County to consider viable options.

Supporting People funding which will come to an end in September 2015. Early indications from the County suggests that there is unlikely to be any financial subsidy to the Districts providing support in Council housing sheltered schemes from 2015 as they move towards support provisions targeted to the needs of individuals under the Governments prevention agenda.

Officers have been attending the County consultation meetings being held with our residents in sheltered schemes. They have also facilitated consultations for those living in bungalows to provide support to residents and officers have appreciated ward members support at these meetings.

The County's correspondences to individuals have caused some confusion mainly related to the difference between an individuals' eligibility to claim support charges and the overall funding of Housing Related Support (HRS) for older people.

The criteria for individual support needs are that many have been in receipt of benefit of Supporting People (SP). However, eligibility changed at the start of April 2014 whereby the individuals who automatically received the Housing Benefit element of SP were no longer eligible unless they meet a means test. Those residents affected by this change have been advised that their benefits are being reviewed and that they may have to pay the charges for receiving support. This will come, from their current income which has understandably caused both confusion and anxiety.

Officers are assisting with a handful of residents who have been affected by this change and will work with the Benefits team and LCC officers to help our residents adjust to the new charging regime.

In addition, Officers are seeking an urgent meeting with LCC to discuss consultation arrangements concerning the variances in financial statements some residents has received. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting following further discussions and an update from LCC

Tenders have been received for all Districts for provision of Assistive Technology (Life line alarms, door entry intercom systems, etc) and the contract has been awarded to our current supplier which should ease the transition around the Assistive Technology changes proposed.

LCC have offered both their support and commitment to work with each District in recognition that we have a better understanding of our community needs. However, what is clear from the County Prevention Agenda is that there is not likely to be any financial support to Local Authorities, as already alluded above in this report.

### **Gas Contract Procurement and Performance**

It has been reported at previous meetings that the current gas servicing contractor sought an early exit from the contract due to their changed business priorities. The Council did not seek to influence their decision to end the contract before the optional fifth and final year because of some performance issues. It was therefore decided to take the opportunity for the council to address these concerns at this time. The company were however held to their contractual obligations to complete the fourth year of the contract to give the Council time to carry out a proper procurement exercise.

A dedicated officer with expertise in gas safety and service Contract Management has now been engaged on a temporary basis. His role is to cover the run off period of the existing contract plus the procurement and mobilisation of the new contract through the Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) partnership arrangement this Council holds. This has helped to improve performance under the current contract and is ensuring the best possible outcomes are achieved through the procurement process. The size of the councils operation does not make it possible to have a dedicated specialist role on an ongoing basis but this approach is proving a very effective way to work through this important period.

Meetings have taken place with NHC; a programme has been agreed and is running to schedule to deliver the new contract in September 2014 which will commence in October 2014. The detailed preparation of schedules, which include all customer facing requirements and selection of contractor; Members of the tenants' panel and other interested parties will be included in these discussions.

Under Gas Safe legislation a Landlord who rents part, or all of a property must have all gas appliances and pipe work, checked and a certificate (referred to as CP12) to prove that it has been done every 12 months. The check must be completed by a Gas Safe registered engineer (previously referred to as Corgi registered). A CP12 certificate provides information about the gas safety checks carried out and is evidence that appliances have been checked and safe to use.

The current working arrangements with the current contractor and performance have improved and this bodes well for a smooth transition into the new contract. This is also important as TUPE arrangements will apply meaning some of the current contractors staffing resource dedicated to this contract may move over to the new contract. Performance at the time of writing this report is as follows:-

- In the current month, as at 19 June. We are 100% compliant.
- Approaching half of Julys work is already complete and appointments have already been made for the remaining visits to happen in June.

We are now in a position of being 100% compliant and this compares very well to a period earlier in the year when the work was happening very close to the expiry date of the old certificate. Many visits were being completed days or in difficult access cases even weeks late his was picked up by Internal Audit. It was also noted that some CP12's were sufficiently overdue that court action

should have been taken, these have all now been completed and have valid CP12's.

As the current Performance Indicator is expressed in percentage terms against a target of 100% compliance a performance for example of 98% might seem very good but does not equate to actual numbers or how long cases have been outstanding. We are therefore introducing the following new PI Table for Gas Safety compliance:-

GAS SERVICE COMPLIANCE AS AT >>	19 JUNE 2014
OLDEST CASE CP12 - EXPIRED (CP12 = gas safety certificate)	(Insert date) None at present as 100% compliant
% CP 12's COMPLIANT	100.00%

### **Internal Audit**

In 2013/14 internal audit made some recommendations for service improvements to the Housing Option, Housing Repairs and Housing Voids services and these have now been implemented. The results of this follow up audit will be reported to the next Policy, Finance and Development Committee.

In brief the follow up audit found:-

- **Housing Options.** All of the action points noted have been implemented with an acceptable low residual risk being low. The main areas of concern were related to system updates and the new team have worked hard to bring both the systems and policies up to date
- **Repairs and Voids.** As previously advised the issues noted for this service related to the upgrade of both the Integra, finance management system interface with Orchard (Housing management system). Both of these projects were delayed due to the lack of internal capacity following the departure of an employee and the ability of suppliers to programme the work in. These are both progressing well now, however, as result of the delay a number of recommendations are only partly implemented these are now a priority for the service.

Issues raised around Gas Safety administrative records and procedures plus the need to complete Gas Servicing / Safety checks before the previous CP12 certificate expires have been addressed. More detail is provided in a separate section of this report. Processes have been reviewed to ensure we adhere more closely to policy and further improvements will be made as we enter into the new gas contract with a new contractor. In particular we are looking at what IT systems can be interfaced and what processes can be improved.

A full audit report will be going to Policy, Finance and Development committee as part of the internal audit annual statement report as an agreed process.

Attached at Appendix 1 is a procurement and market testing plan which has been discussed with Internal Audit. This method ensures that the repairs

services continue to be competitive whilst maintaining its local contractor base in line with the Councils corporate priorities.

### **Welfare Reforms**

The housing team have worked very closely with our colleagues in the benefits team and other partner agencies to closely monitor tenants impacted by the subsidy charged on additional bedrooms. (Often referred to as bedroom tax)

Officers continue to support tenants falling into rent arrears and Officers have been monitoring if any of the increases in rent arrears that can be directly attributed to the bedroom subsidy charge. To date, no formal legal action or evictions related directly to this change in welfare reforms.

In 2013/14 some 52 residents were awarded Discretionary Housing Benefit (DHP) to mitigate the effect of the removal of the spare room subsidy. The total award amounted to £13,147.00 of which £10,344.00 was awarded as a direct intervention of the Income team.

In addition, £2,803.00 was awarded to private tenants who had sought support of our Housing Options team and direct applications to the benefits team.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	The costs of voids are budgeted within the Capital programme The funding of the Canal Street flats is within the current provision of HRA budgets The apparent under spend in the HRA capital programme is due to a considered decision to reschedule within the two year rolling programme. Contract let of the larger programme was just outside of the year end which is now being caught up. The HRA procurement and marketing testing timetable conforms to the HRA ring fenced budget. Loss of the Supporting People budgets requires the reconfiguring of services
Risk (APM)	CR5 – Effective utilisation of assets CR7 - Business continuity
Equalities (KG)	It is envisaged that the appropriate EIA have been undertaken at various stages in respect of impact that changes may have on individuals.
Legal (KG)	Legal have been involved in the procurement process for the Boulter Crescent capital works project and need to be involved at the outset for further procurement works as advised in the procurement and market testing plan within the report.



**Procurement and market testing timetable – last updated June 2014**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Lead officers a resources</b>	<b>Programmed for completion</b>	<b>Update</b>
Bolter Crescent Major regeneration project 128 Homes	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer (Capital Works)/ Ridge	Let contract Jan/ Feb 2014	Completed and letter of intent issued on 31.03.2014. Contract let and works commenced on site 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2014.
Year 10 (final year) Decent Homes Programme 148 Homes (8 projects)	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer (Capital Works)/ Ridge	Phased over the full financial year First 2 projects to be on site in second quarter of 2014/15	Two projects out to tender in first quarter (delayed in part due to unsuccessful attempts to tap into Eco grants for external insulation)
Decent Homes previous refusals 5 Homes grouped (number will increase)	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer	April / September (and further homes in second half of the year if funds allow)	Works being scheduled / priced June / July to deliver by end of September
Reintroduce cyclical painting programme and tender	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer works to be scheduled by Ridge	April / June	Chartwell house identified to be painted by autumn 2014. Newton Lane / Welford Road flats also identified as a priority
Gas Servicing Contract	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer Northern Housing Consortium (NHC)	Contract to be in place by end of September to commence October	Committee approval to use NHC Timetable agreed with NHC work progressing to timetable
Scheme Caretaking and cleaning services	Property Manager/ Community Safety and Tenancy Manager /wider community team in consultation with residents	April / December	Committee approved review of direct labour/contracted resources Ongoing
Replacement of defective doors (Swan doors contracts)	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer	April/May - 30 doors identified for replacement in first phase	Attending trade exhibition to assist in selecting new suppliers

Removal of 'managed asbestos'	Property Manager/ Maintenance Officer	Legacy issue ongoing	Redundant boilers at relet One roof void linked to RTB Boulter Cr via main contract King St via decent homes work
Market testing – responsive repairs and relets	Property Manager/ internal resources	September onwards	JS to report on current arrangements and scope the project by July
Any other fixed term contract approaching expiry	Property Manager/ Community Safety and Tenancy Manager	Sheltered scheme call equipment and general door entry	In discussions with County re new contracts (Supporting People review) current contracts held over.



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**Tuesday  
8 July 2014**

**Matter for  
information and  
recommendation**

Title: **Disability Facilities Grant (DFG)**

Author: Anita Pathak-Mould  
Head of Community

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## **1 Introduction**

This report is to provide Members with an update on the Disability Facility Grants (DFG's) demand for the 2014/15 financial year and the level of funding required.

## **2 Recommendations**

Members are asked to recommend to the Policy, Finance and Development Committee, that additional capital funding of £257,000 be made available to meet demand.

## **3 Information**

The provisions of DFG's are mandatory once a need has been identified and provide adaptations to disabling environments so that the occupier can remain living independently at home. There is a significant return on investment from these grants because they can delay the need for residential care.

Typically the funding will provide accessible hygienic bathing facilities such as a level access shower or a stair lift so that the disabled person can access their bedroom.

The Disabled Facilities Grant service is currently under review to find ways of reducing costs and making the process more efficient and transparent for the customer. Strict financial controls are applied to each application; in particular, additional work is closely monitored and challenged if there are concerns. Proposed adaptations are discussed with the Occupational Service to ensure that the recommendation is value for money in the long term.

The maximum grant is £30,000 however the average grant is approximately £7,000. If funding is not made available then the needs of the disabled person must be met by Social Services.

The Private Sector Renewals Policy has been reviewed and if approved will introduce means testing for all work above the £30,000 legal threshold. This will mainly impact on DFGs for children which tend to be more expensive.

DFGs are funded through Government Grants which have previously been supplemented by contributions from the Council.

**Table 1 Current and Historical Budget**

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£000s	£000s	£000s
Government Grant	£166,490	£138,717	£143,000
Carry forward (slippage)	£139,488	£111,582	£4,920
OWBC contribution	£144,022	£161,283	£0
Total DFG Budget	£450,000	£411,582	£147,920

Last year an additional fund of £161,283 was provided to clear a backlog of cases.

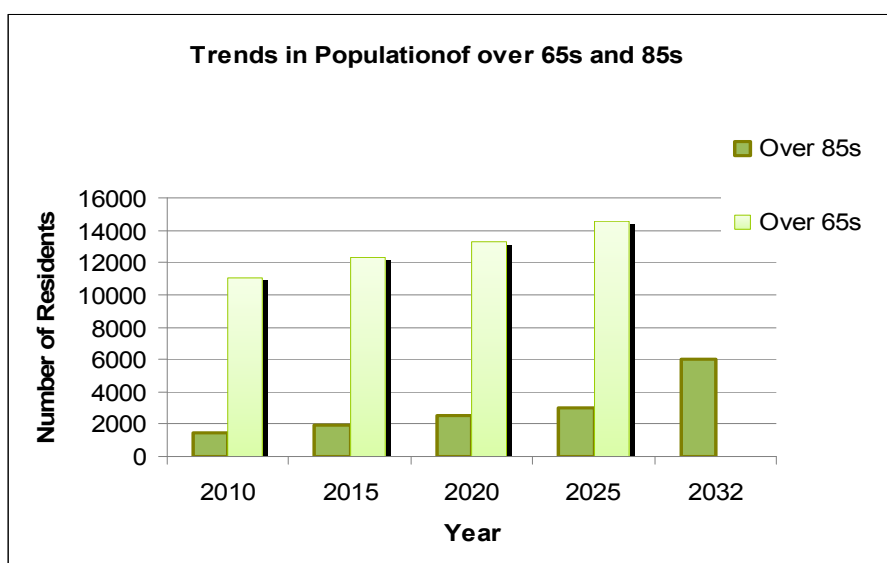
**Table 2 Grants Completed 2013/4**

Adaptation	Number
Level Access Shower	55
Stair Lift	17
Ramp	3
Cancelled	8
Total	83

**Predicted Demand**

Demand for DFGs is expected to increase due to an ageing population. Figure 1 shows the number of residents over 65 and 85 has been increasing and is predicted to increase further in the future The Occupational Therapist will look at all options to meet the needs of the disabled person and often minor works such as fitting grab rails will be sufficient.

**Figure 1 Trend of Residents over 65 and 85.**



Advances in medical technology have led to extended life expectancy for people with severe disabilities now reaching adulthood. These children often need significant adaptations to allow them to remain at home being cared for by their families safely.

### **Current Demand**

The table below sets out the total position of demand for 2014/15

**Figure 2 Total Demand**

Unpaid approvals carried forward to 14/15	£147,494	Committed spend (21 Cases)
Referrals received waiting for approval	£161,000	23 cases X £7000=£161,000
Approximate number of new referrals expected to be completed and paid 14/15	£98,000	2 new referrals per month up to December 2014 (7 months =14 new referrals @ £7,000) (Based on previous years activity)
Total Demand	£406,494	
<b>Additional budget required to meet current and predicted demand for 2014/5</b>	<b>£257,000</b>	<b>Current demand less current budget</b>

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<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	CR5 Effective utilisation of resources/assets. In delivering the programme, Officers will seek to help the maximum number of households within the budget that is available. Spend on this budget will achieve a significant return on investment by removing the need for residential care.
Risk (APM)	CR6 Regulatory Governance. The Council is expected to determine the housing needs of its residents and to set a housing renewal policy in response to priorities within its private sector. CR4 Reputation. The risk of failing to deliver, or to deliver slowly, the statutory duty to provide mandatory DFGs.
Equalities (KG)	An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures are being developed.
Legal (KG)	DFG's are mandatory grants and once need is established the grants are required for improving the quality of life of a disabled person, particularly in their home.

# Agenda Item 11



Service Delivery  
Committee

8 July 2014

For Information

Title: **Private Sector Housing Renewals (Financial Assistance) Policy 2014/17**

Author: Anita Pathak-Mould  
Head of Community

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## Introduction

The Regulatory Reform Order 2002 gave local authorities a discretionary power to provide assistance for housing renewal. However this power cannot be exercised unless a policy is in place.

The policy sets out how this Council provides mandatory and discretionary financial assistance to adapt or remove safety hazards from the homes of vulnerable residents. It also details how we can provide assistance to owners of long term empty properties to bring them back into use providing much needed accommodation for our residents.

Although the aim is for vulnerable households to live in safe, warm and decent homes, this policy recognises that we can only provide discretionary assistance where we have available resources.

This policy is a revision of the former policy and will come into effect at 1st September 2014 and will apply to all enquiries made after 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014

## Recommendations

Members are asked to note the Policy and recommend it for approval to the Policy Finance and Development Committee on 22 July 2014.

## Information

### Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

There is a general increase in the number of people living longer and with restricted mobility. It is also the case that children born with severe disabilities are surviving into later years and with the highly sophisticated equipment now available people are able to live independently in their own homes. Both of these factors generate more demand for DFG's.

DFGs are mandatory once a need has been identified; it is, therefore proposed that these grants take priority. The maximum grant is currently set at £30,000 and is means tested for adults but not for children. Adaptations costing more than the maximum of £30,000 are currently supplemented by a discretionary award.

Currently the Government allocate an amount for Local Authorities to provide the grants. This year, 2014/15, £143,000 was received which is less than what is required to fund the cases that are waiting to be approved. The Community Service will submit a

capital bid for additional funding to meet the current need. If this is not available all urgent cases will be prioritised with the approval of Social Services, Occupational Health to be led by the Head of Community Service.

From 2015, DFG funding will be merged with the Better Care Fund which is part of an integrated fund following the merger of Public Health and Local Authority funds. The Community Service will ensure its bid for capital funding from this fund supports the aims of this policy and that it provides assistance to as many vulnerable people as possible.

In addition, the Health and Wellbeing Board is both monitoring and have contributed to the LCC submission to the Government on the Better Care Fund by linking the health and housing needs.

### **Hazard Removal Loans**

The policy details financial assistance for property owners or occupiers in the private sector to remove significant health and safety hazards.

Many older people will have seen their retirement income reduced due to low interest rates since the financial crisis. These people are often asset rich but cash poor and can be living in unhealthy, cold and unsafe homes without the resources to carry out the repairs. The Local Authority can realise a significant return on investment by offering repayable grants to remove health and safety hazards in the homes of vulnerable people. Making homes safe can delay entry into the care system for several years. It can also prevent homelessness where the condition of their home is such that it is not safe for occupation. The grant will be secured against the property and is repayable within 20 years if the property is transferred or sold. The funds will have to be repaid so that it can be recycled to help other vulnerable people.

### **Empty Homes**

Empty homes are a wasted resource that could provide much needed accommodation for our residents. The policy sets out how we would assist property owners to bring their empty property back into use if funding and assistance were available. Funding will be dependent on the Council being able to nominate appropriate and eligible tenants for a period of 5 years.

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Financial (PL)	CR5 Effective utilisation of resources/assets. In delivering the programme. Officers will seek to help the maximum number of households within the budget that is available.
Risk (APM)	CR6 Regulatory Governance. The Council is expected to determine the housing needs of its residents and to set a housing renewal policy in response to priorities within its private sector.
Equalities (KG)	An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures are being developed.
Legal (KG)	Pursuant to appropriate legislation, a written policy is a requirement to ensure that Local Authorities are able to provide financial assistance to private sector owner occupiers and tenants

OADBY & WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
Private Sector Housing Renewals (Financial Assistance)  
Policy  
June 2014

Draft

TU approval	[Names of TUs (if applicable)]
Committee approval	Service Delivery (July 2014):
Author	Anita Pathak-Mould
EIA	[Date EIA was completed]





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## PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Housing provides the foundation, from which people can engage with life opportunities, including education, employment and training. Having a secure address helps people access employment<sup>1</sup>.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council believes that its residents should have access to a safe and warm home free from significant hazards and if necessary adapted for their needs.

This policy details how Oadby and Wigston Borough Council deliver financial assistance to repair or adapt properties and to bring empty homes back into use. To realise efficiencies the service has brought together the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants in both the private and social sectors. Adaptations in Council properties must legally be financed from the Housing Revenue Account and its Council tenants are not currently subject to a means test. This is currently under review and will be subject to a further report before any changes to this are made.

The link between housing and health is well recognised. In particular, cold homes can contribute to illnesses such as strokes, asthma and heart attacks. The health impact of poor housing is most pronounced amongst pensioners, young children and people with disabilities who spend more time at home.

There is a significant social return on investing in adapting disabling environments by delaying the need for residential care.

The service will manage any demand above the resources available by holding a waiting list based on the date the referral has been received from the Occupational Therapy Service.

It is also the aim of the Council to bring empty properties back into use to provide much needed accommodation in the borough. To this end and where finances are available we will assist owners of empty properties to bring them back into use by offering a mix of grants and loans. These will be available with conditions set out in this policy.

This policy replaces the previous policy approved by Committee in 2013. It sets out a comprehensive housing assistance package that is targeted to meet those households in greatest need and is introduced under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002.

The specific means of delivery and review are identified in the policy and an easy to read guide will be available to enquirers.

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<sup>1</sup> [Developing your local housing offer for health and care: Targeting outcomes: CIH](#)

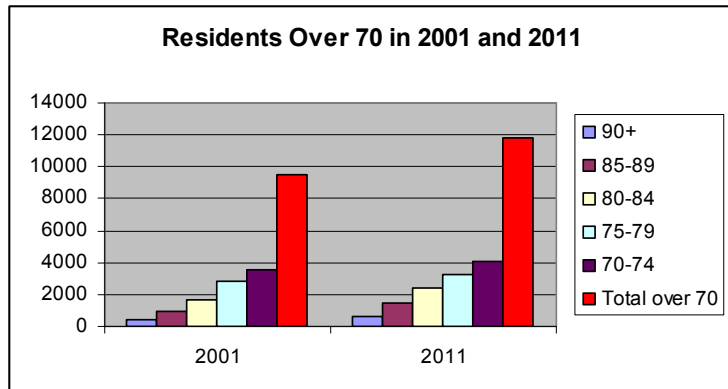
## PART 2: Background

### 2.1 Demands for the Service

In line with the national trend Oadby and Wigston has an ageing population. Since 2001 there are an additional 2,300 residents over the age of 70 living in the borough, and an increase of 223 people who are over 90 years of age.

There are 56,000 people in the borough living with a long-term health problem or disability and 4,000 of these people's day to day activities are limited.

Figures from the 2011 census show that the number of people with activity limitations has increased by 1.6% in Oadby and Wigston and is in the top 10 authorities with the greatest rise in prevalence of activity limitations since 2001.<sup>2</sup>



	<b>All categories: General health</b>	<b>Very good or good health</b>	<b>Fair health</b>	<b>Bad or very bad health</b>
<b>All categories: Long-term health problem or disability</b>	56,170	45,951	7,524	2,695
<b>Day-to-day activities limited a lot</b>	4,309	469	1,668	2,172
<b>Day-to-day activities limited a little</b>	5,412	2,010	2,990	412
<b>Day-to-day activities not limited</b>	46,449	43,472	2,866	111

## PART 3: Implementation

### 3.1 Effective Date

This policy will come into effect at 1 September 2014.

It will apply to all applications/enquiries made after this date and to any applications made earlier, where the policy covers unforeseen circumstances that are preventing completion of a current application.

### 3.2 Transitional Arrangements

<sup>2</sup> [ONS: Disability in England and Wales, 2011 and Comparison with 2001](#)

Where an application was properly made on or before 31st August 2014 and meets the policy criteria for 2013/14 but which the council was not able to approve in 2013/14 due to budget restrictions, approval may be carried over into 2014/15. The policy criteria for 2013/14 will be applied to the approval of such applications. If these criteria are not met, the application will not be approved.

## PART 4: Aims and Objectives

### 4.1 Aim is to:

Deliver an efficient service providing assistance to vulnerable owner-occupiers or tenants to adapt or improve their home. And to bring an empty property back into use for the benefit health and well being of vulnerable residents.

### 4.2 Objectives

To achieve our aim we will work with partners to:

- Provide a comprehensive grants service to adapt disabling environments so that people have a choice to live independently at home.
- Assist vulnerable homeowners and tenants to remove significant hazards and improve the energy efficiency of their homes
- Return empty properties back into use through financial incentives and enforcement.
- Keep under review the processes for delivering grant funding to ensure it remains efficient and value for money

This will be delivered by offering a mix of financial assistance, signposting and the provision of advice.

## PART 5: How this Policy Supports the Priorities of the Council

### 5.1 Creating a Safer Borough

Addressing the prescribed hazards existing within properties and also concerns that residents raise in relation to poor housing conditions increases resident satisfaction, raises the aesthetic appearance of properties which in turn can stimulate other improvements in the local area reducing the fear of crime.

Work undertaken can also address concerns that residents may have over security. Individual needs are met for disabled residents by providing adaptations that increase their safety within their home and also allow them to stay in their own home for as long as possible.

Application of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System requires officers to assess the safety risks within dwellings and in particular the risks that children and older persons are exposed to. Where risks are identified and are significant, action will be taken to remove or reduce those risks through enforcement or financial assistance.

Bringing empty properties back into use improves the local area and reduces the fear of crime.

## **5.2. Improve the Health and Wellbeing of our Residents**

The links between health and housing are well established. It is also the case that living in poor quality overcrowded houses particularly disadvantages children in their academic achievements and social development. This is also the case for people with disabilities.

## **5.3 Work Smarter to Deliver Customer Focussed Services**

The service continually looks at ways to make the DFG process more efficient and customer focussed and remains value for money. The service is under review to ensure it remains fit for purpose for current and future demand.

# **PART 6: Housing Offer to Health and Wellbeing**

The 'Housing Offer' to health and well being describes what Leicestershire's district councils can deliver to support the Health and Well Being Strategy's objectives. It also sets out how the district councils' housing services can support and promote the health and wellbeing of residents across Leicestershire.

In summary, the offer is for residents to have access to a settled, secure home that is fit for living, combined with timely, appropriate housing support and interventions. Addressing these issues can help to address a range of factors that adversely impact on individual and community health and wellbeing. These include the following that are relevant to this policy.

- Providing good quality homes and tackling cold homes and fuel poverty;
- Preventing and reducing homelessness;
- Providing an efficient aids and adaptations service to existing homes;
- Providing new adapted housing and where possible building for Lifetime Homes;
- Helping older and vulnerable people remain independent through the use of support services and assistive technology.

# **PART 7: Our links with Community Safety**

People's homes are where they should feel safe. The fear of crime has a profound impact on people's lives particularly the vulnerable, who, spend more time at home and or are living alone. If an area looks run down or there is a high incidence of crime in the area, people can feel trapped in their home leading to long term anxiety and depression.

It is also the case that if people have been subjected to any crime, including theft is more likely to need a higher level of confidence in the security of their home compared to those who have not. There has been an increase in burglaries in Oadby and Wigston, by providing small grants to make properties more secure will reduce the fear of crime and this work will be ongoing with the Community team and joining up with the Community Safety Partnership.

In line with provisions of the Housing Act 2004 we can target our enforcement to achieve the aims of the Council. We will, therefore, make security a priority when enforcing in the private sector and consider serving statutory notices for category 2 hazards related to security.

## PART 8: Resources

### 8.1 Financial Resources

Resources to the support policy objectives are provided through capital funding partly from Government grant and Council funds. With the exception of Disabled Facilities Grants, all other forms of assistance outlined in this policy are discretionary and all or any may be withdrawn at any time without prior notice.

Each year, the Council will decide what level of funding it makes available to support the assistance package outlined in this policy. The Council has complete discretion in deciding how discretionary funding is allocated between the different types of assistance.

As part of the June 2013 spending round the Government announced that a combination of funding streams (including £220m DFG funding) would be pooled in the Better Care Fund from 2015-16. This fund will enable the NHS and Local Authorities to jointly commission health and social care services enabling both services to work more collaboratively in their locality.

This Council will consult with Social Services to review current and predicted demand to ensure it secures the right funding to support mandatory DFGs and to provide this funding to as many disabled residents as possible. Strict financial controls will be applied to ensure grants are value for money and we will seek to recover any costs in line with legal guidance and this policy where necessary.

Grant funding will be restricted to essential works only and we will re-use equipment where possible to ensure that more people have access to this service.

It is unlikely in this financial climate that funding will be made available for non-mandatory grants such as home repairs assistance. However the Council has a duty to ensure it has a policy for dealing with homes that need major renovation. There is no legal requirement to provide grants, advice and signposting would be sufficient to meet our legal obligations.

The council will seek to promote private investment in the private housing stock by;

- Ensuring client contributions to eligible works are calculated in accordance with the law when assessing an adult DFG application. DFGs for children are not means tested.
- Encouraging Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to contribute 40% towards adaptations (with the exception of lifts) as recommended in the DCLG Good Practice Guide
- Recommending applicants take independent financial advice when considering any funding for home renovation work
- Signposting residents to green deal providers and green deal finance initiatives where appropriate
- Securing property owner funds to bring long-term empty properties back into use by conditioning grant funding to private finance.

### 8.2 Human Resources

An independent contractor who acts as the Grants Officer administers DFGs on the Council's behalf. This Officer will be the main point of contact during the grant process and is responsible for ensuring that the work is of a good standard and meets the needs of the customer.



## PART 9: Publicity Advice and Assistance

The council will make available advice about our services and this policy in the following ways—

- An information booklet written in plain English explaining the financial assistance will be available in places most likely to be visited by potential applicants.
- The Councils web site will be updated to provide good quality easy to understand information about grants, the conditions attached to them and how to apply.
- The Council will make available the Council and Local Government (DCLG). Good Practice Guide "Delivering adaptations for Disabled People"
- We will provide individual assistance to our most vulnerable customers with any aspect of the process to ensure equal access to the service
- Where an applicant who cannot read English and is not able to get assistance with translations themselves then we will offer assistance where possible
- The council may choose to provide some or all of the above by means of an agency service

## PART 10: Reporting and Monitoring

### 10.1 Reporting

Performance will be reported through the Council's performance monitoring process. One of these reports will include confirmation that this policy remains relevant to current needs as a way of demonstrating it has been reviewed.

### 10.2 Targets

Title	Measure	Target
Long term empty properties identified	All long term empty properties to be recorded and risk assessed	
Time valid application is received to approval	Statutory target	6 months
Customer satisfaction	Satisfaction survey of 100% of completed grants satisfied with overall service	90% satisfied
Customers stating Grants Officer courteous and professional	Satisfaction survey of 100% of completed grants satisfied with overall service	95% satisfied

**N.B** These are in addition to the corporate targets.

Any significant variations to the targets or performance management standards will be put to the council's Management Team as variation reports to ensure the policy delivers its strategic aims.

## PART 11: Exceptional Circumstances

Whilst this policy sets out the framework under which the Council will consider applications for grant assistance, there may occasionally be circumstances that would warrant deviations from this policy.

To ensure a fair and transparent process, applications that fall outside the scope of this policy, or requests to amend the terms and conditions will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances that justify such a decision.

The Head of Community in consultation with the Director of Services will consider any such request. Their decision is final and there is no right of appeal. However the Council's complaints procedure can be used to adjudicate if requested.

## PART 12: Complaints

Any person who is aggrieved about a decision made under this policy or how the policy has been interpreted or applied should first discuss their concerns with the Council Independent Officer.

If the matter is not resolved, the person will be directed to the Council's Complaints Procedure. Details of the Complaints Procedure can be found on the Council's website.

## PART 13: General

Any matter not covered by these terms and conditions shall be dealt with in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction & Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) and any associated statutory or government guidance.

Following the making of a grant application and until any repayment liability has been discharged, the applicant shall upon receiving a written request supply from the Council with any such information as may reasonably be required in connection with the application, including the ownership and occupation of the property which is the subject of the application and how they are complying with any grant conditions.

## PART 14: Policy Review

This policy will be subject to a complete review after three years. However there will be an annual light touch review to ensure it remains fit for purpose. Any significant changes will require Committee approval.



# PART 15: Types of Financial Assistance

## 15.1 Disabled Facilities Grant

Purpose	To help meet the cost of adapting a property in which a disabled adult or child lives so they can live as independently as possible in their own home. All works must fall within the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) regime.
Who can apply	<p>The eligibility criteria for mandatory DFGs are set out in the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.</p> <p>The applicant must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The owner or tenant of the property; and</li> <li>● Over 18 years of age and living at the property as their main residence; and</li> <li>● Disabled or have a member of the family living with them who is disabled; and</li> <li>● Referred by an Occupational Therapist.</li> </ul> <p>Applications will be accepted by the Council from tenants of all tenures. However payment for any adaptations cannot legally be made from the General fund, payments will be made from the Housing Revenue Account.</p>
What help is available	<p>Grant assistance is available to adapt a property to meet the needs of a disabled occupant.</p> <p>An Occupational Therapist will recommend works that are necessary and appropriate for the disabled person, for one of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To facilitate access to the dwelling.</li> <li>● To make the dwelling safe.</li> <li>● To facilitate access to a family room, bedroom or bathroom / toilet.</li> <li>● To provide or improve any heating system.</li> <li>● To provide access to controls to provide heating, lighting, power or amenities.</li> <li>● To facilitate access around the dwelling to enable care of a resident.</li> <li>● To enable access to a garden.</li> </ul> <p>The Council will then determine whether the works are reasonable and practical.</p> <p>Cases excluding those involving stair lifts only are considered by a panel comprising the Grants Officer and a representative of the Occupational Therapy service as well as a manager of the service. This is designed to ensure a fair and equitable service to all applicants.</p> <p>Reduced assistance may be considered where it is not in the best interests of the applicant (due to poor health for example) to undertake full adaptation.</p> <p>The Panel, having regard to the applicant's needs, must agree the form of the reduced assistance.</p>
How to apply	<p>The first step is to arrange an assessment by an Occupational Therapist.</p> <p>Where the Occupational Therapist determines that an adaptation is needed to meet the customer's needs they will make a referral to the Council.</p>

	<p>A formal application is made by completing and submitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A prescribed application form;</li> <li>● An owner occupation certificate or certificate of intended letting; proof of ownership;</li> <li>● If the applicant is a tenant, written confirmation from the owner that they agree to the works being carried out;</li> <li>● Proof of income, savings and benefits;</li> <li>● Two competitive estimates from legitimate building contractors; and</li> <li>● Details of any professional fees and/or other ancillary charges.</li> </ul>
Amount of grant	<p>The grant will cover the full cost of eligible work, up to a maximum of £30,000. This upper limit is set by statute and may be subject to change.</p> <p>The grant is subject to a financial test of resources. The applicant's assessed financial contribution will be deducted from the cost of the eligible work, or the £30,000 grant limit, whichever is the lower amount.</p> <p>In the case of a disabled child, the parents' or guardians' income and savings are discounted and there is no financial test of resources.</p> <p>If the total cost of the eligible work exceeds £30,000, the applicant may be entitled to additional financial support to meet the balance of the cost. For further information, please refer to the Discretionary Disabled Adaptations section.</p>
Grant Conditions	<p>The grant will be registered as a local land charge against the property for which grant is awarded.</p> <p>There are no conditions attached to grants of up to £5,000. For grants over £5,000, they must be repaid in full if the owner or the disabled person disposes of the property or fails to comply with any grant conditions within 10 years of the Certified Date.</p> <p>The full value of the grant awarded or £10, 000, whichever is the lesser amount is repayable.</p>
General terms and conditions	Please refer to Appendix A

## 15.2 Discretionary Financial Assistance

Purpose	To assist with the cost of disabled adaptations that exceeds the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) limit.
Who can apply	Residents already in receipt of a DFG
What help is available	<p>Grant assistance is available to top-up a mandatory DFG where the overall cost of the work including fees and/or other ancillary charges exceeds £30,000.</p> <p>The proposed scheme of works must be agreed at the regular who will consider whether the work is necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practical. The exception to this would be where the grant relates to the installation of a stairs lifts or other minor works.</p>

	Final approval will be at the discretion of the Head of Community. In reaching a decision, he/she will consider whether the scheme provides the most appropriate, cost effective and long-term option to meet the needs of the disabled person, and whether the applicant has taken all reasonable steps to secure private finance for this work.
How to apply	<p>Enquires will only be accepted from people who have already been assessed by an Occupational Therapist and have been referred for a Disabled Facilities Grant</p> <p>A formal application is made by completing and submitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A prescribed application form</li> <li>● An owner occupation certificate</li> <li>● Proof of ownership</li> <li>● Proof of income, savings and benefits</li> <li>● Two competitive estimates from legitimate building contractors</li> <li>● Details of any professional fees and/or other ancillary charges.</li> </ul> <p>There is no need to resubmit any documentary evidence already provided as part of the DFG application.</p>
Amount of grant	<p>The grant will cover the full cost of eligible work above the mandatory DFG limit, up to a maximum of £10,000.</p> <p>The grant is subject to a financial test of resources using approved software. The applicant's assessed financial contribution will be deducted from the cost of the eligible work, or from the maximum £10,000 grant limit, whichever is the lower amount.</p> <p>Any assessed financial contribution already being paid towards a Disabled Facilities Grant will be discounted for this purpose.</p> <p>In the case of disabled children, both parents will be subject to the financial test of resources provided they are both normally resident at the property.</p>
Grant Conditions	<p>The grant will be registered as a local land charge against the property for which the grant is awarded and must be repaid in full if the property is sold or ownership is transferred within 20 years of the Certified Date.</p> <p>This is a long-term financial commitment and the applicant may wish to seek legal and/or financial advice before applying for this type of grant assistance.</p>
General Terms and Conditions	Please refer to Appendix A

### 15.3 Relocation Grants

Purpose	To help disabled residents move to a more suitable property if it is not practicable or cost effective to adapt their current property to meet their needs.
Who can apply	<p>Applicant must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The owner of the property; and</li> <li>■ Over 18 years of age and living at the property as their main residence <b>and</b></li> <li>■ Disabled or have a member of the family living with them who is disabled; <b>and</b></li> <li>■ Referred by an Occupational Therapist; <b>and</b></li> <li>■ On a low income.</li> </ul> <p>To calculate whether someone is on a low income, the Council will conduct a</p>

	<p>financial test of resources using approved software.</p> <p>Applicants will only be accepted if their financial contribution is no more than £15,000 and they have no more than £16,000 in savings.</p>
What help is available	<p>This option will only be considered if the Council is satisfied it is not reasonable and practical to adapt the existing home and that finding alternative accommodation is the best and most cost effective long-term solution.</p> <p>Grant assistance is available to help a disabled person move into a property which is already suitable or which is capable of being adapted to meet their needs, as determined by an Occupational Therapist.</p> <p>The cost of adapting the new property must not exceed the £30,000 mandatory DFG grant limit.</p> <p>It will remain the applicant's responsibility to find suitable alternative accommodation. The Council is unable to provide this service.</p>
How to apply	<p>Enquires will only be accepted from people who have already been assessed by an Occupational Therapist and have been referred to the Council for a Disabled Facilities Grant</p> <p>A formal application is made by completing and submitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A prescribed application form;</li> <li>● Proof of ownership;</li> <li>● Full details about the new property;</li> <li>● One competitive estimate for legal and estate agency fees and confirmation of stamp duty liability</li> <li>● Two competitive estimates for removal costs; and</li> <li>● Details of any professional fees and/or other ancillary charges.</li> </ul> <p>There is no need to resubmit any documentary evidence already provided as part of a recent DFG application.</p>
Amount of grant	<p>The grant will cover the full cost of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Legal fees;</li> <li>● Estate agency fees;</li> <li>● Stamp duty;</li> <li>● Removal costs; and</li> <li>● Any other ancillary costs or professional fees up to a maximum of £5,000.</li> </ul> <p>The grant is intended to help with the cost of moving home and not the capital cost of purchasing a new property.</p> <p>The grant is subject to a financial test of resources and the applicant's assessed financial contribution will be deducted from the cost of the eligible work, or from the maximum £5,000 grant limit, whichever is the lower amount.</p> <p>No payment will be released until the Solicitor has provided written confirmation that the sale of the property has been completed.</p>

Grant Conditions	<p>The grant will be registered as a local land charge and must be repaid in full if the owner disposes of the new property within five years of the date the purchase is completed. If the applicant moves outside the borough, the grant will be registered as a charge with HM Land Registry.</p> <p>Receiving this grant does not prevent the applicant from applying for a mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant for the new property they are moving to. If the new property is outside of the borough, the DFG enquiry will be dealt with by the Council in whose area the property is located.</p> <p>Repeat applications for relocation grants will not be considered within 10 years of the date the grant was approved.</p>
General terms and conditions	Please refer to Appendix A

#### 15.4 Hazard Removal Grants

Purpose	<p>These are discretionary repayable grants that can be used to provide finance to support the Councils priorities.</p> <p>Their main purpose is to provide safe, warm and secure accommodation for older, vulnerable or disabled homeowners and tenants who are at serious imminent risk of harm due to the condition of their property, for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To carry out urgent repairs where the condition of the property prevents the occupier from being discharged from hospital</li> <li>● Where the condition of the property may lead to a vulnerable person being made homeless due to significant hazards within their current property</li> <li>● Where the condition of the property is impacting on an existing illness of an occupant/s</li> <li>● Where the condition of the property poses an imminent risk of harm to the occupant/s</li> </ul> <p>The Head of Community in consultation with the Director of Services will approve any financial assistance under this part of the policy.</p>
Who can apply	<p>The applicant must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The owner of the property; and</li> <li>● Over 18 years of age and living at the property as their main residence; and</li> <li>● Disabled or have a member of the family living with them who is disabled; and</li> <li>● Referred by an Occupational Therapist; and</li> <li>● On a low income.</li> </ul> <p>To calculate whether someone is on a low income, the Council will conduct a financial test of resources.</p> <p>Applicants will only be accepted if their financial contribution is no more than proposed cost of works and they will have no more than £5,000 in savings after the work is completed</p>
What help is available	<p>The types of work this finance can be used for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dangerous or inadequate gas or electrical installations</li> <li>● No adequate heating or hot water during cold weather</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Serious roof leaks</li> <li>● No suitable bathing facilities</li> <li>● No suitable facilities for cooking food safely</li> <li>● Insecure premises</li> <li>● No suitable sanitation</li> <li>● Damaged and dangerous floor boards</li> <li>● Exposed asbestos</li> </ul>
How to apply	<p>A formal application is made by completing and submitting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A prescribed application form;</li> <li>● An owner occupation certificate</li> <li>● Proof of ownership;</li> <li>● Proof of income, savings and benefits;</li> <li>● Two competitive estimates from legitimate building contractors; and</li> <li>● Details of any professional fees and/or other ancillary charges.</li> </ul> <p>Where appropriate, the Council may verify ownership details by carrying out a land registry check, rather than demanding a Certificate of Title.</p> <p>Only one competitive estimate is required for works up to £1,000.</p>
Amount of grant	<p>The grant will cover the full cost of eligible work, up to a maximum of £10,000.</p> <p>The grant is subject to a financial test of resources using the relevant software package.</p> <p>The applicant's assessed financial contribution will be deducted from the cost of the eligible work or from the maximum £10,000 grant limit, whichever is the lesser amount.</p>
Grant Conditions	<p>There are no conditions attached to grants of up to £2,000. For grants over £2,000, they will be registered as a local land charge against the property for which grant is awarded and must be repaid in full if the applicant fails to comply with any grant conditions, or if the property is sold or ownership is transferred within 20 years of the Certified Date.</p> <p>Throughout the 20 year grant condition period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The property must be covered by buildings insurance and must be kept in good repair;</li> <li>● The owner must continue to occupy the property; and</li> <li>● The owner must provide the Council with full details of who is occupying the property within 15 working days of a written request.</li> </ul> <p>This is a long-term financial commitment and the applicant may wish to seek legal and/or financial advice before applying for this type of grant assistance.</p> <p>No more than £10,000 grant assistance will be provided in any 10-year period.</p>
General Terms and Conditions	Please refer to Appendix A

### 15.5. Empty Property Grants



Purpose	To bring long term empty properties back into use and increase the supply of safe, warm and decent housing accommodation in the private rented sector.
Who can apply	The applicant must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The owner of the property; and</li> <li>• The property must have been empty for at least twelve months at date of application.</li> </ul>
What help is available	Grant assistance is available to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renovate empty properties and bring them back into use</li> <li>• Convert empty commercial properties or space above shops into living accommodation</li> <li>• Convert larger empty properties into multiple units of accommodation.</li> </ul> All works must comply with the decent homes standard. <p>The proposed scheme of works must be agreed and supported by Head of Community, having regard to all relevant factors (location, size, housing need, access arrangements, internal layout, etc).</p> <p>The proposed management arrangements must be to the Council's satisfaction and the Council reserves the right to insist on a leasing arrangement.</p> <p>Final approval will be at the discretion of the Head of Community and the Director of Services. In reaching a decision, they will consider whether the scheme provides the most appropriate, cost effective and long-term option to bring the property back into use and secure nomination rights for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.</p>
How to apply	A formal application is made by completing and submitting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A prescribed application form;</li> <li>• A certificate of intended letting;</li> <li>• Proof of ownership;</li> <li>• Two competitive estimates from legitimate building contractors;</li> <li>• Details of any professional fees and/or other ancillary charges; and</li> <li>• Details of the proposed management arrangements for the property.</li> </ul> <p>In the case of property conversions, evidence of planning permission and/or building regulation approval must also be provided.</p>
Amount of grant	The grant will cover 50% of the cost of the eligible work, up to maximum limits set out below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One bedroom flat £10,000</li> <li>• Two bedroom flat or house £15,000</li> <li>• Three bedroom flat or house £20,000</li> <li>• Four or five bedroom flat or house £30,000</li> </ul> <p>Buildings containing two or more self-contained flats will be restricted to a maximum grant of £40,000 per property.</p> <p>Larger grants may be considered at the discretion of the Head of Community in consultation with the Director of Services. Relevant factors taken into account will include the location of the property, the length of time it has been empty, its impact on the local community, how it will contribute to meeting housing need and how it links to other corporate objectives.</p> <p>Prior to grant approval, the applicant must demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that they have funding to pay their financial contribution to the scheme cost.</p>

Grant Conditions	<p>The grant will be registered as a local land charge against the property and must be repaid in full if the owner disposes of the property or fails to comply with any of the grant conditions within 5 years of the Certified Date.</p> <p>Throughout the five year grant condition period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The property must be rented out to tenants nominated by the Council's Housing Team.</li> <li>● The property must be managed by the applicant, let through a managing agent, leased to a Registered Provider (i.e. Housing Association) or leased to the Council through a Private Sector Leasing scheme.</li> <li>● An applicant who intends to manage the property themselves must be a member of a Landlord Accreditation Scheme.</li> <li>● If the property becomes vacant, the applicant or their agent must notify the Council and allow at least 10 working days for the Council to nominate a new tenant. In the event of refusal by the nominated tenant, this timescale will be extended to 20 working days;</li> <li>● The applicant must not unreasonably refuse a tenancy to someone nominated by the Council;</li> <li>● Rent levels must not exceed the Local Housing Allowance rates plus 10%;</li> <li>● The property must have buildings insurance and must be kept in good repair in accordance with all necessary legal requirements.</li> </ul>
General Terms and Conditions	Please refer to Appendix A



## **Appendix A: Initial Enquiry**

### **I. Initial Enquiry**

Following receipt of an initial enquiry, the applicant will be asked to complete an enquiry form to check whether they are eligible for assistance. Applicants will be expected to return the completed form within 28 days. Failure to do so will result in the enquiry being cancelled.

No applications will be accepted from an applicant who is a 'person from abroad', as defined in housing benefit rules.

No applications will be accepted in respect of a property that has been built or provided by conversion within the last 10 years.

In relation to Disabled Facilities Grants, no action will be taken we have received a referral from an Occupational Therapist.

One a referral has been received, an enquiry form will be sent to the applicant.

### **II. Preliminary Assessment**

Upon return of the completed enquiry form, the Council will undertake a preliminary assessment to establish whether the applicant is likely to be eligible for assistance.

Unless otherwise specified in this policy, the financial test of resources will be carried out in accordance with the national guidelines already in place for the purpose of Disabled Facilities Grants.

Applicants will be informed of their likely eligibility and any potential financial contribution they would be required to make towards the cost of the work.

Where it is established that an applicant is not eligible for financial assistance they will be advised accordingly and signposted to other agencies that may be able to assist them.

### **III. Property Inspection**

Applicants who may be eligible for assistance will be offered an appointment to have a home survey conducted by a Grants Officer. The purpose of the visit is to assess the condition of the property and establish the extent and nature of works required.

Council Officers always carry a photo ID card to prove they work for Oadby and Wigston Council and will show this to residents when they arrive at the property. Applicants should not let anyone into their property unless they are carrying an ID card. If unsure whether the person works for the Council you can contact 0116 2881961 or in an emergency, contact the Police.

When conducting the home survey, any works to remedy negligence, vandalism or illegal alterations will be excluded for the purposes of this policy. In addition, no assistance will be available if the applicant or someone acting on their behalf has intentionally removed any kitchen or bathroom facilities or any plumbing or structural elements within the property that make the property non-decent.

Any works that are subject of a legal dispute or insurance claim will be excluded from grant assistance. In the case of structural stability, the applicant will normally be expected to pursue a claim under their building insurance policy before any grant enquiry will be considered.

## IV. Formal Application Pack

Following the visit, the Grant office will prepare a schedule of work. The schedule will have enough information for the applicant to be able to obtain quotes from their chosen contractors.

This will be sent to the applicant together with a grant application pack containing an application form, forms relating to ownership of the property and guidance notes on how to make an application.

The applicant is not permitted to make any changes to the schedule of work issued by the Council.

The application pack issued by the Council is valid for six months from the date of issue. Failure to submit a completed application within this period will normally result in the enquiry being cancelled.

## V. Choosing a Building Contractor

Applicants should take care when selecting contractors. Applicants should not enter into any agreement with a contractor until a grant has been approved and they are certain they can meet the cost of the work.

The Environmental Health Service does not maintain a list of recommended contractors and cannot recommend contractors for undertaking grant work. It is the applicant's responsibility to choose a suitable contractor.

Guidance on employing contractors can be found by using 'Trustmark' – a scheme that is backed by Government, the building trade and consumer groups. For more information visit: [www.trustmark.org.uk](http://www.trustmark.org.uk) or Tel 01344 630 804.

Local contractors can be found on the Buy with Confidence website which [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk).

There are various commercial websites such as [www.trustatrader.com](http://www.trustatrader.com) where customers can search for local contractors and read reviews posted by previous customers.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council take no responsibility for the content on these third party websites and it is the applicant's responsibility to find a suitable contractor.

The Grants service will not accept quotations from the applicant or a member or his or her family. Any relationship between the applicant and the contractor must be declared at the time of the application.

All work costing above £1,000 will require two original quotations from legitimate building contractors. Photocopies or faxes are not acceptable. The quotation should:

- Be printed on company headed paper and dated;
- Include the companies full address and telephone number;
- Be addressed to the applicant and not the Council
- Be signed by a representative of the company whose name is printed beneath the signature;
- Include the company's VAT registration number (if applicable)
- Provide a separate price for each item listed in the schedule of work and confirm whether the quote is inclusive or exclusive of VAT; and
- Include the company registration number, if it is a Limited Company.

Quotations that do not contain this information will be rejected. If the costs are considered excessively high or the quotation includes additional items not approved by the Grants Officer, the costs may either be disallowed, the applicant may be invited to obtain further quotes, or the grant may be calculated at a lower level following a comparison with a schedule of rates or other suitable methodology.

Where disabled adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist are of a specialist nature to meet the specific needs of an individual and are difficult to source on the open market (e.g. ceiling track hoist, variable height bath, or specialist through-floor lift) then just one estimate will be acceptable.

## **VI. Professional and Ancillary Fees**

There are various professional and ancillary fees that may be incurred by the applicant. These can include:

- Architect, surveyor or agency fees in relation to the preparation of plans and/or supervision of the building works;
- Charges for Party Wall Act notices, planning permission or building regulation approval;
- Charges made by agents for advising on or assisting with a client's application; and
- Charges for specialist reports.

Details of any professional and ancillary fees must be submitted as part of the grant application. The Council will determine whether the fees are considered reasonable and necessary for inclusion within the grant.

Applicants should not incur any costs until after the grant has been approved in writing. Otherwise, if the case does not proceed to approval, the applicant will be responsible for paying any costs they have already incurred.

## **VII. Using an Agent**

If the applicant lacks the knowledge, ability or confidence to manage the grant process themselves, they may wish to appoint an agent to carry out this role on their behalf. This will be particularly relevant for large or complex schemes that require specialist technical or architectural skills.

Fees will vary according to the nature of the agency service being provided. Agents offering a full agency service can claim an agency fee of up to 15% of the net cost of the building work. Agents will be expected to provide full details of their charges as part of the application process.

A full agency service will include:

- Helping the applicant to complete all necessary forms and certificates;
- Acting as the main point of contact with the Council;
- Preparing a detailed specification and any necessary plans;
- Obtaining any necessary planning and building regulation approval;
- Overseeing the work on site;
- Liaising with the Council over any unforeseen work and
- Dealing with payments and resolving any disputes or snagging items on completion.

The Council does not have an approved list of agents but details can be found from Age UK and the Trusted Trader Web Sites.

## **VIII. Grant Approvals**

Before the Council can decide whether to approve or refuse a grant, the applicant must submit a 'valid application'. An applicant makes a valid application when:

- They submit all the documentation listed under 'How to apply' in the relevant part of the policy; and
- The Council is satisfied that they have all necessary information on which to base a decision.

The Council will notify the applicant in writing of its decision to either approve or refuse a grant application. The approval letter will set out details of the amount of grant assistance available, any financial contribution by the applicant and any associated grant conditions. If the application is refused, the refusal letter will explain why the application has been refused.

Decisions will normally be made within six weeks of receiving a valid application. However, should the budget becomes overcommitted, or, during periods of high demand, the decision to approve or refuse a grant may be delayed for up to six months.

Alternatively, the Council may issue an approval but specify a date before which no grant payment will be made. The maximum period for delayed payments will be 12 months from the grant approval date.

Applicants must not carry out any work prior to receiving confirmation of grant approval in writing. Otherwise, the applicant will be responsible for all costs incurred.

Where the cost of eligible works exceeds the maximum grant limit, the applicant will be responsible for paying all extra costs. If this situation arises at the time of application, the grant will not be approved until the applicant satisfies the Council that they are able to fund the extra cost.

The applicant is responsible for obtaining any necessary planning permission, building control approval or party wall act agreement to enable the works to proceed. Issuing the grant approval does not means that such approvals are already in place.

## **IX. Undertaking the Work**

If the applicant believes there are urgent reasons that justify starting the work prior to receiving grant approval, they should contact the Council for further advice. No grant assistance will be available for work that is carried out before the Grants Officer has visited to assess eligibility under the terms of this policy.

Even if the Council accepts there is a valid reason for starting the work early, this does not guarantee that the application will be subsequently approved. Any decision to start the work early is entirely at the applicant's risk and the Council takes no responsibility for any costs incurred.

Where work has been started prior to grant approval, the Council will normally treat the application as varied so as to exclude the cost of completed work.

However, the Head of Community in consultation with the Director of Services has discretion to approve the full cost of the scheme if satisfied the applicant had an urgent need for starting the work early because of an imminent risk to their health and safety.

When undertaking grant works, the applicant must use the contractor who quoted for the work and whose quotation formed the basis of the grant approval.

The contractor must not be changed without obtaining prior written approval from the Council. Changing contractor without prior consent may invalidate the grant approval.

It is the applicant who employs the contractor to undertake the grant work and the Council has no contractual responsibility or liability in relation to any building contract between the applicant and their contractor. The applicant retains full responsibility for supervising the contractor, dealing with any disputes and ensuring the work is properly completed. If the applicant does not feel confident in carrying out this role, they may wish to employ an agent to assist them in undertaking this role.

During the building work, the applicant may encounter unforeseen work that cannot be completed within the approved grant. If this occurs, the applicant must notify the Council at the earliest opportunity so that a site visit can be carried out.

The applicant is strongly advised not to proceed with unforeseen works until the works have been inspected and written approval received from the Council. If approval is not granted or the maximum grant limit has already been reached, then the applicant will be responsible for any extra costs incurred.

## X. Payments

Prior to requesting a grant payment, the applicant must check that all works have been completed to their satisfaction. The applicant is responsible for resolving any dispute about the nature or quality of the work in conjunction with their agent (if any) and the contractor.

Following receipt of a request for payment, the Grant Officer will visit the property to carry out an inspection. The Officer will not authorise the grant payment until:

- The work has been completed to their satisfaction in accordance with the grant schedule of work;
- The applicant has supplied an original invoice from the contractor who carried out the work. The invoice must be addressed to the applicant or their agent and not the Council; and
- Any necessary supporting documentation or guarantees have been provided.

If the applicant has to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the work, this must be paid in full to the contractor before the Council makes any grant payment.

Where appropriate, the Council can make interim payments for works invoiced and completed to their satisfaction, subject to a minimum of £5,000. No interim payments will be made for grants of less than £5,000.

In relation to agents fees, up to 50% of the fee can be paid once the grant has been approved, with the balance paid on satisfactory completion of all grant works.

Interim payments cannot exceed 90% of the total grant or loan approved.

Once all works have been completed to the Council's satisfaction, the applicant will be required to submit any original documentation and/or guarantees before the final payment is released. Depending on the nature of the work, this may include:

- A 20 year guarantee for all wood rot, woodworm treatment or damp proofing works
- A gas safety certificate from a Gas Safe Registered contractor
- An NICEIC or equivalent electrical certificate from an organisation approved in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document P

Payments will normally be made to the appropriate contractor or agent, unless otherwise instructed by the applicant. In the case of a dispute between the applicant and the contractor



that is not resolved in a reasonable time period, the Council may use its discretion to pay the grant or part thereof to the applicant, agent or contractor, as it deems appropriate.

## **XI. Time Limits**

Once a grant application has been approved, it is a condition of the grant that the work must be completed to the satisfaction of the Council within 12 months from the date of approval.

Applicants who cannot complete the work within this time limit must notify the Council in writing. They must explain the reasons why and explain how much extra time they require. The Head of Private Sector Housing can use their discretion to extend the time limit.

If no request is received to extend the time limit within 12 months from the date of approval, the grant will normally be cancelled without prior notice and the applicant would be required to repay any interim payments already made with immediate effect.

No allowance will be made for an increase in material and/or labour costs caused by the applicant's delay in carrying out the work.

## **XII. Permissions**

### **a) Planning**

Some works may require planning permission, especially if they involve extending a property or changing its use. If the applicant lives in a flat, a conservation area or if the property is subject to an Article 4 Direction there are likely to be restrictions on making external alterations or restrictions on the type of materials that can be used, such as when changing windows or roof coverings.

It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the relevant regulator to ensure their proposals meet with planning requirements and have any other necessary approval. These checks should be carried out at an early stage and should not be delayed until a grant has been approved. The Council is not responsible for checking this information.

If planning permission is required, an agent should be employed to prepare plans. The cost of employing an agent can normally be included within the cost of any grant that is subsequently approved.

### **b) Building Regulation Approval**

Some works will need to be approved by a Building Control Officer to make sure that they meet the standards required by the Building Regulations.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they, their agent or contractor contact Building Control, send in all the forms and gain all necessary approvals.

### **c) Party Wall Act**

There are special rules that apply when carrying out works to a party wall or along the boundary line that separates two properties. Applicants may need to consult their neighbours and obtain consent before carrying out any work. In the event of a dispute, it may be necessary to appoint a party wall act surveyor. If in doubt, applicants are advised to seek independent legal advice.

## **XIII. Repayment of Grant**

Some forms of grant assistance include a condition that the grant must be repaid in full if the applicant fails to comply with any grant conditions, or if the property is sold or ownership is transferred within a certain period from the Certified Date.

The length of the grant condition period will vary according to the type of assistance and details are contained in Parts 3 to 9 of this policy.

If the owner disposes of the whole or any part of the property or fails to comply with any grant conditions within the grant condition period, he or she must notify the Council in writing and must repay the grant to the Council. If the grant is not repaid within 6 weeks from the date of the disposal or the date any grant conditions were breached, then compound interest will be charged on the amount outstanding at the current Bank of England Base Rate. The Council may also seek to recover the money through the courts and this may involve a charging order.

The Council does have discretion to either not demand repayment, to delay repayment or to demand a lesser amount. The Council will normally only exercise its discretion not to demand repayment where there are extenuating conditions and the applicant supplies the Council with supporting evidence as is necessary to help reach a decision.

The Head of Community will consider any such representation. In deciding whether to exercise discretion, regard will be had to the following factors: -

- Financial hardship: where recovery would cause financial hardship and the breach was either unintentional or unavoidable in the circumstances; and
- Equity: where the net value of the property (sale price minus any mortgages and other secured loans) is less than the value of financial assistance to be recovered, thereby leaving the owner in negative equity.
- The value of any loan or mortgage taken out after the financial assistance was approved will not be taken into account when determining whether to recover or reduce the repayment of the financial assistance

In deciding the amount of repayment to be waived, the Council will take account of:

- the amount of financial assistance;
- the period of occupancy since completion of assisted work;
- the relative approximate values of property pre and post assisted work; and
- the amount of equity in property.
- The Council's decision on this matter is final and there is no right of appeal.

#### **XIV. Fraud**

The Council is committed to tackling dishonest and fraudulent activity associated with grant applications made under this policy.

Applicants must ensure that all paperwork is honestly and truthfully completed to the best of their knowledge. Anyone found to have committed or attempted to commit fraudulent activity by providing false, misleading or incomplete information will lose the right to apply for assistance under this policy and may be subject to further legal action.

Information obtained throughout the grant application process will be checked thoroughly and may be shared with other departments of the Council and other organisations involved in any aspect of handling public funds to help prevent and detect fraud or in the investigation of other possible criminal activities.

Where fraudulent activity has been identified and payments have already been made, the Council will demand immediate and full repayment of the grant or any interim payments plus compound annual interest charged at the Bank of England base rate plus 2%, starting from

the date of payment or the Certified Date whichever is earlier. The applicant could also be subject to legal action in the criminal courts.

If the grant has been approved but not yet paid, the Council reserves the right to reconsider the grant application with immediate effect if the application is found to be fraudulent. The grant may be cancelled if the true circumstances mean the application would not be eligible for assistance under the terms of this policy.

## Glossary

Certificate of Intended Letting	A certificate that certifies the applicant has a qualifying owner's interest in the property and that they will rent out the property to tenants who are not members of their family for five years after the Certified Date.
Certificate of Title	A certificate that is completed by the applicant's solicitor or mortgage lender and which certifies the applicant is the freeholder or leaseholder of the property.
Certified Date	The date grant eligible works are completed to the satisfaction of the Council
Disabled Child	For the purposes of a Disabled Facilities Grant or Discretionary Disabled Adaptations, a disabled child is defined as someone between the age of 0 and their 16th birthday or someone between their 16th and 20th birthday who is in ordinary, non-advanced full time education. This includes standard education as provided by a school or similar establishment up to GCE A level or equivalent, and with at least 12 hours per week of teaching. The person will normally have child benefit paid to someone in respect of him or her. See also Disabled Person.
Disabled Person	In relation to Home Repairs Grants or the Handyperson Scheme, a disabled person is someone who receives a disability benefit or a disability premium as part of their claim for a means tested benefit.
Eligible work	The Council will provide the applicant with a schedule of work listing the items that are eligible for grant assistance, subject to submission of a valid application within any specified time limit. Any additional work not included in the schedule will be the responsibility of the applicant.
Imminent risk of harm	In assessing the imminent risk of harm, the Council will consider all relevant factors including the severity of the hazard, the age and health of the applicant, the size and composition of the household, the time of the year and any other relevant issues.
Grant	For the purposes of this policy, grants include any form of financial assistance detailed in this policy whether repayable or not. For each type of grant assistance, details of any repayment conditions are explained in the relevant part of the policy. Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)  A system introduced under the Housing Act 2004 and that forms part of the decent homes standard. It assesses the health impact associated with poor housing conditions and defines category 1 hazards (where the Council has a duty to take action) and category 2 hazards (where the Council has the power to take action).



Owner Occupation Certificate	A certificate that certifies that the applicant has a qualifying owners interest in the property and that they will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the required condition period after the Certified Date.
Person from Abroad	A 'person from abroad' is a person who has limited leave to enter or remain in the UK in accordance with the provision of the Home Office immigration rules relating to the right to public funds. For further information, contact the Council
Owners Interest	In relation to any premises means an estate in fee simple absolute in possession, or-a term of years absolute of which not less than five years remain unexpired at the date of the application, whether held by the applicant alone or jointly with others.
Property	Means the dwelling, house or building that is the subject of an application for financial assistance. It includes any building or part of a building used wholly or partly as a private dwelling, together with any yard, garden, outhouses and appurtenances belonging to or usually enjoyed with that building or part.
Regulatory Reform Housing Assistance (England and Wales) Order 2002	This is the legislation that enables the Council to adopt a housing assistance or renewal policy for repairing, adapting or improving housing accommodation which best meets the needs of local residents.
Valid Application	An applicant is considered to have submitted a valid application when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They submit all the documentation listed under 'How to apply' in the relevant part of the policy; and</li> <li>• The Council is satisfied that they have all necessary Information on which to base a decision.</li> </ul>

# Agenda Item 12



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**8<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

**Matter for Decision**

Title: **Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2014/15**

Author: **Anita Pathak-Mould**

## 1. Introduction

This report asks Members to approve the 2014/15 service plans for the Food Safety Service

## Recommendations

That the plans for 2014/15 referred to in this report are approved

## 2. Information

The Environmental Health team is responsible for delivering the food safety service along with other environmental health functions. Food Safety accounts for the majority of work within the team in terms of staff resources.

It is a legal requirement that Local Authorities have a plan stating how they intend to deliver their food safety service. It is also a requirement that these plans have elected member approval.

The Food Safety Service Delivery Plan shows that the service achieved all of its legal targets last year and all premises that were due for an inspection received an inspection within the 28day timescale.

This year, 2014/15 work is included and is broadly in line with the services delivered by the Council in 2013/14. The report commits the Council to providing the basic service and minimum good practice standards expected by the FSA.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	The plans are covered by the 2014.15 schedule budgets
Risk (APM)	CR 4 Reputation damage CR 6 Regulatory Governance
Equalities (KG)	An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and appropriate mitigation measures are being developed.
Legal (KG)	It is a legal requirement that local authorities ensure compliance within the legislation such as the Food Safety Act 2006

<b>Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Community Service Environmental Health Team Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2014/15</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Food Safety Policies and Procedures</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ref FS.2.1 (FSAFA Ref 3.1)</p>
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## **Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2014/15**

Date Approved: July 2014

Date of Review: March 2015

### **Introduction**

This plan sets out the food law enforcement and regulation services that Oadby and Wigston Borough Council intends to provide in 2014/15.

It is compiled with reference to the joint agreement between local authorities and the Food Standards Agency, known as the Framework Agreement.

## **1. Aims and Objectives**

### **1.1 Corporate Aims and Objectives**

1.1.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council have adopted the following 7 Corporate priorities. These are -

- Protect front line services
- Enhance the green environment so residents take full advantage of it
- Revitalise town centres
- Safer Borough
- Listen and use the 3 forums
- Work smarter to delivery efficiency savings required to meet budget cuts
- Improve the health and wellbeing of our residents

1.1.2 The council seeks to address these priorities in a manner that is open, while listening to the views of, and serving, its community.

1.1.3 This section will be updated to reflect any changes in priorities that occur during the year.

### **1.2 Service Aims and Objectives**

1.2.1 The Food Law Enforcement Service is provided as part of Oadby and Wigston Borough Councils environmental health function in its Community Service.

The service has the following overall vision –

**To protect public health and safety by ensuring that all food prepared, manufactured, stored and sold in the borough is of a safe, wholesome and healthy standard and to control the occurrence and spread of cases of food poisoning within the borough.**

1.2.2 The specific aims of the Food Law Enforcement Service are as follows –

- Provide expert advice and assistance to customers on all aspects of food safety.
- Ensure Oadby and Wigston Borough Council meets its statutory responsibilities for the enforcement of legislation relating to food safety.
- Promote best practice in food hygiene to local businesses and residents.  
Provide services that have the full confidence of all customers, including Councillors, Central Government, other organisations, local businesses and residents.
- Apply the principles of quality management and improvement.
- Achieve financial and performance targets set by the council.

1.2.3 These aims have been reviewed to ensure they –

- ❖ Deliver the corporate aims of the Council
- ❖ Support the Council's 7 objectives in as many ways as possible
- ❖ Satisfy the requirements placed on the Council by statute

1.2.4 In order to achieve these aims, the environmental health team will meet the following objectives –

- Complete annual programmes of inspection of business premises in accordance with statutory requirements for the enforcement of food safety.
- Enforce the requirements for licensing and/or registration of activities involving food businesses and process applications for such in accordance with Council policy.
- Investigate and respond, in accordance with Council policy, to complaints, enquiries and requests for service regarding food safety.
- Investigate and respond, in accordance with Council policy, to notifications and outbreaks of food poisoning.
- Promote food safety, including participation in the national Food Safety Week and Food Standards Agency initiatives.
- Monitor the safety of food sold or produced in the Borough by undertaking an annual programme of food sampling in partnership with other Leicestershire authorities and in conjunction with national surveys of specific products.

- Maintain a well informed workforce by providing appropriate training, access to comprehensive technical/legal data systems and liaising with other relevant organisations.
- Provide reports to Councillors and an annual report to the Foods Standards Agency on the services provided and performance against targets.
- Provide informed choice for food business customers by maintaining a published indicator of food safety standards.
- Promote a consistent approach to enforcement and service provision by creating and maintaining documented policies and procedures for the services provided.
- Monitor customer satisfaction in the services provided and take their requirements into account when reviewing service provision.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1 Profile of Oadby and Wigston**

The Borough of Oadby and Wigston lies to the south east of Leicester City and, at 2,352 hectares, is the smallest in area of Leicestershire's seven districts.

The borough is predominantly urban, consisting of three main settlements – Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston – with a population of almost 57,000.

There has been extensive residential development since 1945 and as a result although the total number of food premises is small in comparison to other authorities, there is a wide variety of food businesses ranging from national food manufacturers to small local retail outlets supplying the local population.

### **2.2 Organisational Structure**

- 2.2.1 The council operates a Committee Structure approach to local government as the most appropriate to the needs of Oadby and Wigston.

For the regulatory aspects of its service, including food safety, environmental health reports to the Service Delivery Committee.

- 2.2.2 The Environmental Health Team Leader reports to the Head of Community and also keeps regular contact with the Committee Chair.

Delegated powers for authorising enforcement officers are vested in the Chief Executive. It is the responsibility of the Environmental Health Team Leader to ensure that officers who are authorised have the necessary levels of competency, experience and training appropriate to the level of work they are asked to undertake.

- 2.2.3 The Consultant in Health Protection employed by the Public Health England (PHE) is the Proper Officer appointed by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council for the purposes of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 and the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988.

- 2.2.4 The Public Analyst appointed by Leicestershire County Council undertakes analysis of food samples and complaints.

- 2.2.5 Microbiological examinations of food and water samples will be carried out by the Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Laboratory at the Good Hope Hospital, Sutton Coldfield, and Birmingham.

## **2.3 Scope of the Food Service**

- 2.3.1 In addition to undertaking the statutory enforcement responsibilities imposed by food safety and public health legislation, the council adopts an educative approach to food safety through health promotion and the provision of advice to local businesses.

- 2.3.2 The Council also supports the “Better Business for All” initiative which is being co-ordinated through the Leicester & Leicestershire Chamber of Trade.

- 2.3.2 The scope of services provided by the environmental health team is as follows :-

### **2.3.2.1 Planned Inspections of Food Premises**

There are 375 (end March 2013) registered food businesses operating with Oadby and Wigston. These comprise a range of premises including manufacturers, caterers and retailers. All food premises are contacted on a regular basis by the Council’s food safety officers who advise on good practice and ensure compliance with legal requirements. Where the business is on the inspection programme, the inspection frequency of each food premises is programmed according to the risk assessment system prescribed in the current Food Standards Agency Code of Practice, which takes into account potential hazards, level of compliance and confidence in management control systems.

### **2.3.2.2 Investigation of Complaints**

Food safety officers respond to all justifiable complaints about food premises and food purchased within the borough of Oadby and Wigston. Each complaint is thoroughly investigated to determine the appropriate enforcement action and to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to prevent any recurrence. This frequently involves contact with manufacturing companies and local authorities in other areas. In 2013/14, there were 19 complaints or concerns about food premises and food handling and 20 complaints about food purchased.

### **2.3.2.3 Revisits**

Where the operator of a food business is required to undertake works in order to comply with food safety legislation, a revisit may be undertaken after the date specified for compliance.

### **2.3.2.4 Food Alerts**

On occasions, Food Alerts are issued by the Food Standards Agency in respect of certain foodstuffs and, where necessary, the team takes all appropriate measures to ensure that stocks of all such food are removed from sale by traders within this Borough. During 2013-14 a number of alerts were received including ones relating to the horsemeat scandal.

### **2.3.2.5 Food sampling**

Sampling is undertaken to monitor food safety standards during inspection and as part of national and local microbiological food sampling programmes.

### 2.3.2.6 Investigation of food borne illnesses

The Council receives notification of food poisoning cases from GP's, the local health authority and their laboratory services. Each notification is investigated and appropriate action taken to prevent spread of infection.

### 2.3.2.7 Food hygiene promotion and education

As part of the Council's commitment to promoting the health and quality of life of residents, the environmental health team undertakes various food safety initiatives. These have included supporting Food Safety Week.

The Council is participating in the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS).

### 2.3.2.8 Food premises approvals and licensing

Certain food operations require prior approval or licensing by the local authority. In Oadby and Wigston these include the manufacture of meat products. Premises and food operations are inspected prior to issuing licences or approvals and systems regularly monitored thereafter, to ensure continued compliance with legal requirements.

### 2.3.2.10 Other services

These include –

- Advice to prospective new businesses
- Occupational health and safety matters arising during the course of food safety inspections.
- Response to any type of environmental health enquiry.
- Support for the Consultant in Communicable Disease Control (CCDC), where required in investigations and control of waterborne incidents and infectious diseases other than food poisoning.
- Interactions on application for licences, planning permission and building regulations, where there is a food safety implication.

## 2.4 Demands on the Food Service

2.4.1 Of the 375 food premises operating in Oadby and Wigston:-

183	Fall into the higher risk A, B or C categories for inspection
1	Is high volume manufacturers whose products are distributed internationally and who refer to the council as their originating authority
2	Have been approved by the environmental health department under product specific legislation
0	Have informal arrangements for the Council to act as its primary home authority

2.4.2 The Food Safety service is delivered from a single location situated at the Council Offices, Wigston. The office opening hours are Monday to Thursday 8.45 a.m. to 4.45 pm except on Wednesday 8.45 am to 4.00 pm and Friday 8.45 a.m. to 4.15 p.m.

2.4.3 Arrangements are in place for contacting senior officers regarding emergency matters arising out of normal working hours e.g. food poisoning outbreaks, food safety incidents and food hazard warnings.

#### 2.4.4 Factors likely to have major impact on service delivery in 2014/15 include:-

- continuing implementation of the food hygiene rating system to businesses in our borough, including responding to requests for revisits and appeals
- training requirements for existing food safety officers;
- adherence to rigorous documented procedures and submission of returns to meet Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement requirements;
- joint FSA/ Health and Safety Executive approach to business regulation
- potential development of a local enterprise partnership to support businesses in Leicestershire, in partnership with the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO)
- government drive for reduction of burden on businesses
- requirement for flexibility, to react to unforeseen opportunities and situations of risk
- reactive requirements of other unscheduled environmental health enforcement duties.

#### 2.5 Enforcement Policy

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Enforcement Policy applies to food safety work. Formal enforcement is taken by a team of regulatory enforcement officers led, by the Council solicitor in consultation with Head of Corporate Resources. Food Safety Officers will receive instruction and guidance as necessary on the application of the enforcement policy and procedures. Enforcement decisions will be documented and monitored to demonstrate adherence with the policy.

### 3. Service Delivery

#### 3.1 Food Premises Inspections

- 3.1.1 In March 2004 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council adopted a formal policy for food safety inspections to be undertaken in accordance with Codes of Practice issued under section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 and guidance issued by then Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) (now defunct).
- 3.1.2 In accordance with this policy and the current Food Safety Codes of Practice, a management system for food safety inspections has been introduced. The current version comprises the documented procedure for food hygiene inspections which will be reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes.
- 3.1.3 Following every full food safety inspection, officers assess the risk posed by the food business with reference to:
- the nature of its operation
  - level of compliance with food safety requirements
  - confidence of its management

This is used to determine the frequency of inspection.

- 3.1.4 Previous inspections and risk assessments of food businesses established that the following number of food premises was operating in Oadby and Wigston in March 2013.



Risk Level and description	Number of Premises
A Risk (minimum inspection period 4 months)	1
B Risk (minimum inspection period 12 months)	39
C Risk (minimum inspection period 18 months)	143
D Risk (minimum inspection period 2 years)	52
E Risk (minimum inspection period 3 years)	140

3.1.5 Based on the dates of previous inspections, the proposed programme of food safety inspections for 2014/15 are as follows:-

Risk Level of premises	Number of inspections
A	2
B	39
C	80
D	22
E	40 (Self assessments)

In addition, there will be a number of new food businesses that are not yet categorised. Following inspection, they will be given a risk rating and this will determine how frequently they are inspected in future. The inspection programme will also include those new businesses that open during 2014/15, although exactly how many we cannot predict.

3.1.6 In addition to visits undertaken as part of the risk assessment programme, inspections are also undertaken in respect of:

- licensing and approvals of food businesses;
- complaints regarding food business operations;
- enquiries and request for advice from food businesses;
- investigation of poor sampling results;
- transient stalls and mobiles
- new business operations

3.1.7 Revisits will be undertaken where significant breaches of hygiene regulations are identified during an inspection. Based on the percentage of inspections previously generating revisits, it is estimated that approximately 10% will be required in 2014/15. Revisits will also be made in response to requests and appeals that meet the criteria set in the food hygiene rating scheme procedures. As this is a new scheme, the impact of this is as yet unknown.

3.1.8 The environmental health department will endeavour to undertake all of these inspections during 2014/15 but it is accepted by the Council that this depends on other reactive environmental health duties that may be required. However, the council is committed to a high number of inspections and will consider contract employment when necessary to achieve this. The Council's annual performance targets reflect the high performance expected by the Food Standards Agency -

- to undertake 100% of the inspections required for A B and C risk premises;
- To undertake 100% of the inspections required for D risk premises.
- To deliver an alternative strategy to inspection for the lowest risk premises (E rated)

High risk premises inspections will take priority over low risk.

- 3.1.9 During 2014/15, our target is 100% of inspections programmed for all Premises to be undertaken within 28 working days of the programmed date.
- 3.1.10 All inspections are undertaken by officers employed by the authority as environmental health officers with the necessary authorisation, competence and experience for food safety enforcement.
- 3.1.11 Where existing resources are insufficient to achieve the inspection programme, specialist contractors may be employed to address any shortfall.
- 3.1.12 All authorised food safety officers have access to the following technical support:
- Food Standards Agency website, publications and seminars;
  - Better Regulation Delivery Office information
  - Internet Access;
  - Leicestershire CIEH Food Safety Network Group.
- 3.1.13 Resources required for food premises inspections in 2014/15, (excluding clerical and senior management support) are estimated as 1.00 full time equivalent qualified officers.

### **3.2 Complaints about Food and Food Businesses**

- 3.2.1 In March 2004 the council adopted a formal policy for the investigation of complaints against service, in accordance with FSA Codes of Practice issued under Section 40 of the Food Safety Act 1990 and guidance issued by the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services.
- 3.2.2 Procedures for responding to and dealing with complaints, enquiries and other requests for service are documented. These will be reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes or in the light of local experience.
- 3.2.3 Based on trends in food complaints received over the last six years it is estimated that between 30 - 35 complaints about food and 25-30 complaints or concerns about food businesses will be received in 2014/15.
- 3.2.4 Resources necessary for investigating complaints about food and food businesses in 2014/15 (excluding clerical and senior management support) are 0.05 full time equivalent qualified officers.

### **3.3 Home Authority and Primary Authority Principle**

- 3.3.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council have no formal policy or arrangements in place regarding home authority or primary authority principles. However advice from the Local Better Regulation Office is considered when dealing with a business in the borough that does have a primary authority arrangement with another local authority.

### **3.4 Advice to Businesses**

- 3.4.1. In accordance with its priorities the Council is committed to responding to all enquiries and requests for advice to food businesses. This is in the form of a service standard rather than a policy.

- 3.4.2 Procedures for responding to and dealing with complaints, enquiries and other requests for service are documented. These will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised as legislation/guidance changes and, in any event, at least annually.
- 3.4.3 Planning and building regulation applications relating to food businesses are examined regularly and, where appropriate, applicants are contacted to seek further information about their intentions for their prospective business and/or to provide advice.
- 3.4.4 Based on recent years' trends, somewhere between 20 to 30 requests for advice can be expected in 2014/15.
- 3.4.5 Resources required in 2014/15 for providing advice to food businesses are included in paragraph 3.7.4.

### **3.5 Food Sampling**

- 3.5.1 The Council's policy regarding food sampling was adopted in March 2004 and is revised annually.
- 3.5.2 Routine food sampling is undertaken in accordance with a strategy and annual programme developed with the Leicestershire CIEH Food and Technical Sub Group. The annual programme for 2014/15 has been with the following partners - county authorities, trading standards and the public health laboratory service, and will be published shortly. It will then be appended to this plan.
- 3.5.3 Other food sampling is undertaken:
- as part of food poisoning and complaint investigations;
  - as part of food premises inspections to monitor hygiene standards and confirm adequacy of food processing systems.
- 3.5.4 Examination and analysis of food samples are undertaken at accredited laboratories detailed in paragraphs 2.2.4 and 2.2.5.
- 3.5.5 Most of the food sampling carried out in 2014/15 by the department will be undertaken for monitoring and surveillance purposes, on an informal basis. It will be undertaken by environmental health officers and a technical officer all of whom have, or will have received, specific training for this work. Where formal food sampling is required, it is undertaken by officers qualified in accordance with the current FSA Code of Practice.
- 3.5.6 Approximately 40 food samples were submitted for examination or analysis in 2013/14 and, a similar number is expected to be taken in 2014/15.
- 3.5.7 Resources required for food sampling in 2014/15 are estimated at 0.1 full time equivalent officers.

### **3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease**

- 3.6.1 The Council's policy regarding the investigation of food poisoning incidents was adopted in March 2004 and is checked each year to ensure it remains up to date.
- 3.6.2 A district plan in case of a major outbreak of infectious disease was documented and revised by the Leicestershire Control of Infectious Disease Group.

3.6.3 Last year about 62 cases of infectious disease were received and, in the absence of any current trend indicating otherwise, we assume a similar number can be expected in 2014/15.

3.6.4 There were no major food poisoning outbreaks in the borough during 2012/13.

3.6.5 Resources required for food poisoning investigation in 2014/15 are estimated at 0.1 full time equivalent officers.

### **3.7 Food Safety Incidents**

3.7.1 The council's policy for responding to and initiating food alerts in accordance with the current FSA Code of Practice was adopted in March 2004. It is subject to continuous assessment and every 2 years.

3.7.2 Procedures for responding to and initiating food alerts are documented. These will be reviewed annually and revised as and when legislation/guidance changes.

3.7.4 The resources necessary for the following services which relate to food safety incidents in 2014/15 are estimated to be 0.15 full time equivalent qualified officers:

- Complaints about Food and Food Business
- Home and Primary Authority liaison
- Advice to Businesses
- Responding to and/or initiating food hazard warnings

### **3.8 Liaison with other Organisations**

3.8.1 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council are represented at regular meetings of the Leicestershire Food Safety Group.

To encourage consistency of enforcement within the nine Leicestershire Authorities, the Group:

- Formulates and reviews strategies and procedures for adoption by individual authorities.
- Liaises with other professional bodies e.g. representatives from the Public Health laboratory Service and Leicestershire County Trading Standards over general matters of enforcement;
- Liaises with the food trade and trade organisations, e.g. Leicestershire County Education and Social Services Departments, over specific matters arising;
- Liaises with advisory groups, e.g. Local Government Regulation
- Works with OFSTED to achieve acceptable standards in educational establishments particularly nurseries.
- Operates county wide the national food hygiene rating system.
- Undertakes peer review exercises, the aim of which is to assess the quality of each participant's service and improve consistency of regulation across the county

3.8.2 The Council is represented on the East Midlands (South) Health Protection Operational Partnership Group. This group was set up by Public Health England (Formerly, The Health Protection Agency) and the constituent district councils to:

- Develop guidelines on infection control issues;
- Act as advisory groups, making recommendations on all aspects of communicable disease (including food poisoning);
- Formulate exercises and, where necessary, implement outbreak control plans.

Members of the group include the Public Health Executive infection control nurses and consultant microbiologist, GP representatives and senior environmental health officers from local authorities within the East Midlands. These arrangements will be updated as and when changes to the health service are implemented.

3.8.3 Arrangements are in place for Environmental Health to be provided with details of all planning and building control applications received. These are utilised to identify new food businesses and changes to existing operations. Contact is made with applicants to provide advice on food safety matters.

3.8.4 The resources required in 2014/15 to maintain liaison with other organisations is estimated at 0.1 full time equivalent qualified officers.

### **3.9 Food Safety Promotion and Education**

3.9.1 The Council has demonstrated a strong commitment to food safety promotion through support for Food Standards Agency initiatives, particularly the annual Food Safety Week.

3.9.3 Resources required for food safety promotions and education in 2014/15 estimated to be 0.05 full time equivalent officers.

3.9.4 The Council has adopted the national Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. As part of its risk rating, each food business is given a score on its performance in 3 areas, standards of hygiene, the structure of the premises and the confidence in management. These scores are used to provide a Food Hygiene Rating score. The scores are published on the Food Standards Agency Website and the scores can be displayed within the food premise. It is not a mandatory requirement for a food business to display their score. A maximum score of 5 means very good whereas a zero score means urgent improvement is necessary. Some food businesses are excluded from the scheme. The profile of the Borough at the beginning of April 2014 is as follows

<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Premises</b>
zero	1
1	23
2	11
3	48
4	58
5	141

## 4. Resources

### 4.1 Financial Allocation

- 4.1.1 The projected budget figure for environmental health administration and enforcement in 2014/15 is £264,090, of which a portion is allocated to the Food Safety Service.

At the present time and given the resources available to deliver all environmental health services, it is not a priority in 2014/15 to identify a means of costing separately the food safety service.

### 4.2 Staffing Allocation

- 4.2.1 The resources required to undertake the services described in Section 3 above (including senior management but excluding clerical support) are detailed in the table below:-

Functions	Full Time Equivalent Officers Estimated for 2014/15
Food Premises Inspection	0.8
Food and Food Business Complaints Home Authority Principle Advice to Food Businesses etc. Food Safety Incidents	0.1
Food Sampling	0.1
Food Poisoning Investigation	0.1
Liaison with Organisations	0.1
Food Safety Promotion and Education	0.05
Administration and Research	0.10
Management/Supervision	0.20
Staff Development	0.05
<b>Totals</b>	1.6

- 4.2.2 In 2014/15, we anticipate sufficient resources will be available from permanent staff to undertake our food law enforcement programme.
- 4.2.3 Should it be necessary to make new appointments or to engage private contractors, these will be properly qualified officers. Where such officers have not undertaken food safety enforcement for some time, revision training, in accordance with the current FSA Code of Practice will be provided.
- 4.2.4 Clerical support is provided by the Community Service area (environmental health administration)

### **4.3 Staff Development**

- 4.3.1 As part of the Council's Employee Development which includes performance management and training. All food safety officers undergo annual appraisal interviews which include review of training requirements and personal development objectives.
- 4.3.2 Communication within the environmental health department is very easy in view of its small size and therefore in practice many matters are discussed informally on a day to day basis, as part of the normal daily routine.
- 4.3.3 Officers authorised to undertake inspections must be suitably qualified and demonstrate their competency to undertake inspections and audits of food safety systems. The FSA Code of Practice also requires authorised food officers to receive at least 10 hours, structured on-going training, and each year.
- 4.3.3.1 To fulfil training needs, officers attend seminars and courses arranged by the Leicestershire Food Safety Group, Central Government advisory bodies, other local authorities and external training organisations. The Council also subscribes to the 5 + 1 Training scheme operated by the East Midlands authorities, which includes a dedicated session on food safety.
- 4.3.3.2 During 2014/15 attendance at relevant course and seminars will be considered as and when they are advertised and found to be relevant to our needs, or where deficiencies in authorised officers' knowledge become apparent by seeking out training courses. A training matrix now forms part of our training procedures and is used to help with the identification of training needs.
- 4.3.3.3 Subsidised training by the FSA is continuing in 2014/15 and the Leicestershire Food Group plans to use this for training events.
- 4.3.4 Should it necessary to use external contractors to supplement our food safety work in 2014/15, their CPD records will be checked and verified if necessary and only those meeting competencies in the specific areas of food safety work we require, will be employed.
- 4.3.5 The service recognises that formal courses and seminars are not the only means of developing and maintaining competence. Some of the other means that are used include
- cascade training to colleagues
  - liaising with colleagues, both internally through the corporate enforcement team and other local authorities and in other organisations
  - work shadowing with colleagues
  - internet research and on line training

#### **4.3.6 Training records**

All officers involved in this service are expected to keep a record of the training events they attend or other training they undertake.

This is a requirement of their professional body, the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health, which operates a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme requiring all members to undertake a minimum of 20 hours CPD each year, 10 of which must be on the subject of food safety..

Officers are also encouraged to reflect on the effectiveness of their training, to determine

how useful it is, what new knowledge and skills they have acquired and what they might do differently or better as a result of the training.

Under the terms of the scheme, this reflection may also contribute to CPD.



## 5. Performance Management

### 5.1 The proposed performance management for 2014/15 is set out below

Target	Expected Outcome	Eval. Method	Resources	Deadline	Officer
Complete annual programmes of inspection of business premises in accordance with statutory requirements for the enforcement of food safety	100% Inspections carried out that were due	Check of actual inspections carried out against action forward planning programme produced on 1 April 2014.  This identifies all the businesses due an inspection during the year.  Monthly Monitoring  Monitoring Reported in Performance Reviews	Officer Time	31 March 2015	Team Leader EH Team  “ 0.1 Full time EH Officers
Enforce the requirements for licensing and/or registration of activities involving food businesses and process applications for such in accordance with Council policy.	All food business in the Borough to be operating within proper registration and, where needed, licensing.	New businesses sent a registration form when they begin to trade – follow up letter/visit if registration form not returned.  Annual licensing inspection programme undertaken at the appropriate frequency as set out in the Code of Practice (this is part of the forward planning inspection process set at the beginning of the year)  Periodic reviews of registration and licensing requirements, including monitoring to confirm appropriate procedures are being met.	Officer time	Deadlines set by reference to the Code of Practice and OWBC performance standards	As above
Investigate and respond to complaints, enquiries and requests for service regarding food safety, in accordance with Council policy.	All complaints, enquiries and requests for service to be investigated in accordance with policy and procedures.	Electronic records will confirm response times.  Sample surveys are undertaken to monitor individual cases.  Customer satisfaction surveys, to provide customer perception of the service.	Officer time	Within OWBC performance standards	As above
Investigate and respond to notifications and outbreaks of food poisoning in accordance with council policy	100% of outbreaks to be responded to and investigated in accordance with council property	Sample monitoring to confirm Policy and Procedures are met	Officer time	Within OWBC performance standards	As above
Promote food safety, including participation in the national Food Safety Week and Food Standards Agency initiatives.	At least one activity during National Food Safety Week	Food Safety Promotional Event in June 2014  Other initiatives as prompted by the Food Standard Agency	Officer time	June 2014 Food Safety Week  Other deadlines as set for other	As above

Target	Expected Outcome	Eval. Method	Resources	Deadline	Officer
		Other Events during the year		specific initiatives	
Monitor the safety of food sold or produced in the Borough by undertaking an annual programme of food sampling in partnership with other Leicestershire authorities and in conjunction with national surveys of specific products	90% of sampling target met, for sampling appropriate to our borough.  All result of sampling to be 'satisfactory'.	Annual county sampling programme is set in line with national and local priorities and in conjunction with the County Public Health Analyst at the beginning of the year.  Monthly records are kept to chart the progress through the year.  The programme and progress to its achievement is published in the Councillors Update.	Officer time	Completion of programme by 31 March 2015	As above
Maintain a well informed work force by providing appropriate training, access to comprehensive technical/legal data systems and liaising with other relevant organisations.	Minimum 10 hours continuous professional development training for food safety officers	Evidence of attendance at CPD events (Certificates or Personal Records)  Evidence of research or cascade training that will count towards CPD.	Officer time and Training budget	31 March 2015	As Above
Provide interim reports internally and an annual report to the Food Standard Agency on the service provided and the performance against targets.	Electronic annual report to Food Standards Agency.	Reports published and accepted	Officer time	FSA report to their deadline date	Head of Service and team leader EH Team
Promote a consistent approach to enforcement and service provision by creating and maintaining documented policies and procedures for the services provided	All Food Safety enforcement carried out in accordance with the policies and procedures	Policies and Procedure documents written and published.  Policies and Procedures updated annually, in line with changes in good practice and FSA guidance  Sample monitoring to ensure policies and procedures are being followed.	Officer time	30 June 2014	As above

## 5.2 Summary of Food Safety Service Performance Standards in 2014/15

### National Indicators

There are no national indicators relating to food safety work.

### Local Indicators

Food Premises Inspection	% of food premises inspected/audited, of those that should have been inspected.
Low Risk Enforcements	% of low risk food business self assessment forms that are returned, assessed and re-categorised where necessary.
Response to	Response within specific times to requests and notifications.

Requests	
Improvement in standards	% of food businesses in each Food Hygiene Rating System category and change over time.
Food Sampling	% of 'credits' used in the annual county food sampling programme (where appropriate to our borough).

## **6. Quality Assessment**

6.1 The quality of service provided by the environmental health food safety service is assessed by:

- Monitoring performance against targets for food premises inspections and responses to requests for service;
- Monitoring actual working practice against procedures and protocols for:
  - Inspections of food businesses;
  - Investigation of complaints and food poisoning notifications;
  - Enforcement;
- Undertaking customer satisfaction surveys of local businesses receiving inspection.

6.3 Complaints regarding services provided will be investigated under the council's formal complaint procedure. No complaints were received in 2013/14.

## **7. Review**

### **7.1 Identification of Variation from the Service Plan**

7.1.1 Reports on performance against targets will be made available quarterly on the Council Website as part of the Service Charters and exceptions reported to the Service Delivery Committee as required. Any variations to the performance standards or targets will be reported to the Council's Management Team at the earliest opportunity.

### **7.2 Reviews against the Service Plan**

7.2.1 The process of review will begin at the end of May each year and will have regard to information provided by the Environmental Health Team Leader

Performance and resources available for the year

- Responses to consultation with local businesses and the community
- Observations from Members, the Management Team and the environmental health officers
- Advice from the Food Standards Agency and examples of best practice observed elsewhere
- Information arising from the Leicestershire CIEH Food Safety Group

7.2.2 A review of the work plan will be included as an appendix in the following year's service plan.

### **7.3 Areas of Improvement**

7.3.1 In producing the 2014/15 service plan and taking into account the advice provided in the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement, the following service developments were identified and are to be addressed during 2014/15 –

- To introduce food hygiene audits as a means of assuring compliance with the premises holding a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme mark of "5".
- To increase numbers in higher categories of the national food hygiene rating system.
- To work with the businesses holding a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme of "0", "1" or "2", in order to improve their rating – known to be a "Zero 1,2" project.

7.3.2 The council's existing policy for food law enforcement is reviewed annually and any significant changes are put to Member approval. Major reviews of the policy take place every 3 years, the next one being due in June 2015.

7.3.2 All policies and procedures will be reviewed at intervals of no more than every two years, unless

- Changes in legislation or guidance dictate more frequently, or
- failures in the service can be addressed by revising policies and/or procedures and that the matter or matters are of such urgency it is not considered advisable to wait until the annual review.

## **8. Work Plan**

In addition to maintaining services and performance in line with Section 5 (Performance Management), the following are specific targets or projects for the 2014/15 food safety service work plan –

1. Joint work and projects planned and delivered by the Leicestershire CIEH Food Liaison Group, whose work is designed to promote good, consistent food safety standards between its members across the county. Their work plan for 2014/15 is attached.
2. Delivering the areas of improvement identified at 7.3.
3. Following the changes within the service workforce, to improve knowledge and resilience across the team by addressing the development targets identified above in 4.2.3, (Should it be necessary to make new appointments or to engage private contractors, these will be properly qualified officers. Where such officers have not undertaken food safety enforcement for some time, revision training, in accordance with the current FSA Code of Practice will be provided)

**Leicestershire Food Liaison Group - Work Plan 2014**

<b>Key Priority Theme</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>	<b>Completion/Review Date</b>	<b>Lead Responsibility</b>
Performance	<u>Sampling</u> (a) Complete 2013/14 Programme	1 April 2014	31 March 2015	Food, Water & Environment Lab, Birmingham in conjunction with all Authorities
	Draft Protocols for sampling subjects	2 months prior to sampling topic	31 March 2015	Food, Water & Environment Lab, Birmingham in conjunction with all Authorities
	<u>Peer Review</u> Undertake a peer review exercise following up on the lessons learnt from May 2011 exercise	30 June 2014	31 December 2014	Leicester City /Blaby District Council
	<u>Inter Authority Auditing</u> Review results of the IAA exercise carried out in the last quarter of 2012 on E coli	1 January 2014	31 September 2014	All
	<u>Newsletter</u> Develop a newsletter template for Food Businesses in the County	1 June 2014	31 December 2014	Blaby District Council
	<u>Food Hygiene Rating Scheme</u> Continue to embed the Food Standards Agency (FSA) Food Hygiene Rating Scheme <u>Intervention Policy</u> To draft a common Intervention Policy for all Local Authorities	1 January 2014  Delayed until new Code of Practice issued	31 December 2014  Review position 31 December 2014	All except Rutland  To be Agreed at future date

Key Priority Theme	Activity	Implementation Date	Completion/Review Date	Lead Responsibility
Inter Agency Working	Invitation to Dairy Hygiene & Egg Inspectorate to attend one meeting	1 January 2014	30 June 2014	Secretary
	Review of Officer Training Needs in Leicestershire.	1 January 2014	30 June 2014	Training Officer/All Authorities
	To facilitate one joint project with Trading Standards Officers in the County	30 June 2014	31 December 2014	Leicestershire County Council Trading Standards
	<u>Facilitation of Courses</u>			
Continuing Professional Development	Arrange 2 courses for Enforcement Officers in the County	1 March 2014	31 December 2014	Training Officer
	Organise 5 + 1 Training Session on Food Hygiene	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2014	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and North West Leicestershire District Council



- 3.3 A site visit and expert assessment was commissioned from the Natural Death Centre. This highlighted the Natural Cemetery proposal for Brocks Hill was not viable as proposed. Reasons included existing land drainage, site usage and the initial design being untenable. A pet cemetery would be cost prohibitive (due to annual licensing) and subject to the same concerns regarding land drainage.
- 3.4 To meet the GoB strategy commitment to trees within the Borough, officers have been working to support Management team on establishing a new Arboricultural Officer role. This would work within the Clean and Green team and Planning. Tree Warden meetings have been re-established each quarter, working with the county scheme co-ordinators. Over 2,000 trees have been planted as copse and hedgerow at Brocks Hill . Three specimen Jubilee trees were planted at Uplands, Coombe and Blaby Road Parks. These were funded by the Stepping Stones Project following applications jointly with the Tree Wardens. Trees and shrubs donated by the public, and from the established Tree Warden nursery, have been used to gap fill hedgerow around the Borough.
- 3.5 Highway tree planting on the A6 has been investigated. Work is cost prohibitive and will not be supported by County Highways. Additional proposed schemes are awaiting decisions from County.
- 3.6 Biodiversity surveys of Fludes Lane are completed for spring seasonal recording. A volunteer is recording butterflies on site. Input has been sought from the local Police and Clean and Green team for an updated conservation management plan for the area. Bridge improvements have been assessed, with work done for one and a rolling programme proposed to improve safety on others. It is proposed to re-establish a community conservation group in the late autumn. Staff are working with LCC regarding the requirement for a footpath diversion, so the definitive map actually follows the actual path.
- 3.7 Volunteering has been promoted for biodiversity, conservation roles and Centre support functions at Brocks Hill, with new volunteers recruited. A successful volunteering fair was run in conjunction with Voluntary Action Leicestershire during National Volunteer Week. This was attended by 20 youth, health and well-being and environmental groups, as well as groups from the voluntary community sector. Next year's event has been booked due to the success. Volunteer litter pickers are assisting with maintaining parks and green spaces. Conservation volunteering will be progressed at Clifton Bridge and Pochins Bridge in coming months.
- 3.8 A metalwork butterfly sculpture is being commission by the Friends of Brocks Hill for the front of the building. This will be under-planted with butterfly attracting plants, to provide an area of high visual impact and outstanding interest.

#### **4. Brocks Hill Country Park and Centre**

- 4.1 Infra-structure developments at Brocks Hill have progressed. Planning permission has been granted for the barn, which will provide storage and training space for site tenants, The Conservation Volunteers. Brocks Hill Centre has been connected to the main sewers and the bio-disc decommissioned due to it being at end of life and increasing maintenance costs. Rain water harvesting is being re-instated for the site. Drainage and footpath improvements across the site are now completed, with positive customer feedback. A new footpath is being laid from the main circuit to Glenmere School to improve conditions for the walking school bus programme. A full assessment of technologies at the site has been completed,



with evaluations of costs and payback times to get all technologies working. Discussions are underway with regard to a company replacing the wind turbine at Brocks Hill.

- 4.2 The construction of the Jubilee Amphitheatre/Outdoor performance space has recommenced. Results of soil compaction tests are due by the end of June, along with construction drawings. This will be a simpler design that reduces the need for concrete. Once an amendment to planning is received, the project can be completed. Sleepers purchased will be used for benches on site.
- 4.3 A revised habitat management and development plan for the site and Centre has been completed. This was the basis for Green Flag Award and Natural England Country Park Accreditation submissions. A new seasonal pond and wetland scrape have been created in the top field. This field has also been sown with wild flower seed, funded by Stepping Stones. Conservation volunteering days on site have been increased, supported by the appointment of an assistant ranger. Brocks Hill Conservation Volunteers (midweek and the new weekend group) are donating approximately 300 hours a month. Employee volunteering has been promoted, with volunteers from British Gas and Charnwood Foods working on site. Companies pay for this opportunity for their staff.
- 4.4 On June 2<sup>nd</sup> the Café came under an interim management arrangement with SLM. Opening hours have increased on weekdays and by two hours at weekends. These will be subject to review as sales patterns become clearer. The café now serves hot and cold food.
- 4.5 A formal working arrangement has been established with Woodlark Forest School to deliver complimentary activities on site. A percentage payment on numbers attending will be received. New adult country craft, bush craft and natural history identification courses are being promoted. A number of natural history events are being delivered by volunteers from local county naturalist groups with no trainers charge. Family activities have been increased during school holidays, with new volunteers helping with prep work. New events linked to the arts are proposed for the autumn following trials.
- 4.6 The new vision for Brocks Hill was adopted at full Council April 2014. This will see the site develop as “a home for natural history”, with all activities aiming to inspire a connection to the natural world. The Centre will also be a hub for volunteering, training and information, inclusive community engagement and multi-cultural celebration. This will be delivered alongside health and well being objectives, addressed through informal recreation. This vision has been endorsed through the external funding received from the Edith Murphy Foundation.
- 4.7 Brocks Hill Budgets
  - Income is profiling as meeting and exceeding targets (although activities, courses and shop sales are weather dependant trends). New shop stock with adult and higher priced gifts has been positively received.
  - Running and development costs are being off-set by grants. For example, the Friends of Brocks Hill have been awarded £1500 from Charnwood Foods which will pay for materials for the dog-walking shelter, a need identified from customer consultation and the Friends Group.
  - Donations have increased due to the installation of an external donations post purchased by the Friends. This is financially tracked independently with income feeding back into the site budgets.

- Talks and tours are an area of growth with new talks on developments at Brocks Hill and Greening the Borough being positively received.
- Grants and donations from charitable trusts are offsetting costs and developments. A relationship has been established with the Edith Murphy Foundation following the initial donation of £25,000.
- Efficiency savings from wider procurement are reducing running costs of Brocks Hill, from site codes and Borough corporate codes.

4.8 Project Wild Thing is a film led movement to get more young people (and their parents) outside and reconnecting with nature. It has led to a growing movement of organisations and individuals who are championing children to be nature connected and to play outdoors. A collaboration and network has formed that includes the National Trust, RSPB, Play England, NHS Sustainable Development Unit, Woodland Trust and many others including local authorities and conservation agencies. This is now known as the Wild Network.

Children have never been more disconnected from the natural world. The roaming distance that children play from their home has shrunk by 90% in 30 years with time spent playing outside down 50% in just one generation. At the same time study after study shows time spent outside in nature increases happiness, health and wellbeing in children and adults.

In recent years the rapid spread of screen technology in homes and on mobile technologies, is also distracting from creative outdoor play. Project Wild Things concept is to initially swap screen time for some Wild Time.

Brocks Hill Country Park links:

- Brocks Hill's Country Park catchment is over 90% of the population of the Borough.
- It is a robust site for outdoor play, with natural play equipment, den building and meadows and woodlands to explore.
- With an existing family profile it is ideally placed to develop a role.
- We are increasingly being approached to deliver den building, bush craft and wild experiences within the Country Park.

It is recommended Oadby and Wigston Borough Council pledges support via the online form and forum to The Wild Network. Mailings would come to the Country Parks and Environment Manager and be distributed as appropriate. Pledging support would involve no cost.

## **5. Clean and Green Team**

5.1 The provision of a piece of public art/heritage interpretation involving railway wheels at Blaby Road Park is near completion. The four railway wheels will sit on rail track and sleepers on the fence at the Park. The installation will include plaques giving information about the history of the railway.

5.2 Area and street scene improvements include:

- Cleveland open space planted with daffodils and crocuses.
- Supporting volunteers with management and work on the Blind Garden and Garden Close, Oadby.
- Support of groups of Pride of the Borough volunteers across the Borough.
- Peace Memorial Park enhanced through shrubs being planted.

- Volunteer litter pickers around the borough help residents to take pride in their area.
- Borough signs troughs and hanging baskets planted with summer bedding.

5.3 As part of the Clean and Green team work each month transects are walked to assess conditions with regard to litter and also detritus (such as waste leaves). These transects include housing, retail and commercial areas; main and rural roads, other highways and recreation areas. This is assessed against national standards for cleanliness. These are the standards set for N195b (now redundant.)

- In April 2014, Litter grades were 90% A standard and the remainder at a B+ standard.
- In May 2014, Litter grades were 60% A standard, 37% B+ standard and 3% B standard.
- In April 2014 period for transects, the detritus grade achieved was A 30%, 60 % B+ and 10% B.
- In May 2014 period for transects, the detritus grade achieved was A 10%, 57% B+, 23% B, 7% b- and 3% C.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Financial	The above schemes can be met within budgetary provision
Risk	All projects will be risk assessed; CR1 : Decreasing Financial Resources CR8: Organisational Change
Equalities (KG)	Volunteering is intended to reach out and engage all communities within the Borough promoting community engagement and cohesion
Legal (KG)	Need to ensure all arrangements in place are formalised into contracts or agreements

## Appendix A: Pledge of Support Wild Network



The Wild Network exists to champion and support connection with nature and wildness in children and young people.

The Wild Network mission is to support children, parents and guardians of children to roam free, play wild and connect with nature.

We believe all children should have the right to access the outdoors for play, learning, expression and development of healthy mind and body.

We encourage, provoke, nudge, support, innovate and campaign for children, kids and young folk to get up and outside.

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To wander freely

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To look up and around

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To find wonder, awe and empathy in all life

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To nurture, steward and protect

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To run, jump, climb, crawl and explore the world on our doorsteps

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To seek imagination in wildness

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To find inventiveness in the woods.

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To grow happy healthy minds and bodies.

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To find comfort in solitude.

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To become truly connected.

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Roam Free. Play Wild.

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<b>Service Delivery Committee</b>	<b>8 July 2014</b>	<b>Update and Information</b>
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Title: **Local Partnership Group (LPG)**

Author: **Anita Pathak-Mould**  
Head of Community

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## 1 Introduction

Report for Services Delivery Committee on the progress of the Children's Centre Programme and the Locality Partnership Group across Oadby and Wigston

## 2 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the report.

## 3 Information

This Committee at its last meeting accepted the recommendation to oversee the governance of the Blaby, Oadby & Wigston LPG during its transitional period from April 2014 to March 2015.

The Blaby Oadby & Wigston LPG (BOW LPG) was set up in 2008 to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0-19.

There are currently 36,393 children aged between 0-19 years with 14,061 (38.6%) who live in Oadby and Wigston.

Funding was devolved to the BOW LPG by Leicestershire County Council, from its ring-fenced Sure Start grant, to commission services for children age range of 0-5s who currently number 8,328 with some 2,9212 (34.6%) living in the borough of Oadby and Wigston.

In 2010, the Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) funding for children aged 11 to 19 age group, along with Section 515 monies in 2012, was also devolved to the LPG and until now has been managed as a single funding stream covering both localities.

A range of partners representing 16 organisations/services, who work with children, and young people and parents, sit on the LPG and they are responsible for the identification of need in the locality, the commissioning of services to meet these needs and the scrutiny of the quality and impact of services provided.

Within Oadby and Wigston there are 3 children's areas (Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston) but only 2 children's centres, one in Wigston in Long Street and the other located within the South Leicestershire Bobbin factory building on Canal Street, South Wigston.

The Wigston children centre area serves the 2 reach areas of Wigston and Oadby and aims to reach out to a target population of 2002 children aged 0-5 years olds, whilst South Wigston centre serves and reaches out to some 901 in the same age group. The total 0-5 population of Oadby and Wigston is estimated at 2921.

Health Visitors now register all newborns with the Children's Centre Programme on their first visit if they haven't already been registered through "Tell Us Once". The Blaby, Oadby and Wigston programme has 77% of its 0-5 year old population registered but registration levels in Oadby and Wigston are higher than the wider locality at around 90%. Proportionally more under 2s are registered with the programme and we expect engagement levels to increase as these children reach 3 and 4.

The target for involvements (targeted work) is based around the numbers of children in poverty in the borough estimated at 368. The outturn figures for 2013-14 show we are working with 542 children of which some 100 (18.5%) of the children are under 5.

#### Locality Partnership Group (LPG)

The commissioning budget in this year (2014/15) allows for the commissioning of services to various ages and target groups even though it saw a reduction of 7%

Of the total commissioning budget, in 2014-15, £509,890 was allocated to commission local services to meet local need. This has resulted in some re-configuration and reductions in services that we commission in order to balance the budget.

Most services are commissioned across Blaby, Oadby and Wigston but all services report by Children's Centre reach and we are able to capture data on activity in each Borough/District. The main exception to the joint commissioning arrangement is Oadby and Wigston therapeutic support for children in domestic abuse households where Women's Aid are commissioned to support this group, whilst Blaby operate in-house programme as part of their wider service provision.

Attached at Appendix 1 are the services commissioned for the 2014/15 and there is now a complex Performance Framework issued to each of the commissioners for delivery of services which are both visited by LPG members and scored for quality and value for money.

LPG meetings will continue to run as joint events across Blaby Oadby and Wigston but performance reporting is now by District /Borough reflecting locality and the reach areas identified above. The chair of the LPG, to ensure both localities are equally covered, now rotates between Head of Community for Oadby and Wigston and by the Director of People in Blaby.

In order to ensure that local needs are met there will be needs analysis event run in September which will include Blaby but will be structured in such a way that each reach area will be covered separately. Therefore we will be able to identify needs in South Wigston, Oadby and Wigston specifically from partners themselves too.

## Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF)

The Local Partnership Group is also currently responsible for the Governance of Supporting Leicestershire Families programme and receives regular updates on progress is reported to this Council's SLF working Group which reports directly to full Council.

Members will be aware that SLF has seen its first year of completion and the following has been achieved in our locality

- Team recruited and operational by April 2013
- Council provided local co-location alongside Community Team officers
- An internal induction programme delivered by the SLF lead officer, Community and Safety Tenancy manager
- Support provided from HR on general office issues even though all SLF staff employed by County
- IT networks and other practical arrangements facilitated
- Attendance at the Meet and Greet programme and answered members queries
- Working practices and meetings established with key Housing and Community staff
- Assistance and close working and training on safeguarding issues
- Over

The following table shows what has been achieved by the locality as of end of March 2014

Supporting Leicestershire Families monitoring areas	Oadby and Wigston at March 2014	Leicestershire at March 2014	% of OWBC compared to Leicestershire
Number of SLF families being worked with	17	289	5.8%
Number of families monitored or assessed on the SLF programme	15	284	5.28%
Number of "complex" families	14	262	5.35%
Number of families "at risk"	1	20	5%
Assessment not complete enough to identify if family "complex" or "at risk"	0	2	0%
*Number of closed SLF cases	6	28	21.42%

### Glossary of above terms

Complex means 5 or more low risk issues or 2 or more high risk OR a child protection plan/reasonable cause for concern. At risk means 2 or more issues

Some examples of what issues fall within a category of:-

- Child Young person issues
  - Child has significant difficulties at or school and formal education
  - Children with violent or aggressive behaviour in the household
  - Child development concerns

- Risk of neglect or abuse to a child or children (Child protection plan)
- Parenting Issues
  - Difficulties looking after children
  - Lack of parenting is an issue in the family
  - Domestic abuse
- Individual Issues
  - Diagnosed mental health issues
  - Alcohol misuse
  - Drug misuse
  - At least one person of the family is or has been in care
- Family Risks
  - Family at risk of homelessness
  - Family in rent arrears
  - Family has financial difficulties
  - Family solely or heavily reliant on state benefits
  - Healthy lifestyle issues
- Influencing factors
  - Child has significant difficulties at school
  - One or more in family have a significant limiting disability
  - A teenager in the household is pregnant
  - Child is a carer
  - Single parent family

Attached at Appendix 2 are samples of case studies.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Equalities (KG)	An EIA assessment needs to be undertaken and clearly the protected category of age is the most relevant here. So the issue of accessibility of such service needs to be smooth, quick and easy.
Financial (PL)	The provision of SLF team in the locality is budgeted for in the 2014/5 budget. All commissioning work needs to be allocated and charged to appropriate budgets
Legal (KG)	It is recommended that any change in governance and working arrangements is secured by a robust agreement setting out terms and remit and reviewed by the Legal team.
Risk (APM)	CR1 Decreasing financial resources CR 4 Lack of credible governing body could lead to reputation risk CR6 Regulatory Governance



# APPENDIX 1

## **Services Commissioned by Blaby, Oadby and Wigston LPG**

- Speech and language for children aged under 3s through commissioning a 0.4 Speech and language therapist and full-time assistant.
- Home safety equipment supply and fitting for 62 households
- A full-time community outreach library worker focusing on early reading and communication with targeted families and an assistant for 1 day a week to run universal sessions in areas where don't have centres.
- A Change for Life Programme (a full-time physical activity officer and 1.5 lifestyle coaches to support overweight/obese children aged 0-8 and their families.
- Therapeutic support for children witnessing domestic abuse
- A post natal illness support project for mums and partners through Home Start
- A step-down home visiting service through Home Start
- First Aid for target families in each Children's Centre
- An additional Family Outreach Worker focusing on getting more children into 2 year and 3 year funded nursery places
- A crèche service to support access to groups
- Transport and community venues to improve access
- A transition for learning programme working with children in the foundation stage at school or in pre-schools in order to help more children to reach good level of development in the early year's foundation stage profile.
- Support for adult education in centres for parents e.g. crèche costs - skills for life, story sacks, craft, cooking on a budget.
- Teen parent outreach worker/project to help young parents move into education, training, employment
- A parent/carer volunteer coordinator to recruit, train and support parents as volunteers.

## APPENDIX 2

Service Delivery Committee 8 July 2014

Supporting Leicestershire Families

### Case Study 1

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Background	Agencies Involved	Outcomes
<p>Strengthening Families            14 years old with ADDH following anger, consuming excessive alcohol, management and criminal activity relating to anti social behaviour. Also have two other siblings, aged 12 and 11. Was previously reported to social care in 2011 (when child was 11). Child had become a ring leader and was attracting other young people and was put under a child protection plan in 2012</p>	<p>School,            Youth Offending Team            Police            Main focus of solutions were with family action plan and SLF key worker</p>	<p>Achievements of SLF intervention in last 10 Months            -Child has vastly improved            -mother is in employment            - mother has stated her stress levels are down            -Mother said - "I never thought child would get any better and behave. We are a much happier family now.            Younger son said 'you are the first person to ask us about us and not just ask about my brother who is always in trouble            Daughter said 'I can talk to you and I know you won't judge me or tell me I'm being silly'</p>
<p>Date intervention began –April 2013</p>		
<p>Date intervention ended- ongoing with low level support</p>		

## Case Study 2

Background	Agencies Involved	Outcomes
<p>Pregnant mother with several other older children not engaging with authorities and school attendance of children poor. Husband lost job, was drinking and not helping in the house, In a private rented property with poor conditions of property with high rent arrears facing an eviction notice.</p> <p>Mum was missing hospital appointments and numerous debts with threat of eviction and bailiff notices.</p> <p>Children had no set boundaries and did what they wanted to do and no set meals were provided form. 2 older children overweight and family dependant on state benefits.</p> <p>Dad had drinking problem</p>	<p>Home Start, SureStart, Schools and Housing Options team Midwife services NHS</p> <p>Referral also made to Christian Against Poverty</p>	<p>-Re-housed following financial appraisal and debts prioritised Attendance at school improved</p> <p>-Family budgeting</p> <p>-referred the family to SureStart – outreach worker</p> <p>Mum attending appointments,</p> <p>-Dad getting support for his drinking</p> <p>-Dad on parenting skills course so can help with homework, reading and cooking</p> <p>2 year old is enjoying her nursery placement</p> <p>-Communications in family improved</p> <p>-children have routines to follow</p>
Date intervention began –19 June 2013		
Date intervention ended –18 November 2013		

### Case Study 3

Background	Agencies Involved	Outcomes
<p>Mum with four children having moved to Leicester fleeing domestic violence from father of children in 2010</p> <p>Mum prescribed medication for depression and anxiety and got too ill to be effective</p> <p>She was also concerned about the impact her husband's violence may have had on the children, particularly on her middle son who would often answer back to his father. Whilst the two younger boys and her daughter had had opportunity for counselling she was worried her oldest son never talked about what had happened.</p> <p>The younger two boys had become increasingly angry, and could direct verbal and physical aggression at both their siblings and Mum. The neighbours had also complained about the levels of noise emanating from the house.</p> <p>Mum had lost control over children as she never carried though her own actions</p> <p>Money was always short and teenagers although on free school meals were always hungry</p> <p>School attendance poor</p>	<p>Mum had had a number of services involved (e.g. Women's Aid, NSPCC) primarily with herself since moving to Leicester and was worried that if these services closed she would not have any support. Despite several contacts with Children's Social Care the family had never met the threshold for support</p> <p>School liaison team</p> <p>Financial support services</p>	<p>-Mum encouraged to see GP and take medication</p> <p>-“Living With Teenagers” course attended by mum helped with managing teenagers and uphold sanctions and manage behaviour</p> <p>- Mum's mental health has improved significantly. She is taking regular exercise (walking) and eating regularly. She feels better able to manage the boys' behaviour and able to follow-through on sanctions. She has secured part-time employment as a care-worker and, following a positive outcome from the divorce settlement and has been provisionally offered a mortgage.</p>
Date intervention began –May 2013		
Date intervention ended –June 2014		



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**8 July 2014**

**Matter for Decision**

Title: **Improvements to town centre car parks.**

Author: Anne Court – Director of Services

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The annual capital programme includes a project 'Car Park Enforcement Improvements' with an allocated budget of £32K.
- 1.2 The aims of the project are to purchase and install ticket machines in all town centre car parks (except South Wigston) and require all drivers to obtain a free timed tickets to enable easier enforcement of 3 hour parking thereby allowing the reduction of enforcement officer time and creating a saving.
- 1.3 A report explaining the above aims in more depth was approved by Service Delivery Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2013.
- 1.4 Since that time further research has been undertaken that indicates that capital costs of implementing the project are likely to be around £12k more than the budget allocation and lead to a significant and on-going increase in revenue costs which cannot be compensated for in the savings in enforcement officer time.
- 1.5 In addition the project does not address the infrastructure problems or complaints relating to town centre car parks which are:
  - Poor surfaces and pot holes
  - Condition of bay markings and directional arrows
  - Unclear (and in some cases missing) signage
  - Missing height barriers

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the capital project 'Car Park Enforcement Improvements' no longer goes ahead and that members divert the money to a scheme that improves the infrastructure of the town centre car parks as set in 3.7 below.

## **3 Information**

### **3.1 Current operation of car parks:**

- 3.1.1 There are 8 town centre car parks; 3 in Oadby and 5 in Wigston. (There is no enforcement of off street parking in South Wigston and no proposal to change this arrangement).
- 3.1.2 Parking is free for up to 3 hours in white marked bays. In car parks where there are blue marked bays (1 in Oadby; 2 in Wigston) drivers can park over three hours by purchasing a ticket from a machine at the current cost of £2.70.

- 3.1.3 There are 5 existing solar powered ticket machines – 2 in Sandhurst Street, Oadby, 2 in Aylestone Lane, Wigston and 1 in Paddock Street, Wigston. Each machine requires a roll of tickets, battery (as back-up), data card and a phone line. The data card collects information and sends it via the phone line to 'Cale Web', which can be accessed by council staff.

### **3.2 Ticket machine maintenance:**

- 3.2.1 In 2013-14 the 5 machines cost £2,130 in repairs and maintenance
- 3.2.2 Some repairs can be carried out by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) For example battery failure, run out of tickets, cash box not inserted correctly etc.
- 3.2.3 There is a loss of income until faults can be rectified.
- 3.2.4 There is no maintenance contract and therefore obtaining an engineer can take up to a week.
- 3.2.5 CEOs are unable to enforce blue (long stay) bays when a machine breaks down until a repair is carried out.

### **3.3 Current Enforcement:**

- 3.3.1 This council has a Service Level Agreement with Harborough District Council to provide enforcement officers (CEOs) and 'purchases' 1 full time equivalent officer in terms of enforcement hours.
- 3.3.2 There are 2.5 full time CEOs operating in the Borough; Leicestershire County Council (LCC) use the remaining time for enforcing on-street parking.
- 3.3.3 In 2013/14 this council paid Harborough District Council £47,957 for enforcement hours including on costs.
- 3.3.4 In 2014/15 this is predicted to be £43,000 which takes into consideration the reduction in purchased enforcement hours in line with the capital project proposal (from 1 April 2014 enforcement hours were reduced from 2 FTEs to 1FTE) but also includes an increase in other areas such as back office costs.
- 3.3.5 LCC operates the Notice Processing Unit. Anyone receiving a penalty notice pays the County Council and then LCC pay back to this council the income from off street penalties minus an administration fee.
- 3.3.6 Currently some areas of car parks cannot be enforced as the blue bay markings are fading and it is ambiguous whether a bay is painted white or blue. This is an ongoing issue as blue lining appears to wear more quickly. CEOs have been advised (temporarily) not to enforce in these specific areas as there is a cost to processing penalty notices whether the notice is upheld or quashed.

### **3.4 Original Capital Project:**

- 3.4.1 The aim of the capital project as approved was to change the system so that all car park users obtain and display a valid ticket whether paid (over 3 hours) or free (up to 3 hours).
- 3.4.2 The following costs would be incurred in implementing this scheme:

<b>CAPITAL COSTS</b>	
Re-configure 5 existing ticket machines to enable them to produce free tickets	£11,745
Purchase and installation of 7 new machines	£17,325
Renewal of all car park signage to take account of need for free ticket	£8,500
Re-lining of car parks where required (blue and white)	£8,000
3G set up charge (7 machines)	£180
An advertising campaign would need to be carried out to ensure drivers understand the need for a free ticket.	£300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£46,050</b> (allocated capital budget = £32k)
<b>REVENUE COSTS of machines (on-going)</b>	
Annual 3G charge (12 machines)	£1,224
Annual Cale WebOffice charges (12 machine)	£1,980
Ticket rolls	£2,500 (conservative estimate assuming no abuse – see below)
Maintenance ('Gold' contract year 2 onwards)	£5,760
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£11,646</b> (only approx £4k of this has been included within the 14/15 revenue budget)

3.4.3 There is a possibility that income from the issue of penalty notices might initially increase if the project goes ahead; this is likely to be from people who are unaware that they need a free ticket and are caught out by not being aware of the changes.

3.4.4 There is no provision within the project to undertake repairs to car park surfaces nor for the re-installation of height barriers that have been used in some areas in the past but are now all missing. There is no budget allocation elsewhere to cover these matters.

3.4.5 All machines would have the ability to take money in case this became an option in the future but there would be an additional cost to re-configure machines for this.

### **3.5 Advantages of implementing the original capital project**

3.5.1 CEOs would only need to make one visit to a car park to catch overstayers as the free ticket would be timed. Currently two visits are required; the first to log the vehicle and the second is an enforcement visit.

- 3.5.2 Reduction in cost of enforcement from two full time equivalent staff to one full time equivalent. (This is approx £9k which is reduced officer time but includes an increase in other overheads)
- 3.5.3 Potential for increased income in penalty notices because everyone needs a ticket and some people may not be aware of this.

### **3.6 Disadvantages of implementing the original capital project**

- 3.6.1 Increased revenue costs due to increase in number of machines and every car requiring a ticket (see table above).
- 3.6.2 Increased maintenance costs; 12 machines rather than 5
- 3.6.3 Greater wear and tear on machines due to increased use therefore more potential for breakdowns.
- 3.6.4 Increase in number of phone calls to council administration staff if a machine breaks down from an increased number of car park users who are unable to obtain a ticket.
- 3.6.5 Greater chance of loss of income and enforcement ability when a machine breaks down – where there is only one machine in a car park enforcement cannot take place on overstaying until the machine is repaired. (CEOs cannot revert to 2 x visits a day as this would be grounds for appeal as the method of enforcement would not comply with the car park signage)
- 3.6.6 Retention of blue bays is a problem for people who are colour blind (Penalty notices can be overturned on these grounds)
- 3.6.7 Potential for adverse publicity; why the need for a ticket when parking is free?
- 3.6.8 There is no evidence that costs will be reduced or income increased.
- 3.6.9 Increase in time taken by CEOs to check machines at the beginning of a shift (more machines over a wider area) leading to reduction in time available for enforcement).
- 3.6.10 Increased time to deal with re-charging batteries reducing time available for enforcement.
- 3.6.11 Blaby District Council introduced a similar scheme a few years ago. They initially experienced misuse of machines once people realised they could just press a button to obtain a ticket. They found machines had been emptied of tickets overnight and that sticky tickets were plastered around their car parks. In order to 'design this out' the costs in the table at 3.4.2 include for machines where a car registration number is required in order to obtain a ticket; machines can be configured to stop issuing tickets after 6pm. There is only £100 difference in the cost of new machines to enable them to take car registration numbers but upgrading the old machines is considerably more expensive (approx £1,500 per machine more). Blaby has since introduced charges in the majority of their car parks.

### **3.7 Alternative scheme**



3.7.1 An alternative to the agreed capital scheme would be to divert the capital allocation to improve the infrastructure of the town centre car parks and address known problems as set out in the table below:

<b>Capital costs</b>	
Continue with the existing arrangements whereby all car parks are free for up to 3 hours (no ticket required) with 3 car parks remaining long stay on purchase of ticket.	No cost
Re-surface areas where there are pot holes.	£7,500
Line all bays in white	£7,000
Improve and simplify signage	£7,500
Install missing height barriers (to include Willow Park car park)	£13,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	£34,000 (slightly above allocated budget of £32k)
<b>Revenue costs</b>	
Ticket rolls/web support/phone lines/3G connectivity to 5 existing machines	Already budgeted for within revenue budget
Maintenance contract on 5 machines	£2,450 (this is cheaper than call out and parts charged for in 2013-14)
<b>TOTAL</b>	£2,450 additional revenue budget required (could be dealt with by a virement)

3.7.2 Enforcement time was reduced to 1 x FTE from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 in line with the original capital project. There is no proposal to increase this.

3.7.3 The opportunity exists to direct CEO time which does not appear to have actively happened in the past. For example, there was a 26% increase in the number of penalty notices issued in April 2014 over April 2013 by directing CEO to problematic areas despite enforcement time being reduced from the beginning of April.

### 3.8 Ticket income from long stay parking.

The income from drivers staying over three hours who purchase a ticket is unlikely to change significantly whichever scheme is implemented.

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### Background Papers:-

1. Report to Service Delivery Committee, 24 September 2014, Off Street Parking Arrangements.

<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (CR)	It is important that both the capital and revenue budgets are not exceeded. The new proposal should ensure this while increasing the Council's ability to enforce its current car parking policy by improving the facilities.
Risk	See financial
Equalities (KG)	An EIA needs to be undertaken to consider the impact on the most vulnerable and consideration needs to be given to minimising any negative impacts that may be identified, for

	example the elderly, disabled, pregnancy & maternity etc.
Legal (KG)	The relevant traffic orders will need be reviewed and if required changes will be applied through the proper processes.



**Service Delivery  
Committee**

**8 July 2014**

**Matter for Decision**

Title: **Scale of Charges for Bowls Club**

Author: Anne Court – Director of Services

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## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 There are three bowls clubs in the Borough that play on bowling greens owned and managed by the Council – Oadby Bowls Club at Ellis Park, Wigston Bowls Club at Peace Memorial Park and South Wigston Bowls Club at Blaby Road Park.
- 1.2 Anyone wishing to play through these clubs needs to purchase a season ticket from the council.
- 1.3 The council makes a charge of £20.50 each time a visiting team plays a match against one of the above clubs. There has been a request from the Bowls Clubs that the visiting team fee is removed.

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Members decide whether the visiting team fee is removed from 1 April 2015.

## **3 Information**

- 3.1 Wigston Bowls Club has approached the council asking why a charge is made for visiting teams. They feel that they are unable to pass this charge on to visiting clubs as, if they did, visiting teams would choose not to play Wigston and therefore there would be no matches.
- 3.2 Quarterly liaison meetings are held with Oadby and South Wigston Bowls Clubs both of whom have verbally expressed the same sentiments.
- 3.3 In order to pay the visiting team charge the clubs raise money themselves by various means; South Wigston ask those people selected to play in a match for a 'donation' of £3 each to cover the charge, Wigston and Oadby clubs raise the money through donations for refreshments that their members provide.
- 3.4 Research has been undertaken with other local authority run bowling greens and no other authority has yet been found that makes a charge for visiting teams.
- 3.5 As bowls season ticket holders have already paid for a season ticket bowls members feel that splitting the charge made for visiting teams between themselves or making donations towards the cost of visiting teams is, in effect, increasing the cost of their season ticket.
- 3.6 Income from visiting teams for 2014-15 is expected to be £1,490.
- 3.7 For information season ticket prices charged by other local authorities in Leicestershire are given below:

<b>Council</b>	<b>Charge</b>
Oadby and Wigston	£81.70 with Leisure Card £84.50 without Leisure Card
Leicester City	£78.00
Hinckley & Bosworth	£77.00 (reduced to £54 for over 60s)
Harborough	£71.30
Blaby, Melton, Charnwood, North West Leics	Bowls dealt with at parish level

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**Background Papers:-**

<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (CR)	Reduction in income of approximately £1,500 per year
Risk (CR)	CR1 – Decreasing Financial Resources
Equalities (KG)	No implications
Legal (KG)	No implications



<b>Service Delivery Committee</b>	<b>8 July 2014</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>
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**Title: Adoption of Terms of Reference for Task Groups**

**Author: Mark Hall – Chief Executive**

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## 1. Introduction

This report requests the consideration and adoption of the appended terms of reference documents for the Greening of the Borough and Health and Wellbeing Board.

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee considers and adopts the terms of reference documents for the Greening of the Borough and Health and Wellbeing Board, which are appended to this report as Appendix 1 and 2 respectively.

## 3. Information

3.1 On 29 April 2014, the Council adopted the recommendations of the 'Evolving the Council's Governance' report.

3.2 As part of that report it was agreed that a review of all existing Working Groups should take place early in 2014/15 to assess their relevance, if they are still needed and if so to revisit and firm up their purpose, terms of reference, reporting lines, relationships to other groups (to prevent silo working), frequency of meetings (which would be published in the annual Calendar), and membership.

3.3 The attached terms of reference are based on a standard format and incorporate the key outcomes that have been discussed and agreed by each respective Task Group.

3.4 At the time of this Committee meeting, the new Waste Task Group has not met and so terms of reference for that Task Group will be brought to the next meeting of this Committee on 21 October 2014.

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### **Background Papers:- Evolving The Council's Governance – 29 April 2014**

<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	No significant implications
Risk	CR6; Regulatory Governance
Equalities (KG)	An EIA needs to be undertaken in respect of each working group
Legal (KG)	No significant implications

# Greening of the Borough Working Group - Terms of Reference

## 1. Purpose and Remit of the Group

- a. To provide overall guidance and direction on policy issues and outcomes
- b. To agree draft outcomes, which for the Greening of the Borough Working Group are:
  - Improve the quality of the green environment within the borough, including the creation of areas of significant interest and enhancement of the biodiversity interest.
  - Provide better access to this environment and opportunities for all to be a part of the aspirations of the Strategy for more environmentally sustainable lifestyle choices and practices.
  - Promote, support, and encourage residents (of all ages and abilities), groups and businesses to contribute, through volunteering and partnership projects, to improving the green environment of the borough in a manner appropriate to their needs and aspirations.
    - c. To review progress in delivering these outcomes and work with officers to embed aims and activities into mainstream work of the authority.
    - d. The terms of reference of this working group would be redefined once aims of the action plan have been mainstreamed and thus the group time defined.
    - e. To act as a sounding board for the officers for major projects and outcomes.
    - f. To give guidance on solutions that will resolve any inconsistencies in policy or outcomes
    - g. To ensure that the outcomes are achieved

## 2. Membership

- a. 8 members will be appointed to the Working Group at the Annual General Meeting each municipal year consisting solely of elected councillors
- b. The membership of the Working Group, wherever possible, will reflect the political representation of the Council as a whole.

### **3. Accountability and Duration**

- a. As a minimum, the Lead Officer will meet with the Chairman of the Task Group at least two weeks prior to the Task Group meeting
- b. The Chairman of the Working Group is Councillor David Carter
- c. The Lead Officer is the Country Parks and Environment Manager
- d. The Lead Officer will be supported by the Director of Services and the Chief Executive
- e. It is expected that the Working Group will exist for at least the 2014/15 municipal year
- f. The Working Group will report to Service Delivery Committee at least twice each municipal year.
- g. The Working Group will be cease when the outcomes have been completed.

### **4. Working Methods**

- a. The agenda and supporting papers for meetings will normally be circulated electronically at least five clear days before the date of the meeting.
- b. These terms of reference will be reviewed, and if necessary, updated at least annually.
- c. The minutes of the meeting will be provided to the Chairman of the Working Group in a timely manner.
- d. An action list will be drawn up following the meeting and provided to the Chairman with the minutes.

## **Health and Wellbeing Board - Terms of Reference**

### **1. Purpose and Remit of the Group**

- a. To provide overall guidance and direction on policy issues and outcomes.
- b. To agree draft outcomes, which for the Health & Well Being Board are:
  - 1. Respond to the health needs and priorities identified for the borough.
  - 2. Act as the central coordinating body for health improvement across the borough.
  - 3. Engage in partnership working throughout the borough based on clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the different organisations .
  - 4. Encourage residents to choose a healthy lifestyle and stay healthy by utilising existing council facilities and services.
- c. To review the progress in delivering these outcomes.
- d. To act as a sounding board for the officers.
- e. To give guidance on solutions that will resolve any inconsistencies in policy or outcomes.
- f. To ensure that the outcomes are achieved

### **2. Membership**

- a. 8 members will be appointed to the Board at the Annual General Meeting each municipal year consisting solely of elected councillors
- b. The membership of the Board, wherever possible, will reflect the political representation of the Council as a whole.

### **3. Accountability and Duration**

- a. As a minimum, the Lead Officer will meet with the Chairman of the Board at least two weeks prior to the Board meeting
- b. The Chairman of the Working Group is Councillor John Boyce
- c. The Lead Officer is the Head of Community
- d. It is expected that the Board will exist for at least the 2014/15 municipal year



- e. The Board will report to Service Delivery Committee at least twice each municipal year.
- f. The Board will cease when the outcomes have been completed.

#### **4. Working Methods**

- a. The agenda and supporting papers for meetings will normally be circulated electronically at least five clear days before the date of the meeting.
- b. These terms of reference will be reviewed, and if necessary, updated at least annually.
- c. The minutes of the meeting will be provided to the Chairman of the Board in a timely manner.
- d. An action list will be drawn up following the meeting and provided to the Chairman with the minutes.

# Agenda Item 18



Service Delivery Committee	8 JULY 2014	Decision
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Title: SERVICE CHARTERS

Author: **Anne Court, Director of Services and Monitoring Officer**

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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1. At the meeting of this committee on 21 January 2014, proposed service delivery Charters for the Council's service areas were approved together with performance to date. The Charters have since been published on the Council's website.
- 1.2 The above meeting requested that this committee be kept updated where promised performance standards have not been met.
- 1.3 This report also includes as an Appendix a further service delivery Charter for the Brocks Hill Country Park for members approval

## 2. Recommendations

That members':

- 2.1 consider the proposed service delivery Charter for the Brocks Hill Country Park
- 2.2 note the performance standards that have not met the set target as reported at paragraph 3 of this report and the reasons why this has been.

## 3 Information

- 3.1. The performance standards that have not been fully met for the Community service area have been reported separately within the Delivery of Housing Revenue Account report at Agenda Item 9.
- 3.2 The other service areas whose performance standards which are very slightly below the set targets are as follows:-

Corporate Resources - "respond in full to all Freedom of Information (FOI) requests within the statutory twenty working days." The response rate is currently running at 96% (April to June 2014). Of the 128 FOI requests received, 5 were delayed due to the complexity of the requests

Financial Services - "ensure that a minimum of 98% of all suppliers and other creditors are paid within 30 days of receipt of the invoice or within the agreed payment terms" This is currently running at 97% principally due to a large number of utility invoices that have to be reissued after eg the meter readings being challenged with the utility company.

Financial Services – “We will ensure that all sundry debtors are raised within 7 days of receipt of requests from departments” This has been achieved for 98% of all invoice requests to date in 2014/15, the actual numbers are small and are for various reasons eg VAT queries.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Financial (PL)	The Charters inform the financial planning process and ultimately the setting of the budgets year to year
Risk (AC)	CR1 –decreasing financial resources;CR2 supplier/partner failure
Equalities (AC)	The Council’s services are accessible to all
Legal (AC)	The Council is required to provide as a minimum, services that are a statutory requirement

## SERVICE DELIVERY

### Brocks Hill Customer Charter

#### What we do

Most of the activities undertaken by the Brocks Hill Country Park and Centre team are customer focused and outward facing, delivering front line services to the residents, businesses and visitors of the Borough from across the County.

Services delivered include activities such as:

- work to manage and enhance the natural environment of the Borough and Brocks Hill Country Park, increasing visitor understanding of, appreciation, and access to the wider natural environment;
- supporting environmental and community volunteering, including support of Borough-wide programmes such as Pride of the Borough, corporate team building for local business, and community empowerment, such as developing the Friends of Brocks Hill group;
- supporting educational visits and opportunities, lifelong learning and projects that support Leicestershire Families across broad environmental themes, with a particular focus on reconnecting to the natural environment;
- providing a community hub and focus for cultural activities, including family events, youth and community projects throughout the year;
- working in partnership to champion biodiversity and improve the environment of the Borough, enhancing the landscape and wildlife value;
- working to encourage greater activity and outdoor visits for all ages addressing health and well-being issues;
- delivery of the Brocks Hill vision to aspire to become recognised as Leicestershire's premier country park and centre for natural history and the environment that the whole borough embraces and enjoys.

#### Our link to the Council's Corporate Priorities

Brocks Hill directly contributes to four of the Council's Corporate Priorities,

##### Corporate Priority 1

Protect the good, quality, consistent, value for money front line services to residents – *particularly weekly refuse and recycling collections.*

##### Corporate Priority 2

Enhance the green environment of the Borough so that residents are able to take full advantage of it.

##### Corporate Priority 6

Work smarter to deliver the efficiency savings required to meet the continuing budget cuts.

##### Corporate Priority 7

Improve the health and well being of our residents.

The Brocks Hill team's countryside management of sites also contributes to site improvement works, that improves safety and thus to a lesser degree supports **Corporate Priority 4: Work with the Police to create a safer Borough where people feel comfortable and at ease.**

**Our promises to our customers and our service delivery against those promises (performance in italics)**

- 1. We will maintain natural open spaces, so that they are pleasant and safe places to visit.**
  - *We will work to ensure all natural open spaces are managed to benefit wildlife and people. We will develop work programmes and management plans with colleagues and partners, alongside an increase in volunteering opportunities, to help us achieve this.*
  - *We will work to enhance interpretation (where appropriate on site) and provide relevant information, through neighbourhood outlets and at events, so as to raise awareness and develop more opportunities for engagement with residents about our natural open spaces.*
  - *We will work with, and maintain regular dialogue, with the local police, OWBC colleagues and neighbourhood agencies, so that anti-social behaviour (where occurring) is addressed promptly.*
  - *The team will work to attract external funding, where possible, to ensure the most efficient use of core budgets for delivery of site improvements and biodiversity projects.*
  
- 2. We will operate our services with full consultation with stakeholders, users and appropriate forum, making sure the public's voice is considered within our service delivery.**
  - *We will maintain communications to the wider public, via the media, public notice boards, Letterbox and the Brocks Hill free newsletters. We will launch social media platforms for Brocks Hill Country Park Summer 2014.*
  - *In 2014 we will update site feedback forms for visitors to Brocks Hill and develop feedback forms for our school visits and events.*
  - *We will hold a bi-annual consultation forum meeting for Brocks Hill. Where other major projects are developed public meetings will be considered.*
  - *In late 2014 we will launch a public profile for the Greening of the Borough Strategy.*
  - *We will address areas of concern to our visitors where ever possible, working with appropriate partners and agencies. In 2014 we will look to establish simple control order guidance with regard to some areas of anti-social behaviour such as dog fouling, overnight camping and fly tipping.*
  
- 3. We will provide high quality, affordable events for all ages, taking feedback and developing services accordingly for all activities**
  - *Centred at Brocks Hill Country Park, the team will develop events for all ages that aim to inspire and foster an awareness of the natural environment, generate new skills and encourage creativity, working in partnership wherever possible to make effective use of available budgets.*
  - *The team will maintain and develop holiday activities for families.*

- *In 2014 we will develop events that centre on the multi-cultural calendar.*
  - *Working in partnership with local naturalist groups in 2014-15 new natural history identification courses will be developed for adults.*
- 4. We will maintain and enhance the formal education offer to schools and educational institutions, developing closer links to those establishments within the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council area.**
- *The Brocks Hill site provides educational packages to Leicestershire schools, with between 1,200 and 1,500 pupils visiting. We will seek to increase visits, opportunities and numbers.*
  - *Enquiries from schools will be dealt with within 5 working days and opportunities developed that meet their needs wherever possible.*
  - *Feedback will be gained from all school visits and from teacher consultation to ensure we deliver an appropriate and quality experience that fosters and encourages repeat visits.*
  - *We will develop new educational opportunities for schools and college partners, to meet citizenship and enrichment agendas, as well as opportunities that assist in completion of identified projects on sites.*
- 5. We will enhance the volunteering opportunities offered within the team and across the Borough's natural open spaces.**
- *We will respond to requests for volunteering in a timely and efficient manner and enhance links to Voluntary Action Leicestershire for recruitment and promotion.*
  - *We will offer new volunteering opportunities within the natural environment and Brocks Hill Centre that meet the priorities of the Greening of the Borough Strategy.*
  - *We will support the Tree Warden network on behalf of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council with quarterly meetings, training, information and support to develop appropriate projects.*
  - *We will develop more corporate volunteering opportunities, so local business can support local developments within the Borough.*
- 6. We will maintain national standards at Brocks Hill**
- *Maintain Brocks Hill Country Park to Green Flag standard as part of embedded working practice (annual award, now held for eight years).*
  - *Maintain Brocks Hill Country Park to Natural England Country Park standards as part of embedded working practice (awarded 2014).*
- 7. We will provide facilities at Brocks Hill Country Park and Centre that are fit for purpose and available for community use**
- *We will support local access to the Centre through discounted room hire to local people.*
  - *We will work during 2014/15 to increase opening hours at the Centre, through the development of the café with a new service provider.*
  - *We will ensure facilities are clean, welcoming and provide a hub of activity for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council including multi-culture and community focussed events.*

- *We commit to a quality and efficient service delivery with regard to customer contact, with all correspondence handled within 5 working days.*
  - *We will work to promote Brocks Hill as a tourism destination and attractive small conference venue.*
  - *We will increase visitor enjoyment of the natural environment and Brocks Hill Centre by enhancing the facilities.*
- 8. We will work with colleagues and partners to offer the greatest range of opportunities and experience at Brocks Hill, meeting new agendas and developing audience opportunity in partnership with others**
- *The team will strive to explore new projects and opportunities working with colleagues from within Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and other agencies to offer the best opportunities to local residents, making the most efficient use of budgets and opportunities available.*
  - *In Summer 2014 a new partnership to deliver Forest School programmes at Brocks Hill will be developed with Woodlark Forest Schools.*
- 9. We will work to provide as wide a range of healthy living opportunities, as possible, using natural open spaces**
- *Working with colleagues and external partners we will work to develop and support opportunities that use natural open spaces to offer informal leisure opportunities and promote out-door exercise that is appropriate to the natural environment. This will include walking, conservation volunteering and targeted activity with groups.*
  - *The Brocks Hill team will look to develop greater signage and information for activities within the Country Park for self-led walks and routes around the site.*
  - *We will develop opportunities in partnership that promote healthy living and lifestyle and help meet the health and well being agenda of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. These will include the Young at Heart Day and sponsored walks at Brocks Hill. We will also work with sectors that recognise the benefits to mental health and wider health and well being benefits from outdoor activity and quiet reflection in the countryside.*
- 10. We will work to help improve and green the Borough**
- *We will support Pride of the Borough in their local work and entry to East Midlands in Bloom competition, encouraging developments that also support the Greening of the Borough Strategy and Town Centre improvements.*

## **COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS**

The site provides feedback forms for visitors and takes note of comments passed to Front of House staff. The nature of **complaints** documented relates to incidents with dogs, equipment closed for repair, or events restricting access to the exhibition hall. Some neighbours have commented on work done, or perceived need for management work. All are dealt with by the team, but generally relate to day to day running. To allow more dialogue a bi-annual consultation forum has been established. 19 complaints were recorded 2013-2014

**Compliments** are received in the same way and via visitors seeing staff on site. Recent developments and improvements, school visits and activities have all generated feedback. Front line staff have been praised for helpfulness. 73 compliments were recorded 2013-2014.





<b>Service Delivery Committee</b>	<b>8 July 2014</b>	<b>Matter for Information</b>
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Title: **Corporate Enforcement Update**

Author: **Kalv Garcha - Head of Corporate Resources**

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## **1 Introduction**

The Corporate Enforcement Team was set up to ensure that best value and efficient working was taking place in respect of all enforcement areas within the Borough of Oadby & Wigston. Since its creation, a consultation exercise has been undertaken in respect of all Council regulatory services and a uniform and consistent procedure has been mapped out with regards to reporting and prioritising. There is also a draft Corporate Enforcement and Prosecution Policy, which is still being worked on and that which will be presented to the Policy, Finance & Development Committee on 22 July 2014.

## **2 Recommendations**

To note the contents of the report which is presented for information only.

## **3 Information**

The intention behind the creation of the Corporate Enforcement Team was so as to ensure that all intelligence collected by various Officers under various legislations, were all brought together under the radar of the Corporate Enforcement team. With this in mind, the Council's Solicitor, who leads on Corporate Enforcement, would be best prepared to be able to advise the Corporate Enforcement Officer and the Corporate Enforcement team on priority investigations and order of enforcement, to assist in the order and ranking of prosecution cases. For example, where one property was the subject matter of several complaints, under several differing regulatory regimes, the Solicitor would be able to advise on the ranking and order of which case to be tried before court first, so as to ensure maximum benefit and impact in obtaining the required output and result.

Moreover, in having one central Corporate Enforcement team, would alleviate any duplication of work by one service area of the Council and all intelligence would be captured across the Council. In essence, the Council now will now have in place, a cohesive complaint handling and recording system with a Council wide unity in the way formal enforcement action is considered and actioned, which naturally involves information sharing between the relevant service areas.

The Corporate Enforcement Team is led by the Solicitor in conjunction with the Corporate Enforcement Officer. Each regulatory service area has nominated an Officer who attends the Corporate Enforcement Team meetings which are held every 6 weeks. There is also engagement with external agencies via the Joint Action Group (JAG) meetings namely the Police. See 'Appendix A' for a list of cases already investigated for the purpose of corporate enforcement.

Below is a list of some of the Acts of Parliament (as amended) (this list is not exhaustive) under which the Corporate Enforcement team carries out investigatory work and wherever appropriate prosecutions:

- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and 1982
- Housing Acts 1985, 1998, 1996 and 2004
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Food Safety Act 1990
- Social Security Administration Act 1992
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and 2011
- The Fraud Act 2006

It is recognised that as a Council we have been reticent in pursuing offences by way of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) particularly in respect of household waste, litter and other environmental offences, pursuant to the Clean Neighbourhoods Act 2005, owing to the lack of available Officer resources and lack of training. This is now going to be an area that is actively trained upon and proactively pursued so as to ensure that the Borough of Oadby & Wigston is free from unsightly and unattractive environmental offences. This will also add to assist the Greening of the Borough Strategy where volunteers will also receive training on environmental offences, who are then able to provide credible first hand evidence when such offences are commissioned. The Corporate Enforcement Team will work closely with the Country parks and Environment Manager, in this regard in relation to volunteer participation.

Compliance with a consistent practice and procedure will give service areas and their respective teams the confidence to share information and intelligence with a view to improving the overall enforcement actions taken by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and take collective responsibility. The spirit of the Corporate Enforcement team will also work in pursuit of at least three of the Council's corporate priorities namely (1) to work with the Police to create a safer Borough where people feel comfortable and at ease, (2) improve the health and well being of our residents, by controlling dog fouling as well as (3) enhancing the green environment of the Borough so that residents are able to take full advantage of it, by ensuring litter is dealt with by FPN's.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Equalities (CA)	None

Financial (PL)	There have been a significant number of cases where successful prosecutions have achieved a reimbursement of the Council's costs in full.
Legal (CA)	It is prudent that strict statutory time limits are met and complied with so as to ensure that the Council is not time barred.
Risk (CA)	CR4 – Reputation damage; CR6 - Regulatory Governance

**Background papers –**

Appendix A – List of cases investigated by the Corporate Enforcement Officer.

**Corporate Enforcement Investigations**

**APPENDIX A**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Site/Address</u>	<u>Case Description</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Contact Initials</u>	<u>Case Status</u>
10/10/13		Trespass on Council Land	Corporate	GR	Ongoing
14/11/13		Unsuitable for habitation	EHO	PF	Resolved
15/11/13		Food production issues	EHO	HM	Resolved
21/11/13		Tenancy breach	Housing,	DT	
		Unsociable behaviour	ASB	FB	
		Breach of peace	Police	HD	Resolved
03/12/13		Damage to Council land	Corporate	BK	Resolved
16/12/13	N/A	Taxi Inspections	Licensing	AW	Resolved
21/12/14	N/A	Taxi Inspections	Licensing	AW	Resolved
30/12/13		Numerous issues of concern	Benefit Fraud	PP	
		Unsociable behaviour	ASB	FB	
		Unlicensed scrap dealer	Licensing	AW	
		Harassment/Assault	Police	HD	Resolved
16/01/14		Tenancy breach	Housing	DT	
		Unsociable behaviour	ASB	FB	
		Breach of peace	Police	HD	Ongoing
27/01/14		Tenancy breach	Corporate	GR	Ongoing
27/01/14		Intimidation	Housing	DT	Resolved
31/01/14		Fly tipping	Clean	MR	Resolved
18/02/14		Breach building regulations	B/Control	SP	Ongoing
18/03/14		Council tax issue	Council Tax	PR	Resolved
21/03/14		Benefit issue	Benefits	DW	Resolved
21/03/14		Vehicle repairs in street	Clean	DB	Resolved
03/04/14		Vehicle sales in street	Licensing	AW	
			Clean	DB	Resolved
03/04/14		Vehicle sales in street	Licensing	AW	
			Clean	DB	Resolved

07/04/14		Non-payment of rent	Finance	CR	Resolved
14/04/14		Fly tipping	Clean	MR	Resolved
28/04/14		Encroaching onto Council property	Housing	DT	Ongoing
30/04/14		Neglected house	EHO	MR	Ongoing
06/05/14		Community Safety		SP	Resolved
07/05/14		Unsociable behaviour	ASB	FB	Ongoing
		Harassment	Police	HD	Ongoing
07/05/14		Interview Under Caution	Licensing	AW	Resolved
14/05/14		Community Safety		SP	Ongoing
30/05/14		Land ownership	Legal	GR	Ongoing
05/06/14		Land Ownership	Legal	DB	Ongoing
05/06/14		Interview Under Caution	Licensing	AW	Resolved

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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