



#### TO COUNCILLOR:

G S Atwal  
E R Barr  
L A Bentley  
G A Boulter  
J W Boyce

Mrs K M Chalk  
M L Darr  
B Dave  
R F Eaton  
R E Fahey

D A Gamble (Vice-Chair)  
J Kaufman  
Dr T K Khong  
Mrs S B Morris (Chair)  
R E R Morris

Dear Councillor *et al*

I hereby **SUMMON** you to attend a meeting of the **POLICY, FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** to be held at the **COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON** on **TUESDAY, 25 JULY 2017** at **7.00 PM** for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Council Offices  
Wigston  
**17 July 2017**

**Mark Hall**  
Chief Executive

#### ITEM NO.

#### AGENDA

#### PAGE NO'S

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Appointment of Substitutes**

To appoint substitute Members in accordance with Rule 4 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

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

**4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 28 March 2017**

**1 - 11**

To read, confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting in accordance with Rule 17 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

**5. Action List Arising from the Meeting held on 28 March 2017**

**12**

To read, confirm and note the Action List arising from the previous meeting.

**6. Petitions and Deputations**



To receive any Petitions and, or, Deputations in accordance with Rule 24 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

<b>7. Annual Internal Audit Report 2016/17</b>	<b>13 - 30</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>8. Annual External Audit ISA 260 Governance Report 2016/17</b>	
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
The report and appendices will follow in an Agenda update issued ahead of the meeting of the Committee in due course.	
<b>9. Statement of Accounts 2016/17</b>	
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
The report and appendices will follow in an Agenda update issued ahead of the meeting of the Committee in due course.	
<b>10. Annual Governance Statement 2016/17</b>	<b>31 - 48</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>11. Committee Budget Outturn Report 2016/17</b>	<b>49 - 54</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>12. Overall Council Position Outturn Report 2016/17</b>	<b>55 - 60</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>13. Treasury Management Annual Report 2016/17</b>	<b>61 - 75</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>14. Internal Audit Progress Report 2017/18</b>	<b>76 - 92</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>15. Timetable: Budget Options 2018/19 and 2019/20</b>	<b>93 - 95</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>16. Collection and Write-Off of Miscellaneous Debtors</b>	<b>96 - 98</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>17. Court Duties: Locally Collected Taxes</b>	<b>99 - 100</b>
Report of the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer.	
<b>18. Elliott Hall Youth and Community Centre, South Wigston</b>	<b>101 - 123</b>
Report of the Planning Development and Regeneration Manager.	
<b>19. Housing White Paper: Increase in Planning Fees in the Borough</b>	<b>124 - 126</b>
Report of the Planning Development and Regeneration Manager.	
<b>20. Proposed Revised Organisational Policies</b>	<b>127 - 227</b>

Report of the Interim Corporate Resources Manager.  
To be presented by the Director of Services / Monitoring Officer.

**For more information, please contact:**

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
**HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 28**  
**MARCH 2017 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

<b><u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u></b>		
Chair - Councillor Mrs S B Morris		
Vice-Chair - Councillor D A Gamble		
<b><u>COUNCILLORS (10):</u></b>		
L A Bentley	M L Darr	
Miss A R Bond	B Dave	K J Loydall
G A Boulter	R E Fahey	R E R Morris
J W Boyce	J Kaufman	
<b><u>OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE (3):</u></b>		
S J Ball	M Hone	A Thorpe
<b><u>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE (3):</u></b>		
T Crawley	S Gill	A Persaud

<b>Min Ref.</b>	<b>Narrative</b>	<b>Officer Resp.</b>
<b>74.</b>	<p><b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b></p> <p>The Chair expressed her gratitude to Members of the Committee for their assistance and contributions to debates throughout the municipal year.</p> <p>An apology for absence was received from Councillors G S Atwal, E R Barr and Mrs L Eaton.</p>	
<b>75.</b>	<p><b><u>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Miss A R Bond substituted for Councillor E R Barr.</p>	
<b>76.</b>	<p><b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	
<b>77.</b>	<p><b><u>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2017</u></b></p> <p>In respect of 'Internal Audit - Progress Report 2016/17' (Minute Ref: 60):</p> <p><b>(a)</b> at paragraph 6, Councillor J W Boyce requested that 'June 2016' be corrected to '<i>June 2017</i>'.</p> <p><b>(b)</b> at paragraph 8, the Vice-Chair requested that 'March 2016' be corrected to '<i>March 2017</i>'.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee (as amended) held on 31 January 2017 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.</p>	

78.	<p><b><u>ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2017</u></b></p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) reported that all items had been duly actioned.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <p>The Action List be noted by Members.</p>	
79.	<p><b><u>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	
80.	<p><b><u>INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2016/17 AND AUDIT PLAN 2017/18</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 15 - 44) as jointly-delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Audit Manager at CW Audit Services, Mr Anand Persaud, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer reiterated that Members at the previous meeting of the Committee (held on 31 January) resolved to award the contract for Internal Audit Services. He added that the Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18 consisted of 273 days of work to be charged at 250 days, in addition to a one-off payment of £3,000 to off-set the contract letting process. This was said to represent good value for the Council.</p> <p><b>Internal Audit Progress Report 2016/17 ("the Report")</b></p> <p>The Audit Manager summarised the contents of the Report in turn (at pages 16 - 30).</p> <p>He highlighted that since the last Report in January 2017, one full review for 2016/17 Debtors had been completed and awarded full assurance representing a significantly marked improvement from the previous year. He stated that five reviews were ongoing. The Audit Manager added that further assurances had been received on 27 April from the Interim Corporate Resources Manager that all recommendations in relation to Health and Safety (<i>'High Risk' outstanding issues, Part 4 of the Report at pages 19 - 20</i>) had since been implemented. It was said that there were still a relatively high number of 33 outstanding recommendations which required attention.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman enquired into the revised and, or, past deadlines or no update having been provided in respect of the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) 15/16 Main Accounting (at page 20);</li> <li>(b) 15/16 Housing Register and Allocations (at page 21);</li> <li>(c) 13/14 Equalities (at page 22); and</li> <li>(d) 15/16 Council Tax and Business Rates (at pages 26 - 27).</li> </ul>	

	<p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer and Audit Manager jointly-advised, accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) This head of work had not yet been completed due to a pre-requisite to remove the IT infrastructure allowing remote systems access to former Council employees. The issue was said to be under the current joint-consideration and investigation by the new IT Manager, Finance Accountancy Manager and Senior HR Advisor;</li> <li>(b) An update was to be circulated to Members in due course;</li> <li>(c) The necessary workforce profile data had since been captured as part of the Investors in People (IiP) assessment in December 2016; and</li> <li>(d) All recommendations subsisted on the Report until resolved and, or, removed by the Internal Auditor.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair requested that an update be circulated to Members on the revised deadlines, the reasons therefor and any additional commentary in respect of the outstanding recommendations aforementioned in the Report.</p> <p>With reference to recommendation '14/15 Private Sector Housing/Disabled Facilities Grants' (at page 22), Councillor G A Boulter requested that '31/10/16' be corrected to '31/10/17'.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce stated that under clear targets to be set by management, the Council should aspire to have no 'critical' (1), 'high' (2) or 'medium' (3) recommendations outstanding for more than 6 months and no recommendations outstanding for more than 12 months.</p> <p><b>Operational Internal Audit Plan 2017/18 ("the Plan")</b></p> <p>The Audit Manager summarised the contents of the plan in turn (at pages 31 - 44).</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce enquired as to how the Internal Audit Progress Report (2016/17) was to inform and flow into the Operational Internal Audit Plan (2017/18).</p> <p>The Audit Manager advised that the Plan for 2017/18 would allow for the Internal Auditors (IA's) to follow up any outstanding reviews and, or, recommendations from 2016/17 (<i>'Follow Up / Contingency', Part 5 of the Plan at page 40</i>). This was said to include the ability of IA's to come into the Council and investigate accordingly.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendations <i>en bloc</i> as set out at paragraph 2 of the report (at page 15).</p> <p>The Vice-Chair seconded the recommendations.</p> <p><b>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The Internal Audit Progress Report for 2016/17 (at Appendix 1) be noted; and</li> <li>(ii) The Operational Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18 (at Appendix 2) be approved.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MHo CR</b></p>
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81.	<p><b><u>EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON GRANT CLAIMS, RETURNS FOR 2015/16 AND AUDIT PLAN FOR 2017/18 ACCOUNTS</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 45 - 72) as jointly-delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer), the KPMG Director, Mr Tony Crawley, and the KPMG Audit Manager, Mr Sundeep Gill, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer added that the revised timetable for external audit submission(s) was to be trial-ran in the upcoming financial year (2017/18) and no difficulties were envisaged at the present time to meet all revised deadlines.</p> <p><b>Annual Report on Grants and Returns 2015/16 ("the Report")</b></p> <p>The Audit Manager summarised the contents of the Report in turn (at pages 47 - 56).</p> <p>He highlighted that three minor errors on Housing Benefits Claims ("the Claims") totalling approximately £5,000 (in the context of a £9m claim) and one minor error on the Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts Return ("the Return") were made resulting in the a qualification letter and the necessary adjustments having to be made ( '<i>Summary of Certification Work Outcomes' at pages 51 and 52</i>). He stated that the Chief Finance Officer was working in partnership with the Interim Community Services Manager in respect of the latter to ensure the error did not re-occur in accordance with the prescribed recommendation in relation to use of retained capital receipts (at page 55).</p> <p>Councillor L A Bentley enquired as to why 'limited information on the working paper file' in relation to the Return was provided and how the prescribed recommendation was to be implemented to ensure compliance ( '<i>Recommendations' at page 55</i>).</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that limited information was provided due implications stemming from a temporary dislocation of personnel in April 2016. He gave Members assurances that the recommendation together with greater resilience was to be implemented to ensure that the error did not re-occur in future years.</p> <p>Councillor M L Darr enquired as to the frequency of the errors made in relation to the Claims for 2015/16 <i>vis-a-vis</i> errors (or lack thereof) made in the previous year.</p> <p>The Audit Manager advised that the errors identified were based upon a random sample/selection of claims as opposed to a systematic review of all claims made.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce sought further clarification upon the inconsistency of housing stock records ( '<i>Recommendations' at page 54</i>).</p> <p>The Member stated that the revised timetable for the trail-run of the external audit submission(s) was a challenging one and that a contingency</p>	<p><b>MHo CR</b></p>
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	<p>plan was required if the initial deadline was not met (on 26 July 2017).</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that the Fixed Asset Register did not correspond with the Housing Stock Repairs Register at the present time. He acknowledged that a contingency plan for audit submission(s) was required.</p> <p><b>External Audit Plan 2016/17 ("the Plan")</b></p> <p>The Director summarised the contents of the Plan in turn (at pages 57 - 72).</p> <p>He highlighted several risks and areas of focus that required specific external audit attention in the Plan, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) The risks associated with the changes in the pension liability due to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Triennial Valuation (at page 61);</li> <li>(b) The risks associated with key financial statements and analyses to comply with Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (at page 61);</li> <li>(c) The Authority's arrangements to continue to build financial resilience in an increasingly-austere public-sector economic climate (at page 67); and</li> <li>(d) The Authority's arrangements to continue to implement change to address the issues raised in the Independent Investigator's Report ("the Penn Report") (at page 67).</li> </ul> <p>Councillor J W Boyce questioned the feasibility of the proper, independent and co-harmonious arrangements for the commission of external audit work when 'working with partners and third parties', in notable relation to the proposed establishing of a Combined Authority for Leicester and Leicestershire ("the Combined Authority") ( '<i>Value for Money Arrangements Work (Cont.)</i>' at page 64). He further enquired as to whether a conflict of interest arose by virtue of a single external auditing firm auditing all the constituent authority members of the Combined Authority.</p> <p>The Director advised that the overall criterion was reviewed and applied to any given public body, which assesses the arrangements in terms of cost-effective outcomes and benefits for taxpayers, local people and stakeholders, and extended to all public, private and voluntary-sector entities with whom partnership work was or may be undertaken. He stated that no conflict arose owing to a duty to objectively-assess.</p> <p>Councillor K J Loydall sought acknowledgement within the Plan of the £1.4m budget gap inherited by the Council as a result of the Government's Financial Settlement.</p> <p>The Director advised that the Council continued to face similar financial pressures and uncertainties to those experienced by others in the local government sector and that, via its Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council needed to have in place effective arrangements for managing its annual budget, generating income and identifying and implementing efficiency-savings required to balance the same until 2020.</p>	<p><b>SJB</b></p>
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	<p>The Director stated that the Plan provided a summary of the Council's present position and an update would be subsequently reported and, if necessary, a qualification issued. There was nothing to warrant a qualification at the present time. He further advised that the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) was equally responsible to notify Members of any budgetary concerns on a regular and periodic basis.</p> <p>The Chair sought to clarify that the Council was not operating on a "budget deficit" and that the Council had a robust, financial strategy to bridge the budget gap.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendation(s) as set out at paragraph 2 of the report (at page 45).</p> <p>The Vice-Chair seconded the recommendation(s).</p> <p><b>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <p>(i) The Annual Report on Grants and Returns 2015/16 (at Appendix 1) be noted; and</p> <p>(ii) The External Audit Plan 2016/17 (at Appendix 2) be noted.</p>	
82.	<p><b><u>COLLECTION AND WRITE-OFF OF MISCELLANEOUS DEBTORS</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 73 - 74) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer added that the outcome of this report was reflected in the Internal Audit Progress Report 2016/17 (at Agenda Item7 and Minute Ref. 80) in respect of the completed 2016/17 Debtors review. He stated that miscellaneous debts continued to fall under a robust debt management strategy and was pleased to announce that there were no debt write-offs in the final fourth quarter of 2016/17.</p> <p>Councillor L A Bentley commended Officers for their efforts in debt(s) collected. He further enquired as to how the remaining c. £153,000 of debt was being managed. With reference to paragraph 3.3 (at page 74), the Member requested that 'the second quarter' be corrected to '<i>the fourth quarter</i>'.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that debt management was a fluid process under which not every debt owed any given time was in a critical position. The c. £153,000 was said not be "under management" insofar the collection of those debts had not reached the formal stage of enforcement, however informal, pre-enforcement action (viz. debtor re-repayment plans) was being taken in relation to the same.</p> <p>Councillor G A Boulter requested that feedback be provided on the newly-appointed debt enforcement agency contracted by the Council. He noted the important distinction to be made between debtors who "could not" and "would not" pay.</p>	

	<p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that the Council was satisfied with the debt enforcement services provided by the newly-appointed agency who were said to operating on the basis of taking a percentage of the debt(s) collected rather than any direct form of payment tendered by the Council. He reported that the agency employed a robust but fair operation, attempting to understand and to be empathic towards the difficulties and hardship faced by debts, and enforced accordingly.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report (at page 73).</p> <p>The Vice-Chair seconded the recommendation.</p> <p><b>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <p>The contents of the report be noted by Members.</p>	
83.	<p><b><u>RESIDENT FORUM OUTTURN BUDGET POSITION AND ALLOCATION REQUESTS</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 75 - 79) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce stated that the allocation of additional funding of £73,000 ought to be fairly and consistently allocated in proportion to the original allocation at paragraph 3.5(i) (at page 76).</p> <p>The Chair and Councillor J W Boyce jointly-requested that a review of the regulations governing grant allocations, including the funding of voluntary organisations and "on-the-night" grants allocation at Forum meetings without supporting paperwork, be undertaken.</p> <p>Councillor G A Boulter enquired as to whether the additional allocation funding was for revenue and, or, capital schemes.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that the additional allocation was to be made available for both revenue and capital schemes, subject to account of annual ongoing revenue costs if used in respect of the latter.</p> <p>Councillor Miss A R Bond stated that it was important for all three Borough town centres to have at least once defibrillator device installed and made available for use on-site.</p> <p>The Chair advised that such requests were to the responsibility of residents to raise.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman welcomed the use of grant allocations for pump-priming purposes (i.e. the stimulation of economic activity by investment) however opined that ongoing, revenue costs ought to be borne by the grant recipients themselves.</p>	MHo CR

	<p>The Chair stated that grant allocations for (voluntary) organisations ought to be managed different to grant allocations for residents.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce stated that the initial lump allocation for the Forums originated from significant capital receipts generated from land in South Wigston and subsequently supplemented by the award of New Homes Bonuses (NHB's). It was said that the grant allocations were designed as "one-off" spends and to benefit the greatest number of people. He opined that ongoing revenue funding of projects was unacceptable and ultimately a matter reserved unto the Council and not the Forums.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce moved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The recommendations as set out at paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of the report (at page 73) and;</li> <li>(ii) That the additional allocation of funding of £73,000 be allocated in proportion to the original allocation as set out at paragraph 3.5(i) (at page 76).</li> </ul> <p>The Chair seconded the recommendations (as amended).</p> <p><b>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) The position(s) of the Forums' budgets be noted by Members;</li> <li>(ii) The allocation(s) requested by the Forums (as set out at paragraph 3.4) be approved; and</li> <li>(iii) The additional allocation of funding of £73,000 be allocated in proportion to the original allocation as set out at paragraph 3.5(i).</li> </ul>	
<b>84.</b>	<p><b><u>ANNUAL REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 80 - 96) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer added that the outcome of this report was reflected in the Internal Audit Progress Report 2016/17 (at Agenda Item 7 and Minute Ref. 80) in respect of all recommendations in relation to Health and Safety (H&amp;S) having since been implemented.</p> <p>With reference to 'Table 1: Staff Accidents via Location' and 'Table 2: Public Accidents via Location' (at Appendix 1 at pages 84 - 85), Councillor G A Boulter stated that information did reflect well in the data breakdown depicted most notably in respect of the locations marked 'Elsewhere' and 'Brocks Hill', respectively.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that the 'Elsewhere' marker incorporated manual-trade employees (viz. refuse collectors, sweepers) working on the Borough's streets and the 'Brocks Hill' marker incorporated public visitors (viz. minor injuries to children) but excluded volunteers.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce requested that the Annual Health and Safety Plan (2016/17) ("the Plan") should include some examples of investigated and</p>	<p><b>AC KP</b></p>

	<p>signed-off accidents for the Council's own learning processes.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that the Senior Management Team (SMT) was to work in close partnership with the H&amp;S Staff Group so to better inform Members of the H&amp;S situation at the Council as of when it develops.</p> <p>Councillor L A Bentley stated that it should be the Council's aspiration to have zero accidents. He further requested that "near-hit" reporting be incorporated into the Plan and the Health and Safety Policy ("the Policy") as a valuable assessment tool and the responsibility of all employees to report, accordingly.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Finance Officer advised that "near-hit" reporting was to feature as part of operational implementation of the Policy via risk assessments undertaken.</p> <p>Councillor K J Loydall welcomed the report and the extensive work undertaken by Officers, however raised a number of concerns and recommendations for subsequent inclusion into the Plan and, or, Policy, amongst other things namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(a)</b> A "high-to-low" risk-ranking system (to be systematically worked through) so to give effect to this Committee's governance role in ensuring progression, highlighting defined structures as to the exact designations of responsibility and operating standards and the importance of a duty to investigate accidents ;</li> <li><b>(b)</b> A more meaningful breakdown and exposition of how accidents are categorised and recorded, why the accidents have occurred (viz. training issues), and the outcomes, progress made and lessons learned;</li> </ul> <p>Councillor J W Boyce moved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> That the Annual Health and Safety Plan (at Appendix 1) be noted, subject to further inclusions and improvements being made at a later date and the Plan being reviewed at a subsequent meeting of the Committee; and</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> The recommendation as set out at paragraph 2.2 of the report (at page 73).</li> </ul> <p>The Chair seconded the recommendations (as amended).</p> <p><b>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i)</b> The Annual Health and Safety Plan (at Appendix 1) be noted, subject to further inclusions and improvements being made at a later date and the Plan being reviewed at a subsequent meeting of the Committee; and</li> <li><b>(ii)</b> The Health and Safety Policy (at Appendix 2) be approved.</li> </ul>	<b>PE</b>
<b>85.</b>	<p><b><u>ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE NOMINATION FOR HIGHCROFT PARK, OADBY</u></b></p> <p>The Council gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 97 -</p>	

	<p>106) as delivered and summarised by the Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce stated that, if Members were minded to approve the nomination of Highcroft Park, Oadby as an Asset of Community Value (ACV), this would not otherwise fetter the discretion of the Development Control Committee and that the ordinary planning rules and procedures would apply where necessary.</p> <p>The Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager advised that by approving the nomination, the Council was said to be merely discharging its obligations under the regulations governing the Council's decision-making in respect of Nominated Assets (NA's) and in managing and maintaining the ACV Register. The nomination, if approved, would not fetter the discretion of the Development Control Committee whatsoever and did not afford NA's any form of extraordinary planning protection.</p> <p>Councillor L E Bentley enquired as to whether the NA was to 'further the social wellbeing or social interests' of the whole Borough community <i>vis-a-vis</i> the local community in terms of permitting wider public rights of access to the land in question.</p> <p>The Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager advised that it was beyond the Council's jurisdiction to insist upon public access rights over, what is, privately-owned land. The matter of legal proprietorship was said to be incidental as opposed to material to the Council's obligation to effectively administer the ACV process only.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman sought further clarification as to the compensatory risks and implications that would beset the Council if the nomination were to be approved, and the consideration given to preparing a locally adopted procedure for the same.</p> <p>The Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager advised that a risk did exist and asset owners did enjoy a right to claim compensation attributable to an approved listing against the Council: however, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) would meet the costs of any compensation payments. It was said that the authority's standard procedures had been considered and followed in lieu of a local adopted procedure which satisfied the Council's own requirements.</p> <p>Councillor M L Darr moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report (at page 97).</p> <p>The Vice-Chair seconded the recommendation.</p> <p><b>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</b></p> <p>The Nominated Asset known as Highcroft Park, Oadby be confirmed as an Asset of Community Value on the basis that it has been made by a qualifying community group and that the nominated asset "further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community" and, therefore, the asset be included on the Council's Assets of Community Value Register</p>	
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	and be entered on the Local Land Charges Register.	
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**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.33 PM**



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**CHAIR**

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**TUESDAY, 25 JULY 2017**

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# Agenda Item 5

## POLICY, FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### **ACTION LIST**

**ARISING FROM A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2017**

<b>Min Ref.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Action To Be Taken</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>On Target</b>
<b>80.</b>	<b>Internal Audit Progress Report 2016/17 and Audit Plan 2017/18</b>	An update be circulated on the revised deadlines, the reasons therefor and any additional commentary for outstanding recommendations in the Internal Audit Progress Report 2016/17.	MHo CR	May-17	Verbal update
<b>81.</b>	<b>External Audit Report on Grant Claims, Returns for 2015/16 and Audit Plan for 2017/18 Accounts</b>	To devise a contingency plan for the external audit submissions(s) if the initial trial-run deadline is not met (on 26 July 2017).	MHo CR SJB	May-17	Verbal update
<b>83.</b>	<b>Resident Forum Outturn Budget Position and Allocation Requests</b>	A review of the regulations governing grant allocations, including the funding of voluntary organisations and "on-the-night" grants allocation at Forum meetings without supporting paperwork to be undertaken.	MHo CR	Jul-17	Verbal update
<b>84.</b>	<b>Annual Review of Health and Safety</b>	The Annual Health and Safety Plan be subject to further inclusions and improvements (including examples of investigated and signed-off accidents) at a later date and the Plan reviewed at a subsequent meeting of the Committee.	AC KP PE	Jul-17	Verbal update



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Title:** Annual Internal Audit Report 2016/17

**Author(s):** Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer)

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## 1. Introduction

As part of the Corporate Governance arrangements the Internal Audit Report is submitted to Policy, Finance & Development Committee.

The purpose of the Internal Audit Annual Report, which is attached as an appendix, is to report the key outcomes arising from the work of Internal Audit for 2016/17 and to provide an audit opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control.

The Council's Section 151 Officer is required to maintain an adequate Internal Audit service in order to help ensure the probity of the Council's financial affairs. The Internal Audit Annual Report summarises the work completed by the Council's Internal Audit provider throughout the year which results in an assurance statement and an overall Internal Audit opinion. The overall opinion may be used by the Council in the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.

The preparation and publication of the Annual Governance Statement in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE governance framework is necessary to meet the statutory requirements set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations which set out a statutory requirement for authorities to prepare a statement of internal control in accordance with proper practices. The draft Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 is included elsewhere on this meeting's agenda.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. That the report included on the audit opinion and the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control be noted.
- 2.2. That Members support the conclusion that the Council has an effective internal audit service.

## 3. Information

- 3.1. The Internal Audit Annual Report (**Appendix**) provides information on the key outcomes arising from the work of the Internal Audit service for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

Internal Audit progress reports are presented to every meeting of the Policy, Finance & Development Committee so Members can be kept up-to-date with Internal Audit work and findings. This annual report provides an overall summary of the work undertaken for the whole year in relation to the 2015/16 approved Annual Audit Plan.

In accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003,



2006 and 2011, Internal Audit has a specific role within the Council's overall internal control framework and governance arrangements, including the provision of Internal Audit's opinion of the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control. The audit opinion forms part of the Council's Annual Governance Statement. This report also meets requirements to report on the review of the effectiveness of Internal Audit and to feed results into the Annual Governance Statement.

The Assurance Statement refers to the three overall areas of Council governance: Risk Management, Control and Council Governance have been rated significant assurance with regards to the management of risk in these areas.

The Internal Audit opinion states that significant assurance can be given that there is a generally sound system of internal control designed to meet the organisations objectives and that controls have generally been applied consistently. However, some weakness in the design and/or inconsistent application controls could put the achievement of particular objectives at risk. These are set out in paragraphs 3.2 - 3.6 below. Committee should note that some of these reports were still in draft at the time of writing, so management actions have yet to be agreed.

The Governance Statement notes that the overall opinion may be used by the Council in the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement. However, Internal Audit have not highlighted any significant internal control issues that they considered would require disclosure within the Council's Annual Governance Statement:

### **3.2. Budgetary Control/Medium Term Financial Strategy**

The draft report has provided 'moderate assurance' and highlighted:

- The Council needs to urgently confirm and implement robust savings plans to support its strategy to achieve financial balance over the term of the current MTFS, and roll forward the MTFS for later years.
- Compliance with Financial Regulations when authorizing virements and supplementary budget requests and updating the ledger thereafter needs to be ensured.
- Financial training for budget holders and other relevant officers, and Members needs to be established.

### **3.3. Creditors**

The draft report on this review provided 'moderate assurance' and highlighted the need:

- To ensure that documentation is retained and readily available for reference, so that the Council has assurance that it is complying with procurement law, internal rules and good practices.
- To ensure the basis for goods/services receipting can be supported by appropriate documentation and readily available for reference, to ensure payment is only made when properly due.
- The requirement to ensure that all creditor masterfile changes are valid and accurate.

### **3.4. Payroll**

The final report on this review provided moderate assurance and highlighted:

- The annual SLA with the payroll provider (EMSS) needs to be signed as near as possible to the start of the financial year after a detailed review of the terms and conditions. The Council needs to insist on receiving reports from EMSS for monitoring service delivery and on independent audit assurance of their payroll processes and procedures.
- Checks must be introduced to confirm the accuracy and validity of the processing of the payroll prior to the BACS payment run.
- Errors and omissions noted in relation to claims processing and leavers processing need to be addressed.

### 3.5. **Void Property Management**

The final report provided 'moderate assurance' with the key issues as follows:

- Failure to record issues encountered resulting in turnaround times in excess of the target of 20 working days.
- Non-compliance with Contract Procedure Rules where only one quotation is received and the lack of audit trail in relation to authorisation of purchase orders being issued (this issue is reflected in commentary above regarding the Council's approach to procurement).
- The lack of budget monitoring of individual void jobs.

### 3.6. **Housing Responsive Repairs**

The draft report on this review provided 'moderate assurance' and highlighted:

- Market testing of contractors is currently not consistently performed and evidenced.
- The Council had an inconsistent approach to recharging eligible repairs to tenants.
- The Council has not been undertaking post inspection works in accordance with its 2014 Policy although some were being done at the discretion of the Property Officer. The ones that were being done were not recorded.
- Contractor performance data is captured but not analysed or reported upon.

### 3.7. **Relevant Considerations**

Under the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 151) and the Accounts and Audit Regulations, the Council has a responsibility to maintain an adequate and effective Internal Audit function.

At Oadby & Wigston Borough Council this responsibility is delivered by CW Audit Services. In responding to this requirement the Internal Audit service works to best practice as set out in the 2006 Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government in the UK which is published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

There are no other relevant considerations from this report.

#### **Background Documents:**

- Attached to this Report as an Appendix is the CW Audit Services Oadby & Wigston Borough Council Annual Internal Audit Report 2016/17, June 2017.

- Agenda and Minutes from Meetings of the Policy, Finance & Development Committee 2016/17
- Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, 2006, 2011
- Code of Practice for Internal Audit of Local Government in the UK 2006 (CIPFA).

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<b>Implications</b>   Annual Internal Audit Report 2016/17	
<b>Finance</b>	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Legal</b>	See paragraph 3.7 in the main body of the report.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Corporate Risk(s)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	Relevant risks and opportunities in conjunction with this matter have been considered and are referred to in the body of the report as appropriate.
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	There are no direct inclusion, diversity or community cohesion implications arising from this report.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

# Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

## Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion 2016/17

June 2017

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**cw audit**  
audit and assurance services

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# 1 Introduction

This annual report provides my opinion (see section 2) as the Head of Internal Audit to Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. It also summarises the activities of Internal Audit for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

The Council is required by the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 to "to undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance". The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require the Head of Internal Audit to provide a written report to those charged with governance, to support the Annual Governance Statement, AGS), setting out:

- An opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's control environment ;
- Disclose any qualifications to that opinion, together with the reasons for that qualification;
- Present a summary of the work carried out by Internal Audit during the year from which the opinion is derived, including any reliance that is being placed upon third party assurances;
- Draw attention to any issues the Head of Internal Audit deems particularly relevant to the Annual Governance Statement (AGS);
- Consider delivery and performance of the Internal Audit function against that planned;
- Comment on compliance with these Standards and the results of any quality assurance programme.

The Council should consider my opinion, together with management assurances, its own knowledge of the organisation and assurances received throughout the year from other review bodies (such as External Audit) when producing its AGS.

My opinion takes into account the range of individual opinions arising from risk-based audit assignments that have been reported throughout the year. An internal audit plan was developed to provide you with independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of systems of control across a range of financial and organisational areas. **A summary of the work we have performed and delivery against the plan is provided in section 3.**

Alongside the delivery of the operational internal audit work, we have met regularly with Council management to ensure any issues regarding our performance could be highlighted and any necessary action taken to resolve these. Following each audit, management are also requested to provide feedback on the service received. No significant issues or concerns regarding the internal audit service have been raised to date. All audits have been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the PSIAS, which includes evidenced review by senior management of all audit files and reports produced. I can confirm that there have been no issues of non-compliance with the PSIAS during the course of the year.



## 2 Annual Head of Internal Audit Opinion

### Roles and responsibilities

The organisation is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate risk management processes, control systems, accounting records and governance arrangements.

Internal Audit provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment and plays a vital part in advising the organisation whether these arrangements are in place and operating correctly.

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is an annual statement by the Leader and Chief Executive that recognises, records and publishes an authority's governance arrangements.

In accordance with PSIAS, the Head of Internal Audit (HoIA) is required to provide an annual opinion, based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes (i.e. the organisation's system of internal control). This is achieved through a risk-based plan of work, agreed with management and approved by the Policy, Finance & Development Committee, which should provide a reasonable level of assurance, subject to the inherent limitations described below.

The opinion does not imply that Internal Audit have reviewed all risks and assurances relating to the organisation. The opinion is substantially derived from the conduct of risk-based plans. As such, it is one component that the organisation takes into account in making its AGS.

## The Head of Internal Audit Opinion

My opinion is set out as follows:

1. Overall opinion;
2. Basis for the opinion;

My **overall opinion** is that **significant** assurance can be given that there is a generally sound system of internal control, designed to meet the organisation's objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently. However, some weakness in the design and/or inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of particular objectives at risk.

The basis for forming my opinion is as follows:

1. An initial assessment of the design and operation of the underpinning risk management framework and supporting processes; and
2. An assessment of the range of individual opinions arising from risk-based audit assignments contained within internal audit risk-based plans that have been reported throughout the year. This assessment has taken account of the relative materiality of these areas and management's progress in respect of addressing control weaknesses.
3. Any reliance that is being placed upon third party assurances.

# 3 Work undertaken during the year

## Summary of assurances provided

During the course of the year we have conducted work to provide assurance over financial, governance and operational systems. Appendix One summarises the assurance levels we have given.

## Delivery of the plan

An internal audit plan for 2016/17 was developed to provide you with independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of systems of control across a range of financial and organisational areas. To achieve this our internal audit plan was divided into two broad categories; work on the financial systems that underpin your financial processing and reporting and then broader risk focused work driven essentially by principal risk areas that had been identified in your risk register. A summary of work undertaken is included below:

- During the year we have undertaken reviews of your core financial systems (including MTFs/budgetary control, payroll, creditors and income/debtors), and have provided moderate assurance in most of these.
- Key income and expenditure systems such as Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits have been subject to detailed audit review. Controls were found to be operating generally effectively.
- We have undertaken a number of pieces of work on areas of principal risk. In general we have been able to conclude that these systems are robust and operate in a good control environment.

It is my view, taking account of the respective levels of assurance provided for each audit review, an assessment of the relevant weighting of each individual assignment and the extent to which agreed actions have been implemented, that you have a generally sound system of internal control.

However, we have highlighted during the year Significant Internal Control Issues that we consider would require disclosure within your AGS. These are set out below:

- We have noted in several of our reviews issues regarding the extent to which the Council is able to ensure, and demonstrate, that it achieves value for money from its procurement of goods and services. Key findings on this matter were highlighted in several of our reviews referred to below in which 'moderate assurance' was provided.

We also note here the need for the Council to ensure it has in place clear and deliverable plans to make necessary savings to achieve financial balance in future years, referred to in our MTFS/Budgetary Control review.

We identified some further weaknesses in control that caused us to limit the level of assurance we could give in the following areas:

- Budgetary Control/Medium Term Financial Strategy – our draft report on this review provided 'moderate assurance' and highlighted:
  - The Council needs to urgently confirm and implement robust savings plans to support its strategy to achieve financial balance over the term of the current MTFS, and roll forward the MTFS for later years.
  - Compliance with Financial Regulations when authorizing virements and supplementary budget requests and updating the ledger thereafter needs to be ensured.
  - Financial training for budget holders and other relevant officers, and members needs to be established.
- Creditors – our draft report on this review provided 'moderate assurance' and highlighted the need:
  - To ensure that documentation is retained and readily available for reference, so that the Council has assurance that it is complying with procurement law, internal rules and good practices.

- To ensure the basis for goods/services receipting can be supported by appropriate documentation and readily available for reference, to ensure payment is only made when properly due.
- The requirement to ensure that all creditor masterfile changes are valid and accurate.
- Payroll –our final report on this review provided moderate assurance and highlighted:
  - The annual SLA with the payroll provider (EMSS) needs to be signed as near as possible to the start of the financial year after a detailed review of the terms and conditions. The Council needs to insist on receiving reports from EMSS for monitoring service delivery and on independent audit assurance of their payroll processes and procedures.
  - Checks must be introduced to confirm the accuracy and validity of the processing of the payroll prior to the BACS payment run.
  - Errors and omissions noted in relation to claims processing and leavers processing need to be addressed.
- Void Property Management – our final report provided ‘moderate assurance’ with the key issues as follows:
  - Failure to record issues encountered resulting in turnaround times in excess of the target of 20 working days.
  - Non-compliance with Contract Procedure Rules where only one quotation is received and the lack of audit trail in relation to authorisation of purchase orders being issued (this issue is reflected in commentary above regarding the Council’s approach to procurement).
  - The lack of budget monitoring of individual void jobs.
- Housing Responsive Repairs – our draft report on this review provided ‘moderate assurance’ and highlighted:
  - Market testing of contractors is currently not consistently performed and evidenced.
  - The Council had an inconsistent approach to recharging eligible repairs to tenants.
  - The Council has not been undertaking post inspection works in accordance with its 2014 Policy although some were being done at the discretion of the Property Officer. The ones that were being done were not recorded.

- Contractor performance data is captured but not analysed or reported upon.

We also note that some reviews are not yet completed to the point at which an assurance opinion can be provided (Food Hygiene and Grant Aid-value for money review). These reviews are not fundamental to our annual opinion.

## **Third party assurances**

In arriving at our overall Annual Head of Internal Audit Opinion, we have not sought to place reliance on any third party assurances.

## **Following up of actions arising from our work**

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All recommendations and agreed actions are subject to an ongoing recommendation tracking process that is facilitated by CW Audit Services, but completed by the relevant managers responsible for implementing the recommendations. This is undertaken on a self-assessment basis, but is supplemented by our independent follow-up reviews where this is deemed necessary (for example following the issuance of a limited or moderate assurance report). A summary of the recommendation tracking results for the 2016/17 year is included as Appendix 2 to this report. In addition elements of our work involve annual coverage of key areas of control for the organisation, such as in relation to key financial systems, and in such cases we also routinely follow up previously-agreed actions at each review.

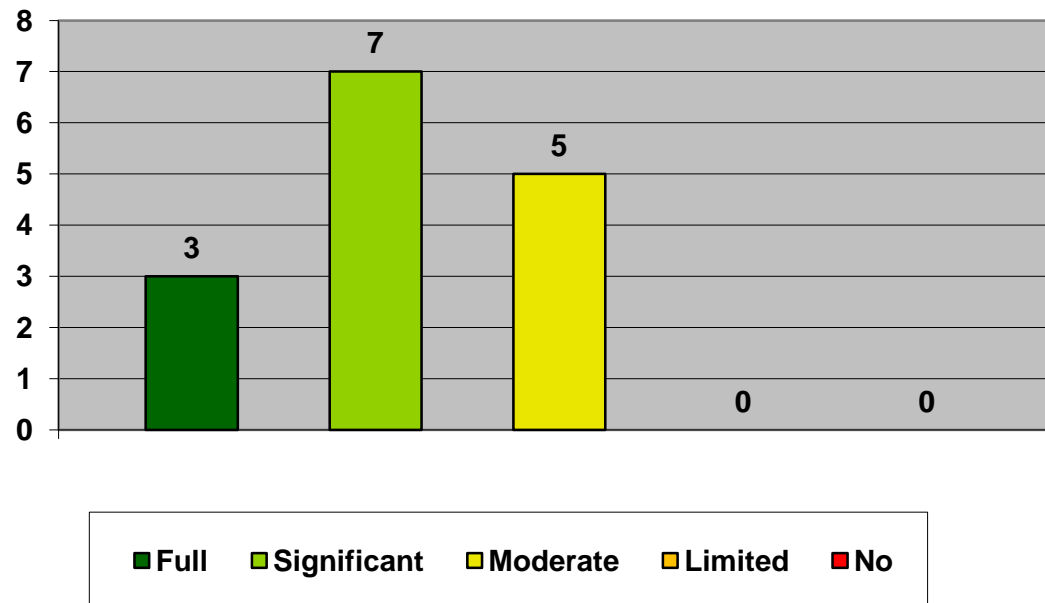
## **Closing remarks**

I have discussed and agreed this Annual Report and Head of Internal Audit Opinion with the Section 151 Officer. Further detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations in the areas covered by our internal audit plan are detailed within the progress reports and individual assignment reports that have been issued to the Policy, Finance & Development Committee during the year.

## Levels of Assurance – Individual Audit Assignments

Description of audit	Assurance level
Budgetary Control/Medium Term Financial Strategy	Moderate*
Main Accounting	Significant
Creditors	Moderate*
Debtors	Full
Treasury Management	Full
Income Management & Cash Receipting	Full
Grant Aid – Value for money review	Not yet available
Food Hygiene	Not yet available
Payroll & Expenses	Moderate*
Council Tax	Significant
Business Rates	Significant
Benefits	Significant
Housing Rents	Significant*
Housing – responsive repairs	Moderate*
Void Property Management	Moderate
Health & Safety – ‘Depot Services’	Significant
Vehicle procurement and management	Significant

\*-at draft report stage



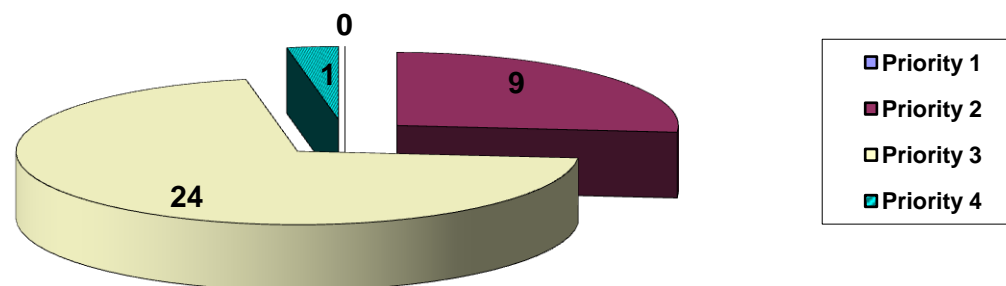
Level of assurance	Criteria
Full	No significant risk issues identified.
Significant	Exposure to levels of risk that may only impair the effectiveness of the system or process under review.
Moderate	Exposure to levels of risk that render some elements of the system's control environment undeliverable.
Limited	Exposure to unacceptable level of risk that could have a serious impact upon the system or process under review.
No	Exposure to unacceptable levels of risk that could have a serious impact upon the organisation as a whole.

NB – other reviews carried out were advisory in nature and did not provide specific assurance opinions.

## Summary of Internal Audit Recommendations

### Recommendations made re 2016/17 (finalised audit reports only)

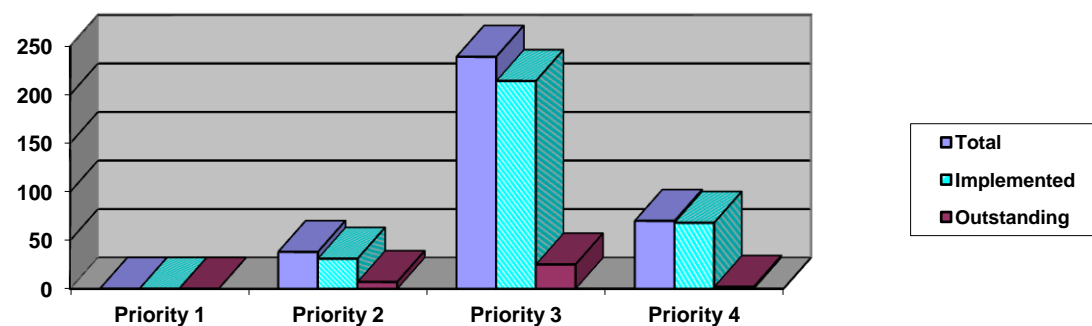
Priority	Number
1	0
2	9
3	24
4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>



### Current status of all recommendations due for implementation by 31st March 2017

(N.B. including recommendations made from 2014/15 to 2016/17, but excluding 2016/17 recommendations that fall due for implementation after 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017)

Priority	Number	Implemented/ closed	Outstanding
1	0	n/a	n/a
2	38	31	7
3	239	214	25
4	70	68	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>34</b>





## Definition of our risk priority rankings

Risk ranking	Assessment rationale
1	The system has been subject to high levels of risk that have, or could, prevent the system from meeting its objectives, and which may also impact on the delivery of one or more of the organisation's strategic objectives.
2	The system has been subject to high levels of risk that have, or could, prevent the system from meeting its objectives, but which are unlikely to impact on any of the organisation's strategic objectives.
3	The system has been subject to medium levels of risk that have, or could, impair the system from meeting its objectives.
4	The system has been subject to low levels of risk that have, or could, reduce its operational effectiveness.



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>
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**Title:** **Annual Governance Statement 2016/17**

**Author(s):** **Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)**

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the contents of the Council's Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 following the review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of financial control.

All local authorities are required to produce an Annual governance Statement (AGS) in line with proper practice and guidance. The purpose of the AGS is to set out and evaluate the Council's corporate governance arrangements. The AGS must be approved by this Committee prior to its certification by the Leader of the Council and Chief executive, and published alongside the Council's Statement of Accounts.

Good governance arrangements are also essential in ensuring that the Council gets the basics right. Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and ultimately a good outcome for citizens and service users. The AGS articulates these arrangements and is set out in the **Appendix**.

This report provides the Committee with a draft of the Statement, prior to its scrutiny by the Council's external auditors, ahead of its formal approval in September 2017.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 established the requirements that all local authorities must adhere to in relation to systems of internal control. This has implications for the Council and for the services it provides. The Regulations require the Council to have a sound system of internal control that facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council is required to review at least annually the effectiveness of the system of internal controls and make a statement alongside its Statement of Accounts.

Whilst the legislation requiring this statement is placed within the Accounts and Audit Regulations, this is not just an accounting or auditing issue. The Annual Governance Statement is a key measure of the overall effectiveness of the Council.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

That the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 set out in the Appendix be approved and referred to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive for formal certification.

## 3. Background

The Council has a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) in accordance with the Local Government Framework and Guidance produced jointly by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and the

Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). The statutory requirement is set out in Regulation 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011. In doing so the Council complies with the principles of corporate governance set out in the CIPFA/SOLACE Good Governance Framework (2007- reviewed and revised in 2012).

The purpose of the AGS is to report publicly on the extent to which the Council complies with its own code of governance (known as the Local Code), including how it has monitored the effectiveness of governance arrangements in year, or any planned changes in the current period. The process of preparing the AGS should itself add value to the corporate governance and the internal control framework of the Council.

The framework is a discretionary code but the Council is judged against it as part of best practice. The original framework outlines six core principles of good governance focusing on the systems and processes for the direction and control of the organisation and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. In July 2014, a joint report from CIPFA and the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) was produced on the, "International Framework: good governance in the Public Sector". This report looks at governance across all public sector bodies and in reviewing the Annual Governance Statement has been referred to and used to further inform the process.

Both frameworks emphasise that good governance should be corporately owned. The degree to which the Council follows these principles should be declared in its Annual Governance Statement. The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to provide assurance that the Council has sound governance arrangements in place that are supported by effective systems of internal control.

The six core principles referred to in the CIPFA framework defining the principles of good governance are:

- i)** Focusing on the purpose of the authority and on outcomes for the community and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.
- ii)** Members and officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.
- iii)** Promoting values for the authority and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.
- iv)** Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.
- v)** Developing the capacity and capability of Members and officers to be effective.
- vi)** Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

In compiling the Annual Governance Statement the guidance identifies it should include the following information:

- i)** Scope of Responsibility.
- ii)** The purpose of the governance framework.
- iii)** A description of the governance framework and the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the authority's governance arrangements.
- iv)** Review of effectiveness.
- v)** Significant governance issues including an outline of the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with any significant governance issues identified.

The Annual Governance Statement is a key corporate document with the Chief

Executive (CEO and Head of Paid Service) and the Leader having joint responsibility as signatories for its accuracy and completeness. It is also important that all other senior officers provide assurances to the process. The preparation of the Annual Governance Statement is overseen and approved by Senior Management Team supported by service managers as a corporate document which is owned by all senior officers and Members.

In compiling the Annual Governance Statement assurance a review of the effectiveness of the Council's systems of internal controls, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 4(2), is conducted and information is obtained from a range of sources so that the signatories to the Statement can assure themselves that it reflects the governance framework for which they are responsible.

Where any significant governance issues are identified within the assurances received these must be identified in the Annual Governance Statement. Both the Council's external auditors (KPMG) and the Head of Internal Audit have completed their audit work for the year 2016/17 and have not identified any significant governance issues.

For 2016/17, the auditor's opinion was that **significant** assurance can be given that there is a generally sound system of internal control, designed to meet the organisation's objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently. However, some weakness in the design and/or inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of particular objectives at risk.

The associated risks have been identified, remain under close review and will be managed throughout the year given that they are key to ensuring the continued delivery of high quality services. Action plans and programmes of monitoring and evaluation are in place and are regularly updated to support both of these issues over the current and future years.

## **Options**

The alternative option would be to defer the referral of the AGS to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive. This is not considered appropriate due to the requirement for the document to be formally certified in a timely manner.

## **Background Documents:**

- CIPFA/SOLACE - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government
- Oadby & Wigston Borough Council - Local Code of Corporate Governance
- KPMG - Annual Audit and Inspection Letter
- Internal Audit - Annual Report 2016/17
- Appendix - Draft Annual Governance Statement 2016/17

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<b>Implications</b>   Annual Governance Statement 2016/17	
<b>Finance</b>	Robust scrutiny of the Council's AGS and framework applied in line with best practice will further strengthen the Council's sound base of strong financial management and assist in reducing risk.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Legal</b>	The preparation and publication of the AGS in accordance with the CIPFA/SOLACE framework is necessary to meet the statutory requirements set out in Regulation 4(3) in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011. Effective corporate governance practice is essential if the Council is to demonstrate that it is acting in the best interests of the communities it serves. The Council's governance arrangements are tested through audit and other means of scrutiny.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Corporate Risk(s)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	A strong internal control environment contributes to the overall effective management of the Council and will minimise the risk of the Council failing to achieve its ambitions, priorities and service improvements.
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b>
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b>
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	Ensuring the Council has arrangements in place to ensure inclusion, diversity and community cohesion forms part of the Council's governance arrangements.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

**INDEX:**

**Scope of Responsibility.**

**The purpose of the governance framework.**

**A description of the governance framework and the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the authority's governance arrangements.**

**Review of effectiveness.**

**Significant governance issues including an outline of the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with any significant governance issues identified.**

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## **Scope of Responsibility.**

Oadby & Wigston Council (the Council) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility the Council must make proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and for facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including the management of risk.

The Council has previously approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. This AGS shows how the Council has complied with the Code during 2015/16 and also meets the requirements of Regulation 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011.

## **Purpose of the Governance Framework**

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which the Council is directed and controlled. It reflects activities through which the Council meets the needs of the community. It includes arrangements to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk at a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risks of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and therefore can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives. Evaluation of the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised and how to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically are key parts of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and its Corporate Plan.

This AGS confirms that the governance framework has been in place for the financial year ended 31 March 2017 and up to the date of the approval of the Statement of Accounts.

## **The Governance Framework**

### ***Current Governance Structure***

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council has retained a committee system. The majority of UK local authorities now operate using a cabinet system where a small group of members have been given the power to make the majority of decisions on behalf of their Council.

The benefits of retaining the committee system are that all members are able to sit on a range of decision making committees and every member has a vote that counts. This is the cornerstone of the Council's governance – members are not marginalised in decision making. All decisions are debated and made during open committee in full public view. Closed sessions, for instance where commercially sensitive matters need to be discussed, are kept to an absolute minimum. Only the most urgent decisions are delegated to the

Chair/Vice Chair of committees, and these must be reported back to the main committee as soon as possible. In addition to the statutory committees that deal with development control and with licensing, the Council has two main committees:

- The Policy, Finance and Development Committee, which has overall responsibility for setting the long term aims of the Council and moving it forward in line with these objectives.
- The Service Delivery Committee, which has direct responsibility for the day-to-day operation of all services.

### ***Visions and Priorities***

The latest Corporate Plan was agreed by Council in February 2017 and the MTFS reflects the Plan's priorities:

#### ***Protect the Borough***

- a. The Council will resist any attempt by either the City or County Councils to impose their control over the Borough.
- b. The Council will work cooperatively and consensually with all the other Councils in Leicester and Leicestershire in order to form a Combined Authority and to seek the devolution of powers with the corresponding financial support from central government without the loss of its sovereignty.

#### ***Maintain Front Line Services***

- a. The Council is committed to free shoppers' car parking and weekly collection of waste and recycling.
- b. No major changes would ever be made to these services without consultation.

#### ***Offering Choice when Possible***

- a. The Council will offer choice whenever possible.
- b. When major decisions affecting front line services need to be considered the Council will ensure that all the options available are explained clearly and listen and respond to residents.

#### ***Save Money through Service Redesign***

- a. The Council will look at all its services and redesign those that can be improved and cheaper to run.
- b. The main focus of this redesign will be the better and wider use of ICT, Council assets and procurement.

#### ***Involve Residents and Partners***

- a. The Council is committed to continue with the town forums and to develop other community engagements systems.
- b. The Council will work with and continue to support partner

#### ***Economic Development***



- a. The Council recognises the need to develop both housing and the town centres.
- b. This will be done with the maximum of public involvement and at minimum cost to the green spaces in the Borough

### ***Greening the Borough***

- a. The Council will continue to invest in and encourage activities which result in a greener Borough
- b. The prioritising of the protection of trees will be a cornerstone of this commitment.

### ***Improving the Health of Residents***

- a. The Council wants to ensure residents live a full and healthy life.
- b. The Council will continue to develop its relationship with partners in order to develop and implement appropriate outcomes that attempt to achieve this.

### ***Value for Money***

- a. The Council will always accept any council tax freeze grant offered by the Government.
- b. The Council will endeavour to benchmark its services against the “most like” authorities to ensure transparency and demonstrate value for money.

These priorities were agreed with residents through the consultation process and the residents’ forums.

These priorities will:

- Focus and drive forward the Council’s strategic plans over the next four years
- Form the basis of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Provide the direction for the allocation of available resources
- Set the parameters for annual service delivery and development plans

The Council’s financial plans are outlined in its Medium Term Financial Strategy – the latest update to the Strategy was agreed by Council in February 2017. The document outlines the financial objectives which the Council looks to achieve in order to meet continuing pressure on available resources. In addition, the Council has agreed its Housing Revenue Account business plan which sets out how housing services will be maintained and financed over the long term.

### ***Quality of Services***

Service plan targets and key performance indicators are set for each department within the annual service delivery and development plans. Progress against targets is monitored monthly by the management team and reported regularly to relevant committees. The Council’s financial position is reported against budget to every meeting of the Policy, Finance and Development Committee. Detailed budget information is provided to budget holders each month and dedicated project teams provide financial information for large projects or capital schemes.

The Council ensures that its key priorities determine the allocation of resources to deliver its agreed activities. A robust corporate business planning programme is used to identify projects against agreed criteria, including the Council's policies, its priorities, the outcome of public consultations, demonstration of continuous improvements, and responding to legislative change.

Achievement of the Council's priorities have been monitored throughout financial year 2016/17 by the Council's Senior Management Team and reports to the relevant committees. The monitoring of delivery against agreed priorities ensures the Council's capacity to deliver projects within agreed costs, time and resources.

As part of the budget exercise, each year a critical review is carried out of existing services and budgets to ensure that resources are properly directed towards the achievement of agreed objectives and priorities. This process helps the Council to test that it continues to provide value for money services.

### ***Financial Management***

The financial elements of the Council's corporate business planning process are included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which has a three year planning horizon to assist in ensuring resources are available to support priorities. The Council has a good track record of financial management and internal control, but resources are necessarily limited and significant net savings year-on-year continue to be required.

The Council continues to ensure that the accounts are compliant with the Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice. Performance against budget is reported at committee meetings and managed by SMT and through the corporate business planning process. The Council ensures that the levels of reserves it holds are sustainable over the medium term. The MTFs takes account of the current economic climate and changes to funding for local government.

The Council has a Treasury Management Strategy that is reviewed each year and monitored on a regular basis. This ensures the Council has sound processes and controls over its treasury function to minimise risk exposure.

### ***Decision Making, Scrutiny and Governance***

The Council, the Policy, Finance and Development Committee and the Service Delivery Committee take decisions on service and management matters in line with terms of reference set out in the constitution. The committees meet four times each municipal year. The Policy, Finance and Development Committee undertakes the role of the Audit Committee for the Council and provides continuous monitoring and scrutiny of financial management, performance, policy and action plans. Further challenge is provided by elected members through meetings with Committee Chairmen, Resident Forums and Member Workshops.

Scrutiny is provided at officer level through the work of the Council's internal audit function which is currently delivered by CW Audit Services. The annual risk based audit plan contributes to the review of the Council's key internal control systems, risk management processes and corporate governance arrangements. CW Audit supports the design and effectiveness of the governance framework. Each internal audit review is given an assurance level. The definition of each of these assurance levels is provided in the table below:

### **Table – Definition of Assurance Levels**

<b>Level of Significance</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
Full	No significant risk issues identified.
Significant	Exposure to levels of risk that may only impair the effectiveness of the system or process under review.
Moderate	Exposure to levels of risk that render some elements of the system's control environment undeliverable.
Limited	Exposure to unacceptable level of risk that could have a serious impact upon the system or process under review.
No	Exposure to unacceptable levels of risk that could have a serious impact upon the organisation as a whole.

Regular meetings are held between CW Audit Services and the Chief Financial Officer (the Council's Section 151 Officer) and with the Director of Services. This ensures the high standard of internal audit support is maintained. The annual audit plan is reviewed on a frequent basis to identify any amendments needed to reflect changing priorities, emerging risks or resourcing challenges.

The Policy, Finance & Development Committee receives regular reports from the Council's External Auditors (KPMG) and Internal Audit (CW Audit). Where appropriate, comments are made on non-compliance with legislation that has been identified as part of a routine audit. The Chief Financial Officer has direct access to this committee as well as to the External Auditors. All members of the Policy, Finance & Development Committee receive training in risk management so as to allow them to appreciate the nature of risks presented to the Council through its activities.

There are governance arrangements in place to ensure that members and officers work together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles. The Council's constitution includes a scheme of delegation and terms of reference for each committee. Responsibilities are set out to make clear how the Council and its committees operate within the organisation. The scheme of delegation also defines the powers granted to the Chief Executive (the Head of Paid Service) and other chief officers within the areas of their service responsibility. The constitution reflects all relevant legislation impacting on decision making in local government and is published on the Council's website.

Elected members are responsible for ensuring that effective policy making, scrutiny and monitoring activities occur. A clear committee structure assists such responsibilities to be effectively carried out. Member expertise and involvement is further enhanced by ongoing training and development opportunities.

The Council has a statutory responsibility to have a Section 151 Officer and a Monitoring Officer. At present the interim Chief Financial Officer is the Section 151 Officer, who has a duty to the Council's tax payers to ensure that public money is being appropriately spent and managed. The Chief Financial Officer ensures that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters and is also responsible for keeping proper financial records and maintain an effective system of internal control.

Underpinning the Council's financial management arrangements is a regularity framework comprising Financial Regulations, Contract Procedure Rules, annual audits of key financial systems and audits of other systems undertaken on a risk-based basis. Other processes and procedures such as the Procurement Strategy and Risk Management Strategy are monitored on a regular basis.

The Monitoring Officer role is fulfilled by the Council's Director of Services, who acts as guardian of the Council's constitution to ensure lawfulness, probity and fairness in Council decision making. The Monitoring Officer has processes for the review of legislative changes which feed into the annual review of the constitution.

Consultation meetings and other forms of communication between the Monitoring Officer and senior managers as appropriate ensures that managers can contribute to revisions to the constitution including the scheme of delegation. The annual review includes the constitution's terms of reference..

The Chief Financial Officer and the Director of Services report directly to the Chief Executive.

Officer decision making at a strategic level is led by the Senior Management Team, comprising the Chief Executive, interim Chief Financial Officer and the Director of Services. The Team meets usually on a weekly basis and standing items of business include finance, policy, governance, human resources, performance management and the delivery of the Council's priorities.

### ***Standards of Conduct***

Officers of the Council are expected to maintain high standards of conduct. The Council has a staff code of conduct that is published on the intranet along with other policies and procedures.

There is an agreed protocol between members and officers to ensure that a constructive working relationship exists and this Annual Governance Statement also promotes and demonstrates the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

In addition, the Standards Committee operates to ensure that councillors and any co-opted members of the Council behave in a way that exemplifies high standards of conduct and effective governance and has regard to the member code of conduct.

Regular records of advice and code issues are kept by the Monitoring Officer.

Declaring interests under the code of conduct is a standard item on the agenda at every committee meeting and Council and declarations are minuted by the clerk. A legal advisor attends all Council and committee meetings to advise on the application of the code and other issues where this is requested or otherwise considered appropriate. A planning code of conduct is in place and is adhered to by members who sit on the Development Control Committee.

Members and officers comply with the Council's gift and hospitality policy.

The Council's website explains how complaints can be made against elected members by either downloading a complaint form or making a complaint on-line. The web page also has links to the code of conduct and the constitution.

A register of the Council's contracts is published on the Council's website. In addition, details of the Council's spend on individual items over £250 is published on a quarterly basis.

### ***Compliance***

The Council's policies and procedures are drawn up and regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with current legislation and regulations. Legal Services assist with updating and amending policies and advice on legal implications including legislative impacts on recommendations included in committee reports.

Equalities implications are also considered as part of committee reports.

### ***Whistle Blowing***

Concerns regarding non-compliance with policies, procedures, laws and regulations can be raised through the Council's anti-fraud and confidential reporting policies. Concerns raised are always investigated and acted upon following clearly defined guidelines.

The Whistle Blowing Policy is published on the Council's intranet and internet to raise awareness and outline procedures in place to staff, contractors and the public. It features in the induction of new staff.

The Monitoring Officer, after consultation with the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, has statutory powers to report to Council in relation to any function, proposal, decision or omission that s/he considers would give rise to unlawfulness or any decision or omission that might give rise to maladministration. Such a report would have the effect of stopping the proposal or decision being implemented until the report has been considered.

### ***Officer and Member Development***

The Council's staff appraisal process assesses performance and delivery of Council objectives and also identifies any skills gaps that need addressing. Each officer has an agreed annual personal development plan. Progress against these plans is reviewed regularly through one-to-one discussions with line managers. The process ensures that the Council continually keeps under review the levels of skills required to carry out functions with due regard to law, policy and regulation.

As part of the Council's business planning process each service plan includes learning and development needs linked to specific actions. This ensures that the skills sets required to deliver the key priorities and actions for the Council are identified and provided.

Training programmes and other development opportunities are circulated and shared more broadly using the Council's internal communication mechanisms. The Council also supports the training and development of members.

### ***Consultation***

Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability is a key element of the governance framework. The Council takes every opportunity to consult with relevant stakeholders before taking any decisions likely to impact on the level and quality of services. In addition, the Council's business planning process includes an annual timetable of formal consultation events ensuring statutory, voluntary and business partners have the opportunity to comment on budget proposals under consideration.

The Council has given delegated authority on budget provision to three Resident Forums who can make recommendations to the Policy, Finance & Development Committee on how funds could be allocated to various projects within their geographic area. The Forums' membership is open to people who live in the three areas and this approach has been found to be a very good source of two-way communication and consultation around the Council's policy initiatives.

### ***Reviewing the Effectiveness of the Governance Framework***

The Council has responsibility for conducting at least annually a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of senior managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment. The annual report from the Council's Internal Audit service (CW Audit Services) is a key document in assessing the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements. Comments from External Auditors (KPMG) and other agencies and inspectorates such as the Local Government Association are also important.

The Senior Management Team, chaired by the Chief Executive, reviews the Council's governance framework and control environment and is responsible for the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement. Appropriate managers are responsible for producing their own service assurance statements and developing an improvement plan to rectify any identified governance weaknesses within their service areas. The Policy, Finance & Development Committee reviews the Annual Governance Statement and evaluates the strength of the underlying assurance statements and evidence.

### **Review of Effectiveness for 2016/17**

#### ***Introduction***

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness is informed by the work of the Senior Management Team and the work of Internal and External Audit, as well as input from other review agencies and inspectorates. The sections below set out how the governance framework has been maintained and reviewed during 2016/17.

#### ***Key Matters***

The following key matters were considered by the Council and its principal committees during 2016/17:

##### **Council**

- Budget proposals and budget monitoring
- Council Tax Base, Support and Setting
- Members' Code of Conduct
- Combined Authority for Leicester and Leicestershire
- Bus Services Bill
- Staffing Issues
- Land Charges Shared Services
- Delegated reports from Forums and Committees
- Council Tax Support Scheme

- Licensing Policy
- Members' Allowances
- Constitutional matters

### **Policy, Finance and Development Committee**

- Individual internal audit reports and the annual report and plan
- Reports from the external auditor including the annual plan and report on the Statement of Accounts
- Budgetary control and financial updates
- Treasury management and prudential indicators
- Debt recovery
- Residents' Forums
- Welfare Reform and Council Tax Support Scheme
- Pooling of Non-Domestic Rates
- Risk management
- Procurement
- Updating of Council policies and strategies
- Medium Term Financial Strategy and Housing Business Plan
- Financial regulations

### **Service Delivery Committee**

- Housing allocations
- Homelessness
- Disabled Facilities Grants
- Leisure Contract Performance
- Service operational updates
- Fees and charges
- Corporate enforcement
- Empty homes strategy
- Customer Services transformation and charters
- Recycling

### ***Local Government Ombudsman***

There was one case where the Ombudsman found fault with the Council regarding homelessness and compensation of £300 was paid to the complainant.

### ***Constitutional Matters***

The key roles and responsibilities of Council committees, elected members, the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer are set out in the Council's constitution scheme of delegation.

These three officers are responsible for ensuring that the Council acts within the law and in accordance with established policies and procedures. No report can be presented to Council or a committee for approval without first being reviewed by these officers or their delegated representative(s). These officers are also responsible for ensuring that legislation and policy relating to health and safety are implemented in practice.

The constitution includes the Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations which detail the processes and improvements required for various levels of purchase and the internal control procedures required for managing the risk across the Council.

### ***Code of Conduct***

The standards of behaviour expected from members and officers are set out in the Member/Officer Codes of Conduct. A register of members' interests is maintained and the records of interest are declared at Council and committee meetings. All members are required to complete Related Party Declarations at the end of the financial year in support of the statutory financial statements. Members' allowances are examined on an annual basis and a review of the allowance scheme was undertaken in 2016/17 by an independent remuneration panel.

### ***Standards***

The Council promotes excellence, probity and transparency in public services and provides training and advice for members on governance matters. Members have to abide by the constitution and the Code of Conduct in order to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties. Each Council is required to put in place arrangements dealing with complaints and standards issues. Since February 2014 this function has been discharged by the Policy, Finance & Development Committee. The Council has adopted a common code in collaboration with other local authorities in Leicestershire and Rutland. The Committee monitored performance of members, senior officers and the Council's committees as part of its workplan for 2016/17.

### ***Scrutiny***

The Council operates a committee style arrangement and therefore is not required by law to have a separate scrutiny committee to support and monitor the work of other parts of the organisation. Since February 2014 each committee has scrutinised its own decisions as they are being debated and agreed in the public arena. Where necessary, time limited member task group may be convened by the Council to deal with any specific matter.

### ***Audit Functions***

The Council does not have a separate audit committee; instead, the constitutional audit functions are discharged by the Policy, Finance & Development Committee. The Committee receives reports from the Internal Audit service and can require service heads to attend to answer questions as required. Reports from the External Audit service are also received at these meetings.

#### **External Audit**

The Council's external auditors are KPMG.

Each year the external auditors review the Council's arrangements for:

- Preparing accounts and compliance with statutory and other relevant requirements.
- Ensuring the proper conduct of financial affairs and monitoring their adequacy and effectiveness in practice.
- Managing performance to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.



In October 2016 KPMG issued their Annual Audit Letter, covering the audit of the Council's 2015/16 financial statements and Value for Money conclusion, providing an unqualified opinion on the accounts and an unqualified conclusion on the Council's arrangements for Value for Money.

There were no recommendations included in the Letter and no significant governance issues were identified.

### **Internal Audit**

The Council's Head of Internal Audit is required to provide an annual opinion, based upon and limited to the work performed, on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes (i.e. the Council's system of internal control). This is achieved through a risk-based plan of work, agreed with management and approved by the Policy, Finance and Development Committee, which should provide a reasonable level of assurance, subject to the inherent limitations described below. The Head of Internal Audit's role reflects best practice as set out in the CIPFA Guidance on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit.

For 2016/17, the auditor's opinion was that **significant** assurance can be given that there is a generally sound system of internal control, designed to meet the organisation's objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently. However, some weakness in the design and/or inconsistent application of controls put the achievement of particular objectives at risk. No significant governance issues were identified by the auditor.

### ***Corporate Plan***

The Council's decision making practices are guided by the values and objectives set out in the 2016/17 Corporate Plan. This document simply consolidates in a focus document the Council's previously agreed priorities and governance arrangements.

The Corporate Plan was reviewed as part of the preparations for the 2017/18 municipal year.

### ***Risk Management***

During 2016/17 the Council's Strategic Risk Register was monitored by Policy, Finance & Development Committee. The register identified major risks and commented on their likelihood and impact on the Council's objectives. Each risk is allocated a responsible officer for identifying an action plan and provides an update on residual risk for each quarter. Risk management is embedded in processes such as appraisal of new capital investment and service development plans.

### ***Whistle Blowing and Complaints***

The Council's Whistle Blowing Policy is available to all employees and those contracting with the Council. A corporate complaints procedure is in place which includes staged levels of escalation depending on the seriousness of the complaint.

### ***Member and Officer Training and Development***

An induction programme was provided for all new members and officers. The member training programme is provided through the Leicestershire & Rutland Improvement Partnership. In-house training is provided for members to keep them up-to-date with changes in Council business such as new legislation. Statutory training for Licencing, Regulatory and Development Control functions was provided during 2016/17.

The skills and resources required by officers are set out in the person specification for each post. The Council's recruitment processes are designed to test that potential candidates have appropriate qualifications and experience. Development needs are identified through individual personal; development plans.

### ***Communication and Consultation***

Local people and stakeholders are engaged through the community strategy, resident forums, youth, senior citizens and multi-cultural groups. A programme of meetings and other events for these took place during 2016/17 with agenda largely being set in conjunction with residents and other stakeholders.

All meetings were held in public to support the Council's commitment to transparency in consultation and decision-making. There was a high level of interest in matters discussed at the three Resident Forums as evidenced by the high level of attendance. Minutes of these meetings were produced with action lists of issues raised.

The Council communicated to residents through the Letterbox Newsletter which was circulated to all households on a quarterly basis. Key documents such as the corporate plan, statutory accounts and budget book were published and made available on the Council's website, setting out achievements, performance and planned activity. Regular staff communications were achieved through the staff and management notice boards. 'everyone' emails, and regular briefings from the Senior Management Team.

### ***Partnership Working***

During 2016/17 the Council continued to exploit fully opportunities for partnership working to ensure joined up service delivery and efficiency savings. Key partnerships involving the Council included the Community Safety and Crime and Disorder Reduction partnerships. At County level, the Council is involved in Leicestershire Together and works with other public sector organisations to improve the wellbeing of local people.

From an operational point of view, the Council continued to pursue opportunities for joint work with other Councils..

### **Significant Governance Issues**

None reported in 2016/17.

### **Conclusion and Statement from the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive**

We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the significant governance issues discussed above to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in the review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

**Cllr John Boyce**  
**Leader of the Council**

**Mark Hall**  
**Chief Executive**

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<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information</b>
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**Title:** **Committee Budget Outturn Report 2016/17**

**Author(s):** **Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance 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 2016/17. The Council's full provisional outturn position is being reported in a further report on this agenda.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

That Members note the outturn position for 2016/17.

## 3. Information

3.1 In February 2016, the Council approved a 2016/17 budget for this Committee of £1.896m. These estimates were later revised to £2.378m, which was approved at Council in February 2016. The provisional outturn position for 2015/16 is £2,579, which represents a £0.201m overspend for the financial year as compared with the revised estimate.

3.2 The provisional outturn position figures shown in **Appendix 1** 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 but do not affect the balance on the General Fund. This makes the figures comparable to the approved budgets for the year.

When the 2016/17 budget was set £730,000 of savings was built into this Committee, these were to be met across the whole authority rather than by this Committee alone. **Appendix 1** shows that a contribution of around £334,000 was made by this Committee toward these savings.

3.3 The headline variances are explained below:

- During the course of the year the Council went through a review of its structure, ending its reliance on agency staff while establishing permanent posts. Employee costs were £17,000 over spent against the revised budget although there was a considerable saving against the original budgets.
- During the year the Council continued to be involved in a protracted dispute with a number of former employees. Members were kept informed throughout the year regarding expenditure. However final outturn for this was £24,000 higher, at around £200,000, than that expected during the budget process.
- A saving of £121,000 was made on the net cost of benefits paid this year.
- Non Distributed Costs shows an over spend of £32,000 against net Committee costs. This however is due to a technical accounting entry made against this cost centre and does not affect the bottom line of the general fund outturn.
- The approach to collecting the Council's sundry debtors was reviewed at the beginning of 2016/17 and this approach has allowed a saving of £32,000 to be

achieved this year by reducing the Council's bad debt provision.

#### **4. Capital Programme**

The revised capital programme for this Committee had a total budgeted cost of £231,610. The provisional outturn for these schemes is £188,725 which represents an under spend of £42,885.

Details of each scheme are given in ***Appendix 3***.

#### **Background Documents:**

None.

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**Tel:**        (0116) 257 2891

<b>Implications</b>   Committee Budget Outturn Report 2016/17	
<b>Finance</b>	As set out in the report.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Economy/Regeneration (CR9)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

**Policy Finance & Development Committee Provisional Outturn Summary 2016/17**

<b>Cost Centre</b>	<b>Service Head</b>	<b>Original Budget 2016/17</b>	<b>Revised Budget 2016/17`</b>	<b>Actual 201617</b>	<b>Variance Revised vs. Actuals (Under) / Over</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
30001	Information and Public Relations	101,830	83,200	90,415	7,215
30002	Corporate Management	489,420	760,100	459,135	(300,965)
30004	Health and Safety	20,210	38,300	26,492	(11,808)
30006	Crime and Disorder Partnership	20,500	20,500	21,110	610
30011	Structural Maintenance	61,030	61,000	44,942	(16,058)
30101	Local Land Charges	35,540	45,100	66,708	21,608
30201	Democratic Representation and Management	549,280	514,700	567,424	52,724
30301	Council Tax	347,380	364,200	377,732	13,532
30302	NNDR	59,050	90,500	90,912	412
30303	Housing Benefits	349,460	333,100	227,977	(105,123)
30304	Council tax Benefits	197,530	144,400	150,115	5,715
30401	Register of Electors	67,680	71,300	71,096	(204)
30402	Election Expenses	120,140	167,100	157,902	(9,198)
30501	Non Distributed Costs	45,600	45,600	77,917	32,317
30701	Civil Contingencies and Emergency Planning	27,310	27,700	27,445	(255)
41001	Economic Development	134,000	145,400	121,346	(24,054)
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,625,960</b>	<b>2,912,200</b>	<b>2,578,667</b>	<b>(333,533)</b>
	Efficiency Savings	(730,000)	(534,600)		534,600
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,895,960</b>	<b>2,377,600</b>	<b>2,578,667</b>	<b>201,067</b>

**Holding Accounts (Fully recharged to frontline services)**

39901	Senior Management Team	354,880	572,000	626,445	54,445
39902	Human Resources	21,800	266,200	277,944	11,744
39904	Legal Section	156,000	135,500	120,622	(14,878)
39905	Internal Audit	70,330	70,500	73,831	3,331
39906	Finance	484,590	435,500	453,673	18,173
39907	ICT Section	423,060	422,300	409,689	(12,611)
39908	Customer Services	615,780	619,400	615,720	(3,680)
39909	Council Offices	154,320	159,100	144,773	(14,327)
39910	Head of Customer Services	211,410	134,300	142,114	7,814
39913	Corporate Services	266,230	259,300	242,859	(16,441)

**Service Delivery Committee (General Fund) Provisional Revenue Outturn Position 2016/17**  
**List of Major Budget variances (above £10,000)**

Cost Centre Code		Service Head	Expense Head	Original Budget 2015/16 £	Revised Budget 2015/16 £	Actual 2015/16 £	Variance Revised vs. Actual (Under) / Over £	Comments
30002	5912	Corporate Management	Provision for Bad Debts	0	0	(33,582)	(33,582)	Bad debt provision reduced due to good debt management
30004	0800	Health and Safety	Training	500	12,900	817	(12,083)	Budget to be carried forward to 2017/18
30301	9100	Council Tax	Court Costs	(173,000)	(124,500)	(110,517)	13,983	Court activity lower than expected
30302	2423	NNDR	Professional Services	0	46,000	29,489	(16,511)	Review of NNDR base - fewer business to review than expected at start of project
30303	0200	Housing Benefit	Hired Staff	10,000	30,400	42,474	12,074	To cover extra work - part funded by grant below
30303		Net Cost of Housing Benefits Given Out	Net Cost of Benefit	(68,430)	(73,000)	(194,345)	(121,345)	Total amount of benefit given out lower than expected
30501		Non Distributed Costs	Pension/Holiday Provision Adjustments	45,600	45,600	77,917	32,317	Accounting entry relating to pension and holiday provisions
41001	2429	Economic Development	Professional Fees	10,000	16,800	2,900	(13,900)	For Horsewell Lane project carried forward to 2017/18

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

39901	0200	Senior Management Team	Hired Staff	37,500	77,000	88,293	11,293	Interim cover for S151 Officer
39901	5156	Senior Management Team	Managing Change	0	175,000	216,139	41,139	Both for employee dispute and to fund other change initiatives
39902	2422	Human Resources	Legal Fees	0	14,600	26,551	11,951	Cost of other employee disputes
39902	5178	Human Resources	Corporate Training	0	21,300	11,124	(10,176)	Carried forward to 2017/18 to complete programme
39904	0100	Legal Services	Salaries	101,290	60,200	36,832	(23,368)	Vacancy in establishment
39907	2423	ICT	Professional Fees	56,430	56,400	39,751	(16,649)	Savings made on contract
39910	9051	Revenues and Benefits Manager	Grant Income	0	(5,000)	(15,078)	(10,078)	To fund benefit hired staff above
39913	0100	Corporate Services	Salaries	230,960	195,000	176,293	(18,707)	Vacancy in establishment



**OADBY AND WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Project Code Reference	Scheme	2016/17 Final Budget	Capital Spend at 31st March 2017	Under spend / Overspend	Comments
	<b>Total Funding Available</b>				
	<b>General Fund - Policy, Finance &amp; Development</b>				
56001	Council Office Refurbishment	91,000	60,122	(30,878)	Two boilers replaced & heating system refurbished. All other works bid for - second set of boilers, ground floor refurbishment, toilet refurbishment, chimney works - deferred pending outcome of asset management review.
56003	Customer Service Centre	0	50,337	50,337	Final software implementation costs
56010	IT Replacement Programme	28,830	23,071	(5,759)	Complete. Under spend to cover server on 56060
56026	Integra Upgrade	0	4,190	4,190	Complete - cover from 56037
56027	41 Canal Street CPO	0	0	0	Still awaiting response form property owner. CPO funds will not be placed into escrow until order is acknowledged. Slip into 17/18
56037	PARIS Upgrade	30,000	19,200	(10,800)	£4K to cover Integra residual costs on 56026. Expect remainder to spend in full in early 2017/18
56053	Public Realm	10,650	2,955	(7,695)	South Wigston digital display screen deferred pending outcome of challenge to assessed business rates for existing Wigston & Oadby screens.
56055	Document Management System Software	50,000	0	(50,000)	Not expected to spend this year, however will fit into digitalisation scheme under development
56060	MS Office Suite Upgrade	4,830	9,622	4,792	Complete. £4991 cost for new server, cover from 56010.
56062	Server OS Upgrade	6,300	6,787	487	Now Complete
56063	Building Control Public Access Module	10,000	6,500	(3,500)	Project straddles year end - slip into 2017/18
56064	RSA Keys	0	5,940	5,940	Now Complete
	<b>Total - Policy, Finance and Development</b>	<b>231,610</b>	<b>188,725</b>	<b>(42,885)</b>	
	<b>PLANNED EXPENDITURE GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>231,610</b>	<b>188,725</b>	<b>(42,885)</b>	



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Title: Overall Council Position Outturn Report 2016/17**

**Author(s): Martin Hone (Interim Chief Financial Officer/ Section 151 Officer)**

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## 1. Introduction

This report gives a summary of the overall outturn position for the financial year 2016/17 including the effect on reserves as at 31 March 2017.

The provisional outturns for the General Fund shows an overspend while the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is under spent against the revised budgets. The draft annual financial statements have been prepared and signed off by the Section 151 Officer before the statutory deadline of 30 June. Although at the time of writing this report the audit process has not been fully concluded the accounts will be the subject of a report elsewhere on this agenda.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Note the report and overall provisional outturn positions for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.
- 2.2 Approve the requested revenue and capital carry forwards as set out in Section 7 of this report.

## 3. Information

The following commentary summaries the outturn position for each of the Council's funds in respect of both revenue and capital expenditure and compares these with the corresponding revised budget for the year. A statement of reserves and balances in hand at 31 March 2017 is also including:

## 4. General Fund

- 4.1 In 2016/17 the Council has a deficit on the General Fund of £380,000 which is £230,000 higher than the originally budgeted for deficit of around £150,000. The increase in deficit is principally due to the Council receiving lower than anticipated funding from both Non Domestic Rates and Section 31 Grant for Small business rate relief. The combined shortfall in these two funding streams was £218,000.
- 4.2 In 2016/17 the Council was involved in a long running employee dispute which had commenced in May 2015. This has now been concluded but during 2016/17 around £200,000 was spent bringing it toward a close. Members have had periodic reports to Council relating to these costs where the use of the Management of Change Reserve and the Contingency Reserve to fund them was approved.
- 4.3 The budget that Council Set in February 2016 set a number of ambitious savings targets during the cause of the financial year. These were required to keep the Council and totalled £0.633m. Some of these schemes were deferred to 2017/18 however the Council largely achieved this target. The principal reductions in net

expenditure were brought about as follows;

- Savings were made on the general fund salaries budget of £351,000
- Recycling Income exceeded its 16/17 target by £127,000
- Planning application fees exceeded its 2016/17 target by £56,000

## 5. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

In February 2017, the revised forecast for the HRA was that a contribution would be required from balances of £1.046m leaving a balance of £0.300m at 31 March 2017. However, the provisional outturn position shows a deficit of £0.913m for the year with a closing balance of £0.433m. This represents a £0.133m under spend against the revised budget.

The headline variances are explained below:

- Although there has been a significant reduction in hired staff the service did incur significant agency costs in the first half of the year. This has been partly offset by a reduction in salaries;
- Part of the programme of planned revenue maintenance has been deferred to 2017/18. The funding for this has been returned to the HRA reserve; and
- Improved debt collection has meant that the provision put in place for bad and written off debts has not been fully utilised.

Overall rental income is down as a result of the length of time properties have remained void. This is principally due to the extensive refurbishment programme being undertaken.

The HRA Outturn 2016/17 is attached as **Appendix 2** of this report.

## 6. Capital Programme (General Fund and HRA)

Details of the provisional outturn position for 2016/17 on both the housing and non-housing capital programmes together with details of their funding are shown below.

Committee	Revised Allocation £'000	Outturn £'000	Variance £'000
Service Delivery (HRA)	4,260	3,793	(467)
Service Delivery (Housing Non-HRA)	318	360	42
Service Delivery Other	863	244	(619)
Sub-total	5,441	4,397	(1,044)
Policy Finance and Development	232	189	(43)
Total	5,673	4,586	(1,087)
Financed by			
Borrowing		1,801	
Revenue Contributions to Capital		1,356	
Government Grants		177	
Major Repairs Reserve		1,214	
Other Earmarked Reserves		38	
Total		4,586	

## 7. Budgets Carried Forward

Members are asked to approve the carry forward of revenue and capital budgets as

follows:

- Any housing capital schemes which have not been completed at 31 March to carried forward to 2017/18 and reallocated where necessary for HRA schemes.
- General Fund schemes that already have a contractual commitment will be carried forward into 2017/18
- That the following specific revenue budgets are carried forward.
  - i) Orchard System Development £8,500
  - ii) Horsewell Lane Project Professional Fees £13,900
  - iii) Health and Safety Training £12,000
  - iv) Corporate Training £9,900

**Background Documents:**

None.

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**Tel:** (0116) 257 2891

<b>Implications</b>   Overall Council Position Outturn Report 2016/17	
<b>Finance</b>	As set out in the body of the report.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Reputation Damage (CR4)</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Economy/Regeneration (CR9)</b>
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Balanced Economic Development (CP3)</b>
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b>
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

OUTTURN SUMMARY 2016/17					
GENERAL FUND	Ledger	Budget 2016/17 £	Revised Estimate 2016/17 £	Outturn 2016/17 £	Variance Revised to Outturn £
Policy, Finance and Development		1,895,960	2,377,600	2,578,667	201,067
Service Delivery		3,593,050	3,417,600	3,381,878	(35,722)
Development Control		520,200	559,900	558,457	(1,443)
Children and Young Persons		11,800	8,800	8,234	(566)
Licensing and Regulatory		61,160	56,500	53,872	(2,628)
<b>Net Committee Expenditure</b>		<b>6,082,170</b>	<b>6,420,400</b>	<b>6,581,108</b>	<b>160,708</b>
Interest Paid	66002/5113	737,850	692,700	697,280	4,580
Interest Received	66001/5112	(30,000)	(11,000)	(10,349)	651
Debt Management Expenses	66002/6002	18,210	18,200	0	(18,200)
MRP	64002/6012	449,104	463,100	463,106	6
Item 8 Debit / Credit	66002/6011	(548,504)	(544,300)	(532,583)	11,717
Capital Financing		626,660	618,700	617,453	(1,247)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>6,708,830</b>	<b>7,039,100</b>	<b>7,198,561</b>	<b>159,461</b>
Contributions to/(from) :					
H.P.D.G. Reserve	64007/9053	0	0	(76,424)	(76,424)
Grants Reserve	64008/9053	0	0	(12,264)	(12,264)
Contingency Reserve	64006/6504	0	(182,000)	(200,000)	(18,000)
Budgets Carried Forward Reserve	64009/9053	0	(42,900)	(7,075)	35,825
Grounds Maintenance	64016/9053	(23,400)	(28,400)	(38,400)	(10,000)
Welfare Reform Reserve	64019/9053	0	(3,000)	(3,000)	0
Disabled Facilities Grant Reserve	64020/9053	10,000	10,000	9,802	(198)
Management of Change	64022/9053	0	(58,000)	(57,960)	40
Budget Equilibrium Reserve	64025/9053	(280,554)	(280,554)	(399,048)	(118,494)
Council Priority Reserve	64026/9053	0	0	(20,038)	(20,038)
HR Recruitment Reserve	64027/9053	0	(20,000)	(20,000)	0
Land Valuation Reserve	64028/9053	0	(800)	(3,487)	(2,687)
Land Charges Reserve	64030/9053	0	(7,000)	(14,696)	(7,696)
Borough Events Reserve	64033/9053	0	(1,500)	(1,500)	0
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>6,414,876</b>	<b>6,424,946</b>	<b>6,354,472</b>	<b>(70,474)</b>
Financed By :					
RSG		(718,275)	(718,275)	(718,279)	(4)
NNDR Contribution		(1,411,462)	(1,411,462)	(1,310,775)	100,687
NNDR Pool (Surplus/(Deficit))	See Below T - Accounts	0		(348)	(348)
Council Tax Surplus/(Deficit)		(35,230)	(35,230)	(36,925)	(1,695)
NNDR Surplus/(Deficit)		280,554	280,554	280,554	0
Extra NNDR Income		(75,000)	(75,000)	0	75,000
Other General Grants		(360,000)	(360,000)	(242,812)	117,188
New Homes Bonus	66104	(445,767)	(445,767)	(445,097)	670
Precept on Local Tax Payers	680015001	(3,501,210)	(3,501,210)	(3,501,210)	0
Reserves (Movement on GF)		(148,486)	(148,556)	(379,580)	(231,024)
		<b>(6,414,876)</b>	<b>(6,414,946)</b>	<b>(6,354,472)</b>	<b>60,474</b>
Reserves Balance as at 1st April		995,518	995,518	995,518	0
Reserves Used in Year		(148,486)	(148,556)	(379,580)	(231,024)
Reserves Balance as at 31st March		847,032	846,962	615,938	(231,024)

**Housing Revenue Account Provisional Outturn Report 2016/17**

Service Head	Original Budget 2016/17 £	Revised Budget 2016/17 £	Actual 2016/17 £	Variance £	Explanation £
Housing Revenue Account	(3,729,990)	(3,702,800)	(4,075,161)	(372,361)	Depreciation -£287,000, Provision for Bad Debts - £122,000, Rent, +£36,000
Estate Management	1,139,460	1,162,000	1,229,818	67,818	Salaries -£139,000, Hired Staff +£172,000, Stock Survey -£14,000 CSSC +£28,000 Professional Services - £5,000
<b>Older Persons Services and Community Care :</b>					
Churchill Close	39,340	13,300	8,064	(5,236)	
Marriott House	46,830	46,700	41,044	(5,656)	
William Peardon Court (Kings Drive)	18,930	15,100	13,975	(1,125)	Salaries -£8,000
Communal Services	130,500	127,800	183,346	55,546	Awaiting electricity credit notes in 2017/18
Housing Support Officer	33,590	32,200	32,282	82	
<b>Caretakers Services :</b>					
Elizabeth Court	28,920	29,200	27,125	(2,075)	
Bennett Way	15,770	23,000	20,575	(2,425)	
Boulter Crescent	28,100	22,700	20,246	(2,454)	
Burgess St, Maromme Sq, Junction Rd	15,630	5,900	5,695	(205)	Electricity +£23,000
<b>TOTAL SUPERVISION &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>(2,232,920)</b>	<b>(2,224,900)</b>	<b>(2,492,991)</b>	<b>(268,091)</b>	
<b>REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE</b>	1,351,310	1,381,400	1,236,327	(145,073)	Planned Maintenance -£145,000
<b>NET COSTS OF SERVICES</b>	<b>(881,610)</b>	<b>(843,500)</b>	<b>(1,256,664)</b>	<b>(413,164)</b>	
Capital Charges	538,480	533,800	532,583	(1,217)	
<b>NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(343,130)</b>	<b>(309,700)</b>	<b>(724,081)</b>	<b>(414,381)</b>	
Appropriations	494,000	1,355,800	1,637,486	281,686	Depreciation Adj +£287,000, Appropriations to Reserves £6,000
<b>DEFICIT / (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>150,870</b>	<b>1,046,100</b>	<b>913,405</b>	<b>(132,695)</b>	
<b>HRA DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) BOUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>(1,346,070)</b>	<b>(1,346,100)</b>	<b>(1,346,100)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>DEFICIT / (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>150,870</b>	<b>1,046,100</b>	<b>913,405</b>	<b>(132,695)</b>	
<b>HRA DEFICIT/(SURPLUS) CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>(1,195,200)</b>	<b>(300,000)</b>	<b>(432,695)</b>	<b>(132,695)</b>	



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information</b>
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**Title:** Treasury Management Annual Report 2016/17

**Author(s):** Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)

## 1. Introduction

This report details the actual performance and activities of the authority's treasury management function for the financial year 2016/17.

Treasury management is defined in the Code of Practice as " the management of the organisation's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks".

## 2. Recommendation(s)

That Members note the contents of the report.

## 3. Information

- 3.1 Two annual reports on treasury management are produced. Firstly, a Treasury Management Strategy and Statement is approved by Council prior to the commencement of the financial year and then this report provides Members with a summary of actual activity for the year 2016/17. The report is required to comply with the "Code of Practice on Treasury Management in Local Government " and the Council's own Treasury Management Policy Statement.
- 3.2 The Code requires the Section 151 Officer to operate the treasury management function in accordance with treasury management practices adopted by Council. There are no issues of non-compliance with these practices that need be brought to Member's attention.
- 3.3 Under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, the Council is required to prepare a number of prudential indicators against which treasury management performance is measured
- 3.4 Details of all borrowing and investment transactions for 2016/17 together with the performance against prudential indicators are given below.
- 3.5 **Borrowing**

**Long Term** - The Authority is able to borrow on a long term basis from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLb). At the beginning of the year the amount of loan outstanding was £19.114m. During the year, £5m of long-term borrowing was undertaken in order to fund the leisure facilities renewal project. This left the outstanding balance at the end of the year unchanged at £24.114m.

**Short Term** (*Less than 365 days in duration*) - There was £4.5m of short-term



borrowing undertaken during 2016/17 (2015/16 £8m), in lieu of long-term borrowing.

### Cost of Borrowing

Interest on the outstanding loans was paid as follows:

Loan £ 000's	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	Interest £ 000's
500	29/03/52	4.10	21
500	29/03/18	3.50	17
18,114	Various	2.98*	539
5,000	30/06/55	2.66	100
1,000	05/07/17	0.50	4
3,500	15/02/18	0.56	2

#### \* Average Interest rate for loans

### 3.6 Investments

During 2016/17, the Council was in a position where it often had cash surpluses to invest. When considering investments the Council must consider the following factors:

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

In the current economic climate and due to the volatility and uncertainty being prevalent in financial markets security has to be the most important factor of the three listed above.

For 2016/17 surplus cash was invested in the following ways.

**Special Interest Bearing Account** – This account is held with National Westminster Bank plc. It can be used for deposits up to £5 million and pays interest at 0.25%

**Business Direct Reserve Account** – Again, this is a National Westminster Bank account which allows deposits up to £1 million and also pays interest at 0.25%.

**Money Market Deposits** – Used for larger amounts up to £1.5 million. The list of institutions approved for investment was agreed at Committee on 24 March 2015 and is included again for reference in **Appendix C**. The investments fall into two categories:

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

The total interest received for the year to 31 March 2015 on temporary investments amounted to £10,349 (2015/16 £13,771). A summary of the total amount invested in 2016/17 is given at **Appendix A**.

### 3.7 Prudential Indicators

The Local Government Act 2003 requires Councils to comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities when carrying out their budgeting and treasury management activities. Fundamental to this is the calculation of a number of prudential indicators which provide the basis for management and monitoring of borrowing and investments. These indicators were agreed by Council on 24 March 2015.

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

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

	<b>2016/17 Original Estimate £ 000's</b>	<b>2016/17 Revised Estimate £ 000's</b>	<b>2016/17 Actual £ 000's</b>
Gross Borrowing	27,114	30,114	28,614
Investments	-	-	2,250
<b>Net Borrowing 31st March</b>	<b>27,114</b>	<b>30,114</b>	<b>26,364</b>
<b>Total CFR 31st March</b>	<b>35,758</b>	<b>34,845</b>	<b>33,703</b>

**The Section 151 Officer reports that the Council complied with the requirement to keep borrowing below the relevant CFR in 2016/17 and no difficulties are foreseen for the current or future years.**

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

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

- **The actual borrowing compared to the Authorised and Operational limits agreed by Council are as follows:**

	<b>2016/17 Original Limit £ 000's</b>	<b>2016/17 Revised Limit £ 000's</b>	<b>2016/17 Actual (Max) £ 000's</b>
Authorised Limit	34,000	34,000	28,614
Operational Boundary	32,000	32,000	28,614

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

	<b>2016/17 Original Estimate %</b>	<b>2016/17 Revised Estimate %</b>	<b>2016/17 Actual %</b>
General Fund	9.8	9.7	10.3
HRA	10.6	10.5	10.6

The above indicator shows that within the General Fund, financing costs are equivalent to 10.3% of the net revenue income. In the case of the HRA there is net interest payable which is equivalent to 10.6% of the net revenue income.

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

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

*(Continued overleaf)*

	<b>2016/17 Original Indicators</b>		<b>2016/17 Revised Indicators</b>		<b>2016/17 Actual Maturity Structure</b>	
	%		%		%	
Fixed Interest Rates Limit	100		100		100	
Variable Interest Rates Limit	25		25		0	
Maturity Structure of Borrowings	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Under 12 months	0	25	0	25	0	16
12 months to 2 years	0	25	0	25	0	2
2 years to 5 years	0	50	0	50	0	10
5 years to 10 years	0	75	0	75	0	18
10 years and above	0	100	0	100	0	54

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

**Background Documents:**

None.

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**Tel:**        (0116) 257 2891

<b>Implications</b>   Treasury Management Annual Report 2016/17	
<b>Finance</b>	Strong, prudent treasury management is vital to the governance and financing of the Council.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	No direct implications.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b> In periods of tight financial control strong treasury management is vital. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Reputation Damage (CR4)</b> Inappropriate treasury management decisions could severely damage the Council's reputation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Regulatory Governance (CR6)</b> Treasury management of public money is governed by statute, regulations and codes of practice,
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Teamwork (V3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovation (V4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

**TOTAL INVESTMENTS PLACED DURING THE PERIOD**  
**1 APRIL 2016 TO 31 MARCH 2017**

	<b>Cumulative No. Of Investments In Year</b>		<b>Total Value Invested in Year £ 000's</b>
<b>British Clearing Banks</b>			
National Westminster Bank plc	159		49,742
<b>Local Authorities</b>			
Cornwall County Council	1		2,000
Thurrock Borough Council	1		1,500
Blackburn Borough Council	1		2,000
Blackpool City Council	1		1,000
Newport City Council	1		1,000
Gloucester City Council	1		1,500
	<b>144</b>		<b>58,742</b>

**SCHEDULE OF PWLB LOANS (HRA SELF – FINANCING SETTLEMENT)**

<b>Principal (£)</b>	<b>Rate of Interest (%)</b>	<b>Date of Maturity</b>
1,006,333	1.99	20/03/2020
1,006,333	2.21	20/03/2021
1,006,333	2.40	20/03/2022
1,006,333	2.56	20/03/2023
1,006,333	2.70	20/03/2024
1,006,333	2.82	20/03/2025
1,006,333	2.92	20/03/2026
1,006,333	3.01	20/03/2027
1,006,333	3.08	20/03/2028
1,006,333	3.15	20/03/2029
1,006,333	3.21	20/03/2030
1,006,333	3.26	20/03/2031
1,006,333	3.30	20/03/2032
1,006,333	3.34	20/03/2033
1,006,333	3.37	20/03/2034
1,006,333	3.40	20/03/2035
1,006,333	3.42	20/03/2036
1,006,333	3.44	20/03/2037
<b>18,113,994</b>	<b>Total</b>	

**INVESTMENTS STRATEGY 2017/18 – 2018/19****1.0 Introduction**

This strategy is written in accordance with guidance issued under section 15 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Guidance on Local Authority Investments issued in April 2010, any revisions of that guidance, the Audit Commission's report on Icelandic investments and the revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes (2011).

The objectives of this strategy are to:

- facilitate investment decisions which ensure that the Council's investment sums remain secure
- ensure the liquidity of investments so that the Council has sufficient cash resources available to carry out its functions at all times
- achieve the maximum return on investments after taking into account security and liquidity

**2.0 Current Investments**

At present the Council has no fixed investments.

Surplus funds arising from day to day operations are invested based on the most up to date forecasts of interest rates and in accordance with the Council's cash flow requirements in order to gain maximum benefit from the Council's cash position throughout the year. In the current financial climate only specified investments will be considered as set out below.

**3.0 Investments**

In accordance with relevant guidance, all investments will be placed for a maximum of 364 days and amounts will only be invested with counterparties included on the Council's approved list. Institutions with which specified investments will be made include:

- UK government institutions and other local authorities
- institutions which have been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency

The Council's Treasury Management Practice note 1 (3) states that 'The Section 151 Officer will be responsible for preparing for the Council a list of institutions in which the Council's funds may be invested. This list will be supported by details of the criteria employed to assess the various credit standings of counterparties'. The following credit ratings will be considered:



- Long-term ratings – these range from the highest rating of AAA to the lowest rating of D. As the title suggests, this indicator reflects the long-term stability of the institution.
- Short-term ratings - These have a time horizon of less than 12 months and therefore place greater emphasis on the liquidity necessary to meet financial commitments in a timely manner. As all of the Council's investments are expected to be for less than 364 days, this is of particular importance. The ratings are F1 (highest credit quality), F2 (good credit quality), F3 (fair credit quality) and B to D (representing various levels of potential default).
- Individual ratings – These range from the highest of A to the lowest of F. This rating is only assigned to banks and attempts to assess how it would be viewed if it were entirely independent and could not rely upon external support.
- Support ratings – These range from 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest. It is a judgement on whether a bank would receive support should this become necessary. It is assumed that any such support would come from the sovereign state or institutional owners.

The Council's counterparty list needs to provide security for the amounts invested whilst containing a sufficient number of institutions with which to place funds. For the purpose of this strategy in respect of Categories 1 and 2 below, only counterparties that meet all of the following criteria will be considered for investment.

- UK banks
- Building societies with asset bases in excess of £6 billion.
- By reference to all three major credit rating agencies (Fitch, Standard and Poor's, Moody's) only those that reach the minimum standard for the lowest agency rating set out.

#### Category 1

The minimum ratings that will be considered for all agencies are set out below:

	<b>Credit Agency</b>		
<b>Term</b>	<b>Fitch</b>	<b>Moody's</b>	<b>S &amp; P</b>
<b>Short</b>	F1	P1	A1
<b>Long</b>	AA-	AA3	AA-
<b>Individual</b>	C	D	
<b>Support</b>	3		

For any organisation that meets the above criteria, up to £1.5m may be invested at any one time for a maximum duration of 364 days.

**Any building society that meets the above criteria must also have an asset base in excess of £6 billion.**

#### Category 2

The minimum ratings that will be considered for all agencies are set out below:

	Credit Agency		
Term	Fitch	Moody's	S & P
Short	F1	P1	A1
Long	A	A2	A1
Individual	C	D	
Support	3		

For any organisation that meets the above criteria, up to £1m may be invested at any one time for a maximum duration of 6 months.

**Any building society that meets the above criteria must also have an asset base in excess of £6 billion.**

Other counterparties that can be used and any restrictions applicable are set out below.

#### Debt Management Office

Investments of a maximum duration of 6 months can be made with this Government department.

#### Public Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales

Investments of up to £5m at any one time with a maximum duration of 364 days can be made with these bodies. These include local government, fire and police authorities.

#### Money Market Funds

Investments of up to £1.5m per fund at one time can be made provided they are AAA rated.

Credit ratings are monitored on a daily basis using Sector's credit rating service by the Section 151 Officer who will determine the amendments to be made to the counterparty list when credit ratings change.

The proposed counterparty list for investments is given at Annex 3.1.

### **4.0 Liquidity of Investments**

The period for which investments are placed will be based on the Council's cash flow forecasts and estimates of movements in interest rates. The Council does not expect to place investments for longer than 364 days although this situation will be kept under review by the Section 151 Officer. Long-term investments

will only be made where it is clear that surplus cash resources are not required for the day to day financing of the Council's activities. The maximum period for any long-term investments will be the three-year planning cycle covered by this strategy.

The maximum amount which may be held in investments lasting more than 364 days will be 25% of the average annual investments.

## **5.0 Policy on the Use of External Service Providers**

External investment managers will not be used, except to the extent that a Money Market Fund can be considered an external manager.

The Authority uses Sector as an external treasury advisor but still recognise that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council at all times. Whilst it is recognised that undue reliance should not be placed on external advisors, it is valuable to be able to access specialist skills and resources.

## **6.0 Scheme of Delegation**

Policy, Finance and Development Committee

- Approval of annual strategy
- Approval of annual treasury outturn report
- Approval of mid year treasury management updates
- Mid year treasury management updates
- Review of treasury management policy and procedures, including making recommendations to responsible body

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Scrutiny of Treasury Management Strategy and Plan, Investment Strategy and Annual Outturn Report

Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer)

- Day to day management of treasury management, within agreed policy
- Appointment of external advisors, within existing Council procurement procedures and standing orders.

## **7.0 Role of Section 151 Officer**

The Section 151 Officer has day to day responsibility for running the treasury management function.

## **8.0 Ethical Investment Strategy**

The Council aims to be aware of ethical issues within its investment strategy. Where any member of the Council becomes concerned about such issues, these matters should be reported to the Section 151 Officer. Where necessary, the

Section 151 Officer will then present a response to the concerns raised to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Development Committee.

**EXTERNAL INVESTMENT OF FUNDS - APPROVED INSTITUTIONS****Category 1**

<b>Restrictions</b>	
<b>Max Amount £m</b>	1.5
<b>Duration</b>	364 days
<b>Asset Base (Building Societies Only)</b>	£6 bn

HSBC Bank plc

*(Rating Source: Sector – Feb 2014)*Long-term  
Rating

AA-

Short-term  
Rating

F1+

**Category 2**

<b>Restrictions</b>	
<b>Max Amount £m</b>	1
<b>Duration</b>	6 months
<b>Asset Base (Building Societies Only)</b>	£6 bn

Bank of Scotland plc

Barclays Bank plc

Lloyds Bank plc

Nationwide Building Society

Royal Bank of Scotland plc

Santander UK plc

Standard Chartered Bank

*(Rating Source: Sector – Feb 2014)*Long-term  
Rating

A

A

A

A

A

A

AA-

Short-term  
Rating

F1

F1

F1

F1

F1

F1

F1+

### **Debt Management Office**

<b>Restrictions</b>	
<b>Max Amount £m</b>	N/A
<b>Duration</b>	6 months

Operated by a National Government Department

### **Public Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales**

<b>Restrictions</b>	
<b>Max Amount £m</b>	5
<b>Duration</b>	364 days

All public authorities (including local government, fire and police authorities)  
in England, Wales and Scotland

### **Money Market Funds**

<b>Restrictions</b>	
<b>Max Amount £m</b>	1.5
<b>Duration</b>	N/A

Funds must be AAA-rated and operated by a company regulated by the Financial Services Authority. The Section 151 Officer, under delegated powers, will choose the appropriate fund(s).

# Agenda Item 14



**Policy, Finance and  
Development  
Committee**

**Tuesday, 25 July  
2017**

**Matter for  
Information**

**Title:** **Internal Audit Progress Report 2017/18**

**Author(s):** **Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)**

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## **1. Introduction**

This report summarises the work of Internal Audit for the period to the end of June 2017. The purpose of the report is to update the Committee on progress made in delivering the 2016/17 audit plan, commencing the 2017/18 audit plan, and to update in relation to management's implementation of internal audit recommendations. It should be read in conjunction with the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2016/17 included elsewhere on this meeting's agenda.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

That Members note the content of the progress report for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

## **3. Information**

The Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18 has been agreed and Section 5 of the attached Appendix gives details of planned audits over the coming months.

The purpose of the Report is to:

- Show progress against the Audit Plan; and
- Summarise key findings and conclusions arising from the work performed during the period.

The **Appendix** also gives details of the audits completed in 2016/17 and provides information on the audit recommendations.

### **Background Documents:**

None.

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<b>Implications</b>   Internal Audit Progress Report 2017/18	
<b>Finance</b>	No direct implications.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Legal</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Corporate Risk(s)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	Internal Audit is a key component of the Council's internal control framework. Outcomes of all internal audit reviews will be considered in the context of the strategic risk register.
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>



# Oadby & Wigston Borough Council

## Internal Audit Progress Report

July 2017

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Bringing public value to life

**cw audit**  
internal audit services

## 1. Introduction

This report summarises the work of Internal Audit for the period to the end of June 2017. The purpose of the report is to update the Committee on progress made in delivering the 2016/17 audit plan, commencing the 2017/18 audit plan, and to update in relation to management's implementation of internal audit recommendations.

## 2. Progress summary

The agreed internal audit plan for the 2016/17 year has been substantially completed, with a limited amount of work still remaining. This is dealt with further in the Head of Internal Audit Annual Opinion report separately on this agenda. We have started work on the 2017/18 internal audit plan; Section 5 provides details of all audit assignments included in the 2017/18 year, together with details of the point in the year at which each assignment is currently planned for delivery and an update on the current position.

The following 2016/17 audits remain to be formally reported:

Housing Rents – a draft report was issued on 30/5/17 and a management response is awaited.

Housing Responsive Repairs – a draft report was issued on 8/6/17 and a management response is awaited.

Grant aid – Town Forums – in progress

In addition the following 2015/16 audit is still to be formally reported:

Community Safety/Anti-social Behaviour – a draft report is under discussion and we expect that a final management briefing report will be agreed before the next meeting of this Committee.

## 3. Reviews completed

The following reviews have been completed and final reports agreed with management since the last full Internal Audit progress report (March 2017 meeting):

Review	Status	Level of assurance
<b>2016/17 Payroll</b>	Final report issued	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>2016/17 Vehicle Procurement and Fleet Management</b>	Final report issued	<b>Significant</b>
<b>2016/17 Housing - Void Property Management</b>	Final report issued	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>2016/17 Medium Term Financial Strategy/Budgetary Control</b>	Final report issued	<b>Moderate</b>
<b>2016/17 Creditors (including procurement)</b>	Final report issued	<b>Moderate</b>

At the request of the Committee at its February 2014 meeting, and as subsequently agreed with the Chair of this Committee, to ensure members are provided with further detail only on issues which may warrant their concern, we only report specific findings, recommendations and agreed actions arising from our finalised audits where these relate to matters we deemed to be high risk/priority. The following issues were raised in relation to the above finalised audits.

### **Payroll**

Neither HR nor Finance sections undertake checks to ensure the overall validity and accuracy of the payroll before the BACS payroll run. HR do check to confirm requested pay variations and leavers have been correctly actioned but these checks are not evidenced. Finance do carry out checks against budget but these may not be before the BACS payroll run. We recommended that a check of the accuracy of the payroll be introduced before the BACS run, and that this could be facilitated by using exception reports which can be requested from the payroll provider. The Corporate Resources Interim Manager agreed to obtain an exception report, by 31/7/17 to ensure any errors in pay can be identified before the payroll payment is made.

## **Vehicle Procurement & Fleet Management**

Records relating to the procurement of seven vehicles in 2016/17 could not be located to confirm the procurement process and its achievement of value for money and compliance with Contract Procedure Rules etc. This seemed to be due to the departure of the previous Fleet Manager. We recommended that relevant records should always be kept and securely retained, which was agreed for immediate implementation by the current Depot Manager.

## **Housing - Void Property Management**

Five high risk/priority matters were raised:

- We looked at a sample of cases where void works had taken significantly longer than usual and found it difficult to obtain records to explain why this was. Staff turnover also meant that knowledge of such cases was often lost. We recommended that clear records be kept and regularly monitored to address any performance issues. This was agreed by the Property Manager to be actioned by 1/7/17.
- The Housing Maintenance Team has a small number of contractors listed on Orchard and they are allocated repair work based on their specialism. These contractors have been used for many years and there is no evidence of any formal market testing being performed to ensure that they are providing the Council with value for money. In addition there is no formal performance monitoring carried out to ascertain how much is being spent with each of these contractors on an annual basis and how these should be treated to ensure compliance with Contract Procedure Rules which state that "the aggregate value of any contract is calculated on the basis of the total value of the consideration. In relation to goods, works and services the value of the contract shall be the total expenditure incurred over a four year period." We recommended that management should review the use of existing contractors and consider market testing to ensure the Council is getting value for money from their services; and that overall annual amounts spent with each contractor should be monitored. The Property Manager committed to seek, by 1/7/17, guidance from the Section 151 Officer on Contract Procedure Rules requirements and aggregation of contracts, and to compile expenditure data to support that discussion.

- Contract Procedure Rules state that for contracts with a value of £5,001 to £75,000 at least three written quotations should be sought and that, to ensure adequate competition there must be at least two satisfactory responses from the three quotations requested and that if the Council receives only one satisfactory response, the officer must obtain an additional quote or obtain an exemption. Our testing noted a number of cases where this rule was not applied or the trail of evidence to support decisions taken was not clear. We recommended that Contract Procedure Rules should be complied with in relation to obtaining at least two satisfactory responses from the three quotations requested, to ensure competition and seek to obtain best value for money. Immediate action was agreed by the Property Manager to address the matter.
- Contract Procedure Rules state that purchase orders should be signed by relevant officers for orders with a value up to £5,000 and that relevant officers should sign contracts or agreements for between £5,000-£75,000. In the absence of a written contract, a Purchase Order containing the relevant information and signed by an authorised signatory is sufficient. The process in operation for void property works does not ensure documented approval by relevant authorised officers. We recommended that Contract Procedure Rules should be complied with. The Property Manager agreed to review order authorisation processes by 1/7/17 whilst noting that this could not be based on hard copy signatures.
- There is no budget monitoring in place in relation to the individual cost of void work, the scale of job cost variations nor the accuracy of initial estimates. A report was generated from the Orchard system for our audit, showing estimates versus actual job costs. This showed that overall year to date actual costs were £56,000 more than estimated at that point. The Property Manager agreed to increase awareness of the importance of these estimates and to improve accuracy where possible. The team will set out what is required in revised procedures and issue guidance notes.

### **Medium Term Financial Strategy/Budgetary Control**

The following high risk/priority issues were highlighted:

- The Council needs to urgently confirm and implement robust savings plans to support its strategy to achieve financial balance over the term of the current MTFS, and roll forward the MTFS for later years.

- Compliance with Financial Regulations when authorizing virements and supplementary budget requests and updating the ledger thereafter needs to be ensured.
- Financial training for budget holders and other relevant officers, and members needs to be established.

### **Creditors (including procurement)**

In 40% of the cases covered in our sample testing, although tenders or three written quotes were needed to comply with Contract Procedure Rules requirements, evidence to demonstrate this could not be obtained.

We also highlighted cases where although creditors had been paid, evidence could not be located to show that the goods/services involved had been supplied.

The Interim Chief Finance Officer has proposed that the Contract Procedure Rules be reviewed to ensure their consistency with the revised Financial Regulations and that all relevant officers then be given refresher training to ensure they are fully aware of the requirements of these documents, including on the above areas, to ensure future compliance.

We also highlighted that important reports and records to evidence changes to supplier data were appropriate, had not been run and retained. Certain other previously-agreed fraud prevention controls on this matter were also not evidenced as in place. Management has agreed to establish controls

## **4. Recommendation tracking**

We provide a system for tracking the actioning of agreed Internal Audit recommendations, as a management assurance tool for the Council and specifically this Committee. Managers are responsible for updating actions taken and other key information directly on the system. The first table below represents the status of agreed actions due to be implemented by 30/06/17, the second table the age of the outstanding recommendations (based on the original date due for implementation). The status shown is as advised by the relevant manager/Head of Service and does not imply that Internal Audit has verified the status.

Summary	1 Critical	2 High	3 Medium	4 Low	Total
Due by 30/06/17	-	43	247	71	361
Implemented	-	39	221	68	328
Closed (e.g. superseded or system changed)	-	-	9	2	11
Still to be completed	-	4	17	1	22

Time overdue for actions o/s or not complete	1 Critical	2 High	3 Medium	4 Low	Total
Less than 3 months	-	-	3	-	3
3 – 6 months	-	1	4	-	5
Greater than 6 months	-	3	10	1	14
Total	-	4	17	1	22

As previously requested we provide below details of all outstanding 'high risk' issues, and 'medium risk' issues outstanding for more than 6 months. (NB where these issues have been reported on previous occasions we have not restated the original recommendation or previous updates).

## 'High Risk' outstanding issues

Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
14/15 Street Cleansing & Grounds Maintenance	<u>Key Service Risks</u>  Original recommendation: It should be ensured that all the risk assessments identified by Audit and/or due for review are reviewed in a timely manner. Additionally new risks to the service should be identified and assessed. Based on the evaluated risks rating undertaken as part of these risk assessments (reviews and additionally identified risks), key service risks should be identified and included in a Risk Register which should then be kept under constant review.	2	Ongoing with H&S Officer Rescheduled to 31/12/17
15/16 Budgetary Control/MTFS	<u>Budget Holder Training</u>	2	Unchanged - Senior Managers are briefed on the current financial position at the fortnightly managers meetings as appropriate. This will continue throughout 2017/18. Training - revised date 31/3/18.
15/16 Main Accounting	<u>Leavers Access to Council's IT system</u>	2	Original response: ICT to co-ordinate with Human Resources to identify when officers leave the employment of the authority to ensure they are deactivated in a timely manner. Paul Langham, IT Manager 28/2/16



Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
			Owner changed subsequently to Mike Dungey, ICT Infrastructure Manager. Management update: Agreed that from 1 August 2017, the leavers list will be emailed to ICT on the first day of every month.
2015/16 Housing Register & Allocations	<u>Housing Applications</u>  All current applicants on the Housing Register should be reviewed to ensure that the details and allocated bandings held on the Housing Register are correct.	2	Most recent management update: Senior Housing Options Officer has been appointed and with the extra resource random sampling of applications will be commence before 1 September Rescheduled to 1/9/17

### **Medium (level 3) risks outstanding for over 6 months**

Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
13/14 Equalities	To comply with the legislation the Council should consider enhancing the type of information presented in its workforce profile to include a profile of staff at different grade, levels and rates of pay, including part-time work etc	3	Most recent management update: Workforce profile data has been collected by HR to analyse and publish by September 2017
12/13 Risk Management	An exercise should be undertaken to review all existing partnerships and projects to establish what risk registers are currently in place. A	3	Most recent management update: Zurich Municipal have now been contracted to revise the Council's risk strategy, register and roll out training to SMT and Service Heads with the possibility of further training to other key staff at a latter date. – revised date 31/12/17

Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
	review should then take place to standardise the format of partnership and project risk registers and ensure that all partnerships and projects maintain such registers.		
14/15 Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance	Efficient working: It should be ensured that consideration is given to the maximisation of the efficient and effective use of staff and equipment (including procurement) across the Clean and Green Team and other Council Teams.	3	Most recent management update: date amended to 31/3/17 – this is still ongoing with HR.  Waiting for Council decision on Waste Collection service.
15/16 Benefits	Management should review the information held on the Council website to ensure it is accurate, and up to date.	3	Update from Chris Raymakers: This is part of a wider piece of work across the organisation on performance reporting and management when all KPIUs will be reported on the website. Rescheduled to 31/10/17
14/15 Refuse & Recycling Collection	<u>Recycling Strategy</u>  The Recycling and Composting Strategy 2005 -2015 should be reviewed, updated and re-implemented.	3	Most recent management update: Until a final decision is made in September 2017 regarding Waste, the strategy cannot not be written. Rescheduled to 31/12/17
14/15 Refuse & Recycling Collection	<u>Vehicle Replacement/Procurement Programme</u>  A vehicle replacement / procurement programme for the refuse and recycling fleet should be completed as	3	Original response: This is being done at present.  Martin Bennett (now Mark Weskamp, Fleet Manager) – by 31/7/16  Update - Awaiting Council decision on the method and frequency of collections; to be reported to Dec 2017 Council meeting.

Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
	<p>soon as possible. KPIs should be introduced to enable the monitoring of the downtime of vehicles. This should highlight vehicles that are constantly or more regularly idle and enable investigation into the reasons. Relevant information from this monitoring should be used to update the vehicle replacement / procurement programme.</p>		
15/16 Council Tax	<p><u>Reporting of arrears</u></p> <p>Arrears reports showing the position and performance of the Recovery Team in collecting arrears should be produced periodically and considered by senior management. This could be monthly or quarterly and show information including/such as: the position to date; performance since the last report; comparative performance against prior year; and Detailed reports on the oldest and highest risk debtors outlining what has been done and other potential recovery actions that need to be considered including ongoing write-offs.</p>	3	<p>Update from Chris Raymakers: Scrutinizing and reporting on the recovery of arrears will be a performance target for the new Senior Recovery Officer and his team Revised date: 31 October 2017.</p>

Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
15/16 Business Rates	<p><u>Collection and Recovery Performance Reporting</u></p> <p>The Council should ensure quarterly reports on key elements of the performance of collection and recovery of Business Rates is reported to senior management outside the department.</p>	3	Update from Chris Raymakers: Scrutinizing and reporting on the recovery of arrears will be a performance target for the new Senior Recovery Officer and his team Revised date: 31 October 2017.
15/16 Housing Rents	<p><u>Rent roll and reconciliation to property records</u></p> <p>An annual reconciliation should be undertaken of the properties on the rent system and the Council's asset register, and that this agrees to legal services records.</p>	3	<p>Most recent management update: Will be completed when new rent roll is updated in February-Chris Raymakers, Interim Accountancy Manager 28/2/17.</p> <p>Update - Further reconciliation will take place in October 2017.</p>
15/16 Building Control	<p><u>Disabled Facilities Works</u></p> <p>Management should consider arranging discussions between the Building Control Surveyor and the DFG consultant to ensure there is clarity on the level of detail required to facilitate Building Control review of plans, and where possible as a result reduce the level of non-chargeable time the service needs to dedicate to inspecting such building projects</p>	3	<p>Original response: Agree for this to be considered. Adrian Thorpe, Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager By 31/12/16</p> <p>Update from Steve Glazebrook 12/7/17: DFG's are moving over to Lightbulb on 1/10/17 who will take over full responsibility for delivering the service.</p>

Review	Recommendation	Risk Rating	Current status per Management
	(whilst still ensuring proper compliance).		

## 5. 2017/18 Internal audit plan

Review	Scheduled Start*	Status	Level of assurance
Performance Management	By September 2017	Scoping	
Business Continuity	By September 2017	Scope agreed	
IT & Information risk assessment	By September 2017		
Capital Programme	Oct 2017 – March 2018		
Anti Fraud & Corruption-targeted fraud prevention/detection work	Oct 2017 – March 2018		
Project assurance (eg Housing Company, System Support, Asset Management)	To be ascertained dependent on project progress		
Procurement	Jan – March 2018		
Budgetary Control	Oct – Dec 2017		
Financial systems (ledger, creditors, debtors, treasury management, income management & cash receipting-key controls	Oct – Dec 2017		
MTFS – key risk areas/savings plans	July – Dec 2017	Scoping	

Review	Scheduled Start*	Status	Level of assurance
assurance			
IT contract assurance	To be agreed		
Payroll & Expenses	Oct 2017 – Mar 2018		
Taxi and Hackney Carriage Licensing	By Dec 2017		
Council Tax	Oct – Dec 2017		
Business Rates	Oct – Dec 2017		
Benefits/Council Tax Support	Oct – Dec 2017		
Management of Section 106 agreements and related contributions	Oct – Dec 2017		
Housing Rents	Jan – Mar 2018		
Repairs & Voids key controls/follow-up	Jan – Mar 2018		
Fuel and valuable asset control	By Sept 2017	Scoping	
Additional – General Data Protection Regulation preparedness	By Sept 2017	Scope agreed	

- Timings either agreed with management where relevant or proposed by us.



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Title:** **Timetable: Budget Options 2018/19 and 2019/20**

**Author(s):** **Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)**

## 1. Introduction

At its meeting on 6 July 2017, Council reviewed a range of budget options in order to provide advice and guidance to the Senior Management Team to produce a robust programme of projects and schemes to be developed as part of the budget plans for 2018/19 that would achieve the planned net reduction in annual spending of £700,000 by 2019/20 set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The report to Council is included at **Appendix 1** (below table) to this report. It will be noted that Council were not asked to agree any specific savings at this stage.

Council went through the various budget options and the senior Management Team was tasked to provide a timetable for carrying out further analysis and bringing back more detailed reports on each proposal, to include consultation arrangements, consideration of risks, equalities issues and timescale for delivery.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

That Members note the contents of the report and agree the timetable for bringing back more detailed reports on each budget proposal set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

## 3. Information (**Appendix 1**)

- 3.1. The proposed timetable for the various budget options set out in Appendix 1 to this report is as follows:

<b>Budget Option</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
<b>Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)</b>	To be actioned by SMT once the facility ceases to be economically viable – Likely closure to be April 2018. Impact: 2018/19 Budget
<b>Wholly Owned Housing Company</b>	Housing Company now set up and Advisory Panel due to meet in the Autumn. Impact 2018/19 Budget
<b>Brocks Hill</b>	Report to Council September 2017 relating to the whole site. Impact 2018/19 Budget
<b>Public Toilets</b>	Report to Council December 2017 with options for each site. Impact 2018/19 Budget



<b>Green Waste</b>	Consultants to be appointed by Change Management Committee after meeting in July to report back in December 2017 on options. Impact 2018/19 Budget
<b>Refuse and Recycling Collections</b>	Consultants to be appointed by Change Management Committee after meeting in July to report back December 2017 on options. Impact 2019/20 Budget.
<b>Car Parking</b>	To report back in December 2017 on options on a site by site basis with overall Management Plan. Impact 2019/20 Budget
<b>Administrative Offices</b>	Officers to begin preliminary work on alternatives as part of the wider Transformation strategy. Periodic reports on progress to be brought to relevant Committees recognising that any financial impact will be outside the current planning horizon of the MTFS.
<b>Discretionary Services</b>	Report back in early 2018 with options for each service. Economic Development to be reported to September 2017 Council. Set up a five Member panel to review the discretionary grants arrangements. Impact 2018/19 Budget
<b>Vacant Chief Executive Position</b>	To facilitate a five Member panel to review options in October 2017.

- 3.2. All of the work required to work up the budget options will be co-ordinated by the Senior Management Team. The totality of all budget options recommended to future Council or Committee meetings must sum to a reduction in net General Fund expenditure of at least £350,000 for financial year 2018/19 and a further £350,000 for financial year 2019/20.

#### **Background Documents:**

Report entitled 'Budget Options 2018/19 and 2019/20' by the Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer to Council (Extraordinary) on 6 July 2017.

**E-mail:** martin.hone@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

**Tel:** (0116) 257 2621

<b>Implications</b>   Timetable: Budget Options 2018/19 and 2019/20	
<b>Finance</b>	As set out in the body of the report.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Legal</b>	As set out in the body of the report.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Key Supplier/Partnership Failure (CR2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Political Dynamics (CR3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Reputation Damage (CR4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Utilisation of Assets/Buildings (CR5)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisational/Transformational Change (CR8)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Economy/Regeneration (CR9)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Balanced Economic Development (CP3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Green &amp; Safe Places (CP4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Wellbeing for All (CP5)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Respect (V2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Teamwork (V3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovation (V4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b>
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	Not directly applicable.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

# Agenda Item 16



**Policy, Finance and  
Development  
Committee**

**Tuesday, 25 July  
2017**

**Matter for  
Information**

**Title: Collection and Write-Off of Miscellaneous Debtors**

**Author(s): Martin Hone (Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer)**

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## **1. Introduction**

As part of the income collection process the Council's Finance Section is responsible for the production and collection of general invoices for sundry/miscellaneous debts across all services of the Council. This report updates members on the current collection position and requests permission to write-off larger items as required by the Council's Financial Regulations.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

That Members note the contents of the report.

## **3. Information**

- 3.1 The Council's Finance Section is responsible for the raising and collection of around 1,400 invoice per annum, with an annual value of approximately £1.5 million relating to income for all services of the Council.

The Council uses three principal methods for collecting these debts.

- (i) Direct contact with the debtor by letter or telephone;
- (ii) Referring the debt to a collection agent; and
- (iii) Legal action through the courts.

During the financial year 2016/17 Council raised 1,398 invoices totalling £1,424,377 during 2016/17.

In the first quarter of 2017/18 194 invoices were raised totalling £510,812.

- 3.2 The Current position relating to collection of outstanding invoices is summarised below

	<b>Days Overdue</b>					
	0-90	90-182	182-365	365-730	Over 730	Total
28 February 2017	63,693	6,074	16,620	33,326	132,939	252,652
30 June 2017	75,991	13,663	14,129	27,132	117,219	248,134

- 3.3 During the first quarter of 2017/18 miscellaneous debt has continued to fall through careful management. Of the total debt of £248,000 approximately £94,000 (97 accounts) is actively managed through instalments.

- 3.4 In the first quarter the Council has:

- Referred 21 cases to the collection agent;
- Write-offs totalling £811 have been made in line with the Financial Regulations;

- 9 accounts have completed their arrangements to pay; and
- A Key Performance Indicator (KPI) of the Council is the proportion of debt over 90 days old as a percentage of the total estimated annual debit. At 30 June this percentage is 12% (the target for 2016/17 is to be under 20%).

#### **4. Requested Debt Write-Off**

There are no write-offs in the first quarter which require Committee approval.

#### **Background Documents:**

None.

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**Tel:**        (0116) 257 2891

<b>Implications</b>   Collection and Write-Off of Miscellaneous Debtors	
<b>Finance</b>	Good debt management is essential if the Council is to maximise its revenue streams.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Reputation Damage (CR4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Economy/Regeneration (CR9)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Increased Fraud (CR10)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Balanced Economic Development (CP3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Wellbeing for All (CP5)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Teamwork (V3)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	No implications.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Decision</b>
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**Title:** **Court Duties: Locally Collected Taxes**

**Author(s):** **Martin Hone (Interim Chief Financial Officer / Section 151 Officer)**

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## 1. Introduction

As part of its local tax collection processes the Council's Finance, Revenues, and Benefits Section regularly appear in the local Magistrate's Court as part of the recovery process for outstanding debt.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

Members approve the list of Officers in section 3.2 below.

## 3. Information

- 3.1 It is required that Policy, Finance and Development Committee approve the list of officers who appear in court on local tax collection matters.
- 3.2 Due to the recent re-structuring in the Revenues and Benefits Section which included some changes in job titles, it has become necessary to request that the posts authorised by the Council to appear on its behalf in court with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates be amended.
- 3.3 It is requested, under the provisions of Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1972, that the Revenues Team Leader, Senior Recovery Officer, and Recovery Officer be duly authorised to appear in the Magistrates' Court on behalf of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council in respect of all duties concerning locally collected taxes.

### Background Documents:

None.

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<b>Implications</b>   Court Duties: Locally Collected Taxes	
<b>Finance</b>	It is important that Officers are able to carry out debt collection duties efficiently and with the full support of the law.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	Contained within the report at paragraph 3.3.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b> Collection of arrears increases income to the Council. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Reputation Damage (CR4)</b> Poor debt recovery impacts on the Council's reputation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Increased Fraud (CR10)</b> Increase in fraud makes debt recovery more important.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1)</b> It is important for the residents to see the public purse protected. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Wellbeing for All (CP5)</b> Good debt management increases wellbeing in the Borough by stopping debt increasing unnecessarily.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b> It is important for the residents to see the public purse protected. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Respect (V2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Teamwork (V3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovation (V4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b>
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	No implications.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information</b>
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**Title:** **Elliott Hall Youth and Community Centre, South Wigston**

**Author(s):** **Adrian Thorpe**  
**(Planning Development and Regeneration Manager)**

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## 1. Introduction

This report seeks Members approval for the Council to make a financial contribution toward the establishment of the Elliott Hall Youth and Community Centre in South Wigston.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:

1. Members approve in principle a grant of £30,000 to 'Step Out South Wigston Youth Group' towards the establishment of the Elliott Hall Youth and Community Centre in South Wigston from funds identified in the Council's Capital Programme for 2017/18 as set out in paragraph 3.4 below.
2. Delegated authority is provided to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to agree the terms on which the grant is provided to 'Step Out South Wigston Youth Group'.

## 3. Information

- 3.1. Step Out Youth Group opened in 2015. The Borough Council has previously supported a number of activities provided by the Youth Group. It now has over 86 children on its register and has outgrown the premises that it currently hires.
- 3.2. The Youth Group has now found an alternative location, which is the former Needle Factory on Albion Street in South Wigston. It proposes that this will provide a suitable location from which to run the Step Out Youth Group and also as a centre for other community meetings and activities. A copy of the Business Plan is appended to this report which contains full details of the proposal.
- 3.3. The Youth Group has requested a financial contribution from the Borough Council of £30,000 to be used towards the following in order to make the building operational:
  - new staircase leading to fire exit door (including architect and engineers fees);
  - electrical work, including improvements to heating;
  - alarm system;
  - new fire system;
  - kitchen;
  - toilets;
  - stair lift;
  - secondary glazing to reduce noise and improve insulation; and
  - skip hire.



- 3.4. It has been emphasised to Step Out South Wigston Youth Group on a number of occasions that Councillors will make a decision as to funding based upon the information that the Youth Group is able to provide in support of its case. The Youth Group's business plan is attached (**Appendix 1**).
- 3.5. The Borough Council currently has £114,000 identified in its capital programme to act as a contribution towards improvements to Blaby Road Park Pavilion in South Wigston in order to make it suitable to operate a youth club from the Pavilion. Discussions have previously been held with a potential operator which had been seeking the additional funding necessary to bring forward this project, however, there has been no further contact from this potential operator with the Council in respect of this proposal for over 12 months. Therefore, it is proposed that £30,000 of this money is allocated in order to provide this grant.
- 3.6. The funding of £114,000 originates from the Section 106 monies received as a result of the Tesco development in South Wigston and comprises of interest accrued on this money whilst being held by the Borough Council.
- 3.7. Should the Committee approve in principle that a grant of £30,000 is provided to 'Step Out South Wigston Youth Group' towards the establishment of the Elliott Hall Youth and Community Centre in South Wigston then it is recommended that delegated authority is provided to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of this Committee to agree the terms on which the grant is provided. These terms will include criteria and timescale for spending the funds and the return of the funds in the event that the scheme does not come to fruition.
- 3.8. It is the opinion of the Council's Community Safety and Youth Coordinator that the Step Out Youth Group fulfils an important role in South Wigston by engaging with and providing activities for young people in South Wigston and surrounding areas. It is therefore considered appropriate for the Borough Council to meet the Step Out Youth Club's request and to provide a grant of £30,000 towards establishing the new facility.
- 3.9. However, in the course of preparing this report, it has also come to light that the Community Action Partnership is exploring opportunities to provide what it describes as 'a professional and well resourced youth service provision' from the Bassett Street Community Hub in South Wigston following a successful year which has seen the number of young people aged 10-16 using Bassett Street increase by 93% compared to 2015. As a result the Community Action Partnership is looking to deliver a number of educational workshops for young people and is bidding for additional funding to establish a drama group and to increase capacity to deliver open access youth work in South Wigston.
- 3.10. It is the opinion of the Council's Community Safety and Youth Coordinator the opportunities being explored by the Community Action Partnership with in general compliment the Step Out South Wigston Youth Group because Community Action Partnership will focus on educational workshops for young people, particularly looking at mental health and life skills, which Step Out South Wigston Youth Group offers a more social provision.
- 3.11. However, the open access youth work proposed by the Community Action Partnership would create more direct completion with the Step Out South Wigston Youth Group. Therefore, it is the intention of the Council's Community Safety and Youth Coordinator to meet with representative of both organisations to ensure that there is a consistency in their youth work provision in South Wigston.

**Background Documents:**

Elliott Hall, Youth and Community Hall Business Plan, 2017

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**Tel:**        (0116) 257 2645

<b>Implications</b>   Housing White Paper: Increase in Planning Fees in the Borough	
<b>Finance</b>	The funding to provide a grant of £30,000 to 'Step Out South Wigston Youth Group' is available in the Council's Capital Programme. See paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 above.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	The grant should be subject to a formal agreement being drawn up and in accordance with the Group's Constitution.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b>
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Key Supplier/Partnership Failure (CR2)</b> The Council's Community Safety and Youth Coordinator will meet with representative of both organisations to ensure that there is a consistency in their youth work provision in South Wigston.
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>An Inclusive and Engaged Borough (CP1)</b>
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Wellbeing for All (CP5)</b>
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovation (V4)</b>
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b> Providing the grant will assist in service improvements to young people in South Wigston through effective innovation and customer focus.
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

## APPENDIX 1



**Business Plan  
2017**

# **Elliott Hall Youth and Community Hall South Wigston**

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Elliott Hall will deliver a modern, fit for purpose facility, which will allow the organisation to support the growth of youth provision and groups within the community of South Wigston, and the borough as a whole to operate within.

Whilst the project will principally focus on youth, its intention is to introduce other activities for all age groups, which will promote health and well-being within the community and borough of Oadby , Wigston and South Wigston.

Creating a larger better equipped community space, compliments our operation by offering people of all ages the opportunity to develop, away from the pressure of those engaged in anti-social behaviour, petty crime and unhealthy lifestyles.

As part of the development process, the group will achieve community status with a clear commitment to promote good practice within our own operation, in addition to working closely with local schools and groups to provide a gateway into organised events within the community of South Wigston and the surrounding area.

The project will provide two large rooms; the ground floor will offer a large open space with changing facilities, a small kitchen area and disabled access to upper floor. Also, the building will offer a disabled toilet, separate male/female toilets and a store room.

The upper floor will offer a large open space, large catering kitchen with a separate room for computers. This will ensure that Elliott Hall can host different activities for groups of all ages at the same time within a safe environment.

Elliott Hall hold a strong belief that being a member of a group, should not have a negative impact on family life. The group is unique within the area by being able to offer extended activities for non-members of the youth group, and give families the opportunity to engage in alternative sport and social activities throughout the week, to become more of a community hub by broadening its scope of sports and activities for all ages, as well as offering different opportunities for all to enjoy.

Elliott Hall will be operated and managed by Step Out Youth Group Committee with the addition of the Elliott Hall Building Committee.

# Elliott Hall

## Background

Step Out was conceived in late 2015 when planning to hold a youth programme of activities on Blaby Road Park. Local schools, youth organisations, community groups, government and charity organisations all wishing to support and attend the event. The turnout was outstanding with children attending from all over the borough. Lots of important information was taken from these events from children, parents and carers. Consultation clearly indicated that a youth group was needed, and we had the support we needed. Step Out was born and was advertised through local schools, groups and through the Tesco community event where we promoted its activities.

We kicked off with local support from the borough council with the Something to Project run by Kane Radford, Jane Morris & Mark Smith. They decided to support this by offering funding in way of sports instructors doing Boxercise and Street Dance. This was huge hit with over fifty children attending.

Step Out has gained great support from local parents/carers who later came on board and attended training courses such as, Young Leicestershire's nationally accredited Passport to Volunteer training, DBS and First Aid. This abled us to run the youth group on our own with our own committee.

Supported by parents, local youth workers, PCSO's and other groups we became a busy youth club very quickly with over 86 children on the register. The group was attracting children from outside the area of South Wigston which has now been operating two hours an evening, twice a week. We could only operate at these times due to the venue we hire, but we would like to offer more services throughout the week and extending the number of qualified volunteers.

In 2016 we started to look for new facilities, but could only find two other buildings in South Wigston that could be appropriate. We finally found Elliott Hall which was the old needle factory on Albion Street in late 2016. We started to talk to different organisations and the local council to put wheels in motion to obtain permission to use the building.

We named the building after a local business man who, along with his wife, has done a lot for the local community. Both Rob & Ruth Elliott has been trying to find a building for the youth and community for a number of years. Since the main buildings in South Wigston, the Bassett Centre has lost its main hall due to library moving in, and The Bobbin Factory not meeting our needs. So the Step Out has embarked on a journey of continuous development combining the community with the valuable youth work they provide to the borough of Oadby & Wigston, mainly South Wigston.

# Elliott Hall

## Current Position

### **Why is the Project needed?**

The vision needed for the project is quite apparent; the existing facilities within South Wigston are inadequate, not fit for purpose for youth or community groups to operate.

We need to provide our members with a positive experience of using our facilities if we are to sustain and increase our current membership.

The underlying need is if we are to fulfil our responsibility as a “in part” public funded organisation, we must provide a facility which has the capacity to continually attract and retain new members, offer a range of activities which promote health and wellbeing to the entire community and encourage other groups to utilize the facilities.

The planned housing developments programs within the local areas will underpin the increased need for a youth and community building which Elliott Hall can provide, securing facility where local people can participate in sport and activities at an affordable cost.

Blaby, Oadby & Wigston 0-19 Locality Partnership Group conducted a needs analysis in November 2012 which highlighted the need for positive activities for young people. It also identified gaps in physical activities for 5-11 year olds.

Our aim to increase the number of people within the community and encouraging older people the opportunity to return to an active lifestyle, and meet others of all ages, this will not happen until we have delivered this project.

### **Aims and Objectives**

#### **Aims:**

- To create a modern facility which is fit for purpose
- To attract new users, especially during daytime
- To provide a community base
- To ensure by design that one activity does not have a negative impact on another
- To begin the process of empowering our Young People to direct the future of our group
- To gain an understanding of, and to meet, the needs of young people in terms of support and leisure activities and give them a voice in determining local provision
- To provide safe and positive outlet and environment for young and old people
- To encourage the foster social links and connections between different generations and increase participation between different parts of the community
- Encourage other delivery partners looking to provide activities for the people of South Wigston, by working in partnership and offering support such as shared training opportunities and resources, advice about the need of local community and support with delivery
- To provide a safe and supported environment through which local residents involved in can develop the skills and confidence to empower them provide ongoing activities for the community, young people and families in the future.

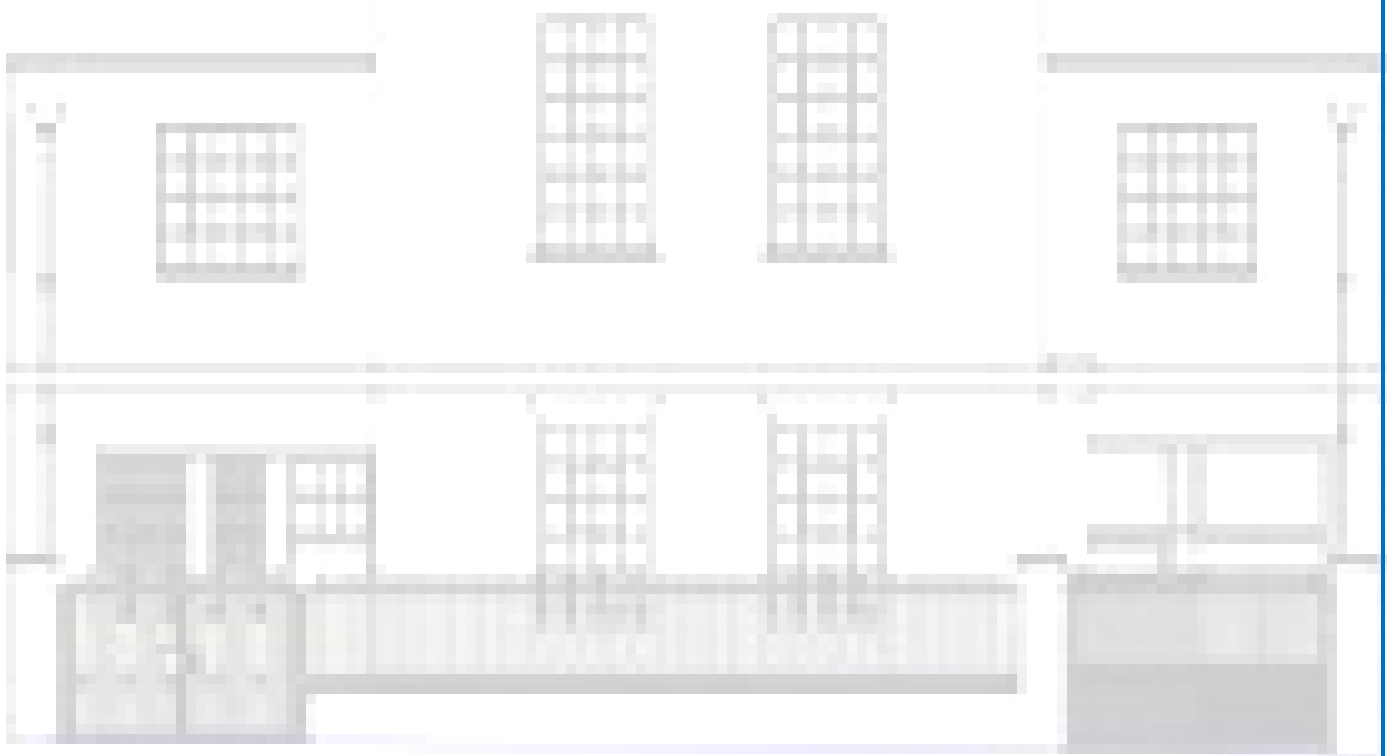
## Aims and Objectives

### The Project will focus on three main areas of development:

- New community facilities with full catering facilities.
- Major refurbishment of the old needle work buildings
- Activity space for all to use

### Objectives:

- To provide facilities for use by multiple groups, male and female, Adults and Young People, in line with requirements of safeguarding.
- Be up to today's standards and requirements so to become a real whole community asset and develop income from daytime usage to support our core activities of Youth and community work.
- To reorganise the centre and space available so that the three sections or various different activities can operate simultaneously whilst ensuring a quality experience and safeguarding standards are always being adhered to.
- To ensure that the service, development and activities we provide reflect the needs of young people and therefore promote their ownership of the activities and in turn increase participation and benefit to all.



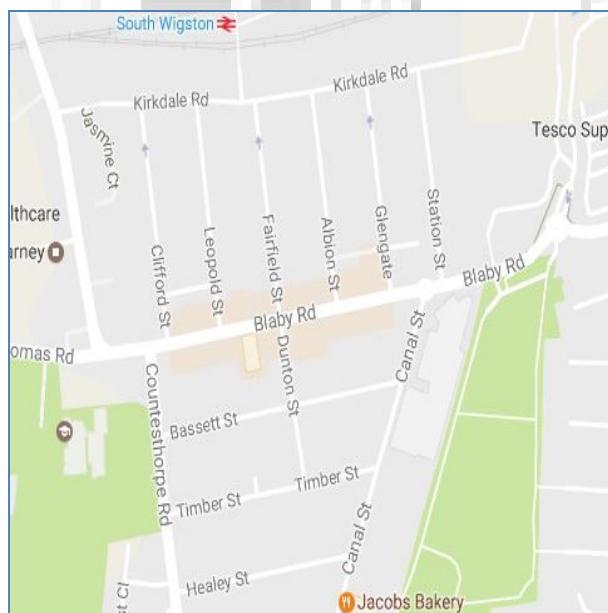
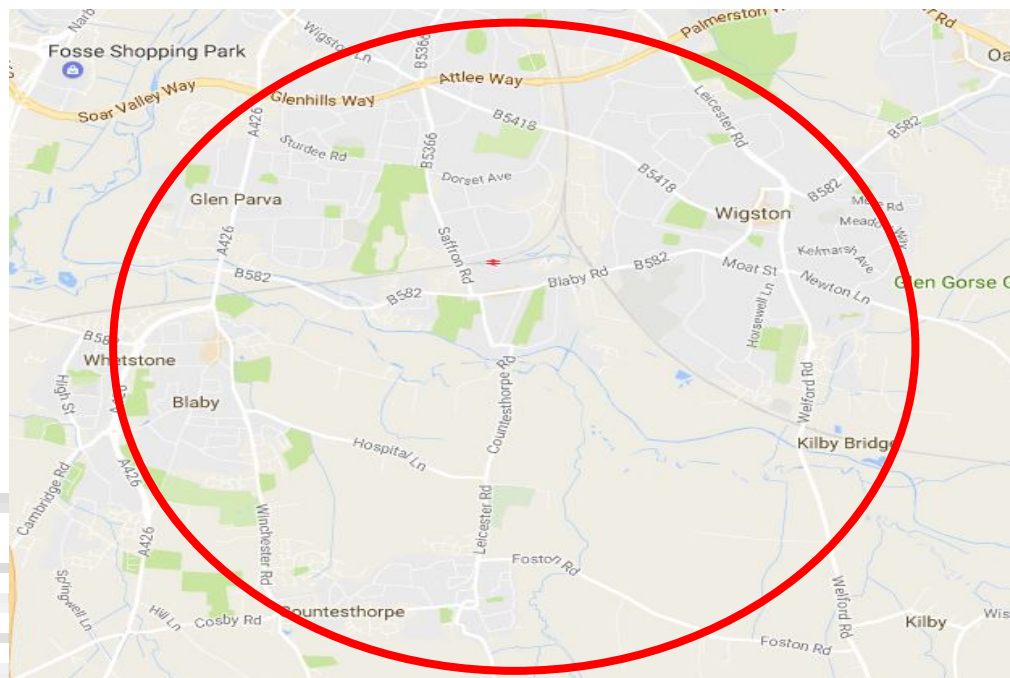
# Elliott Hall



## Demand for the Project

### Catchment Area

The map below shows a 5 mile radius from Elliott Hall which spans over the Local Authorities of Leicester City, Blaby, Countesthorpe, Glen Parva, Eyres Monsell, Oadby & Wigston.



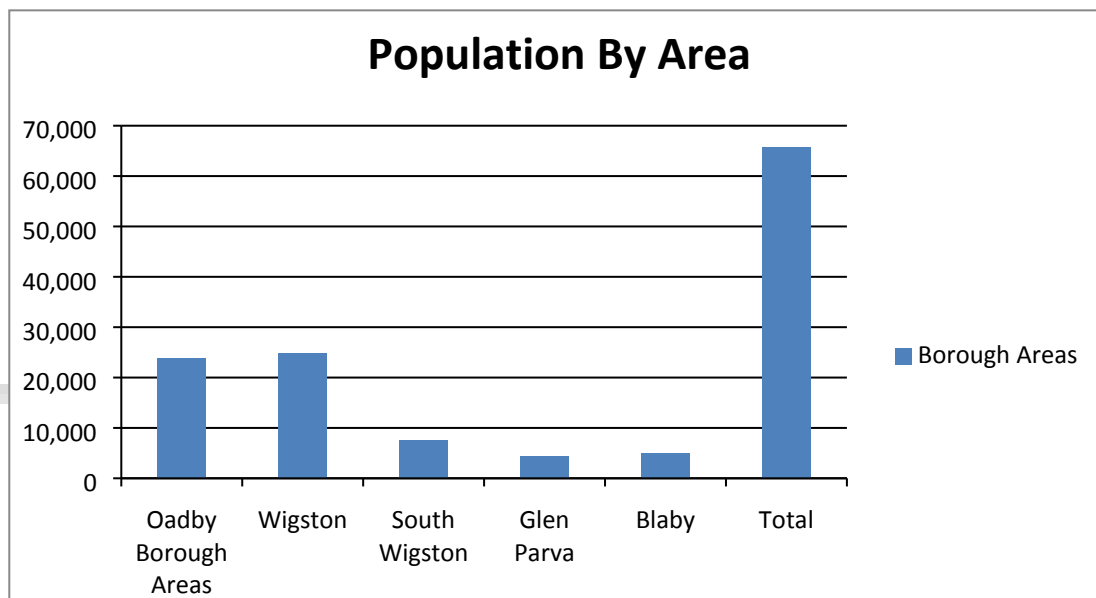
With reference to the above map, Elliott Hall is ideally situated close to Blaby Road centre of South Wigston High Street. It is based on a side street leading to either the main Blaby Road or Kirkdale Road which leads on to the Fairfield housing estate.

South Wigston has four bus stops offering a service either to Leicester City or Wigston. South Wigston has a train station offering links to Birmingham, Nottingham as well as Leicester City and further if required. Blaby Road have three local taxi companies when required.

# ott Hall

### Population Breakdown (Information provides by Community Safety & Youth Co-ordinator)

As stated in 3.1, the project is in a prime location and the 5 mile radius catchment area spans over three local boroughs, although some not in their entirety. It is therefore extremely difficult to give an accurate population breakdown. The graph below shows the population of two nearest villages, and the populous of the three Boroughs\*, including South Wigston where the project will sit.



Borough Areas					
Oadby	Wigston	South Wigston	Glen Parva	Blaby	Total
23,849	24,831	7490	4469	5,066	65,705

### Neighbouring Facilities

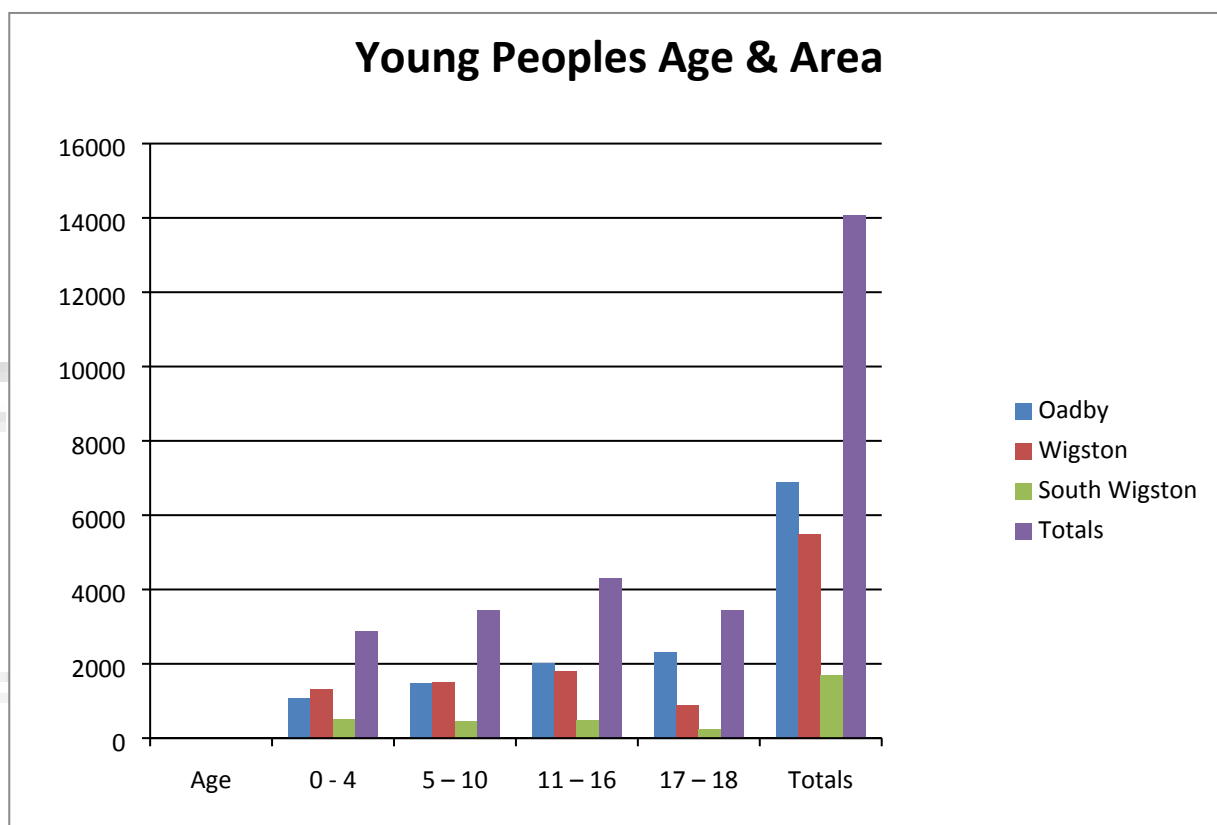
The table below show similar facilities within a 5 mile radius of the project. Due to the high population within this area, and local demand, there is no reason why any of these facilities should be displaced.

Table 1; Local Facilities

Bobbin Factory	0.3 mi
Sea Cadets	1.7 mi
Bassett Centre	0.4 mi
T. Army	0.7. mi
Eyres Monsell YC	2.3mi
Step In YC	3.0mi

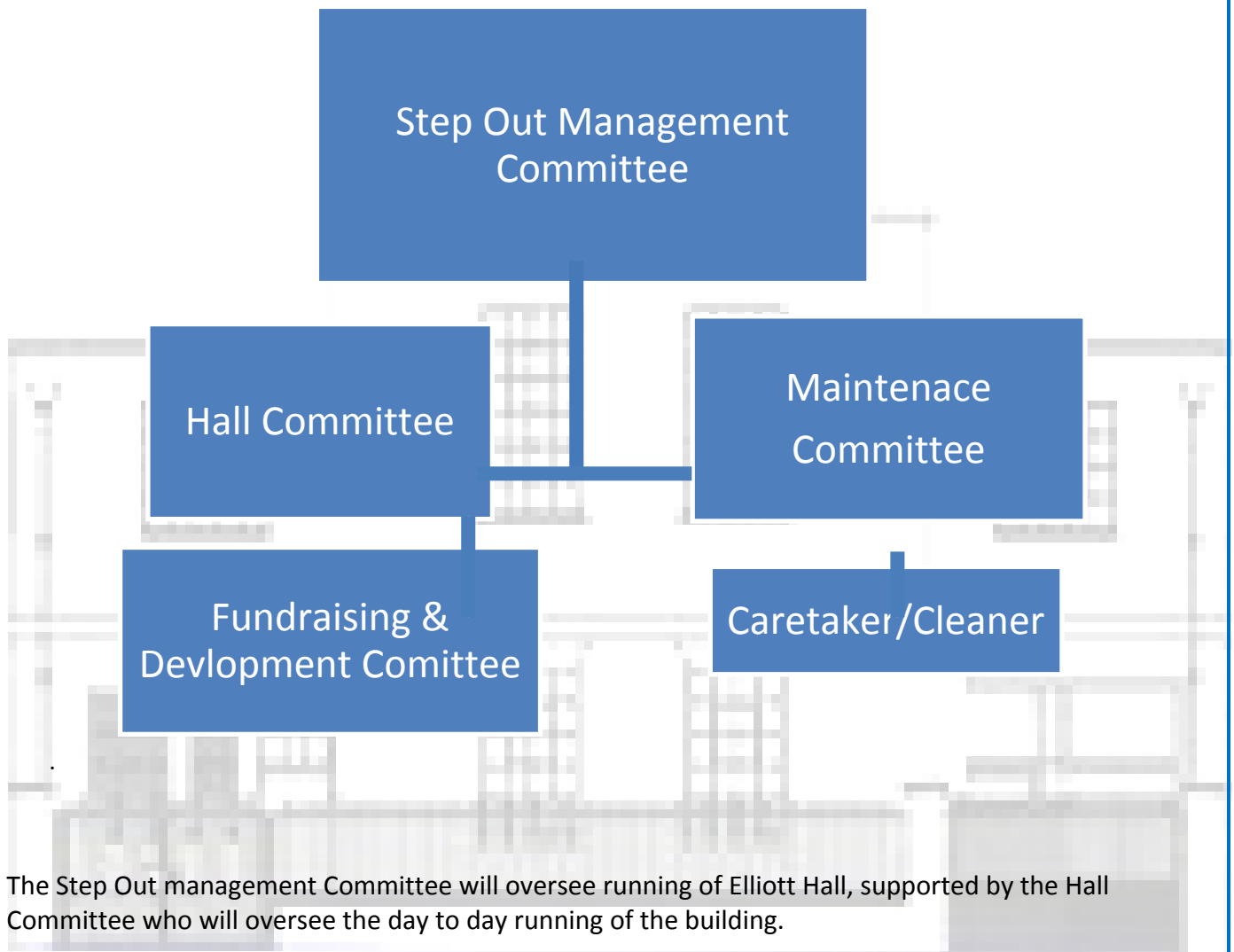
## Age ranges By Location

The graph below show the age range in each town within the Borough. These areas are Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston where the project will be taking place. Elliott Hall work within these areas as well as Eyes Monsell, (which comes under Leicester City), Glen Parva, Countesthorpe and Blaby. These areas fall under Blaby District Council.



Age	Borough Area			Totals
	Oadby	Wigston	South Wigston	
0 - 4	1,060	1,317	505	2,882
5 - 10	1,472	1,503	461	3,436
11 - 16	2,020	1,799	492	4,311
17 - 18	2,319	869	244	3,432
Totals	6,871	5,488	1,702	14,061

## Management and Organisation



The Step Out management Committee will oversee running of Elliott Hall, supported by the Hall Committee who will oversee the day to day running of the building.

All committee members have a duty of care for Elliott Hall, and will help to ensure the smooth running of all activities and event.

Members can escalate any queries or complaints through these channels, and ultimately request these are taken to the appropriate committee to be actioned.

Each committee has an active member on the management committee, who ultimately report to the Step Out.

## Marketing Plan

### KEY PRINCIPLES AND AIMS

#### Communications must:

- Be Accessible, clear, appropriate for all club members and facilities users
- Be timely and up to date
- Reflect and consider the a) views and b) protection of young people and members at all times
- Be in accordance with house style, and easily identifiable as originating from Elliott Hall

#### The club's communications will aim to:

- Raise the profile of Elliott Hall & Groups within
- Develop a greater understanding of the scope and value of the group services for all of the target audiences

#### Target audiences for this strategy are:

- Young people – both existing and potential group members
- Parents of existing and potential group members
- Group supporters, committee members and former members
- Local residents in the general community
- Business – businesses already investing in the area, potential inward investors, and interest groups representing business.
- Voluntary sector organisations and groups
- Partners, influencers and other stakeholders – Young Leicestershire ,South Wigston Chambers, South Wigston Forum, & Oadby and Wigston Council, Leicestershire & Rutland Sports, TCV, VAL.

### General approach

Marketing will focus on two key areas:

**Phase 1: Marketing the Centre:** To create awareness, interest and build reputation. This will be achieved through marketing collateral e.g. leaflets and posters, social media, local schools, community groups and Local authorities.

**Phase 2: Activity marketing:** To build desire and to create interest from the local community and to action – develop marketing and sales activities on a monthly plan. This will involve developing monthly action plans of tactical activities to be undertaken.

### Marketing objectives

- Build awareness and reputation of Elliott Hall & groups, highlighting its purpose and the services/ activities
- Position the Centre as the centre for Sport, Youth Activities, activities for all ages within Elliott Hall and social impact
- Highlight 'Open for Business', explaining the products, their benefits.
- Promote involvement, support and opportunities for business and stakeholder engagement

# Elliott Hall

## Maintenance Plan Outline / Maintenance Funds Projections

The Step Out Youth Group will be responsible for the maintenance of the facility. The group includes within its annual budget a provision for day to day maintenance costs. These are carried out by our directly employed cleaner and maintenance assistant.

The groups will also include an additional contribution to its maintenance fund to cover the cyclical maintenance of the building.

## Health and Safety

The group's current policy will extend to the development of good Health and safety practice. Health and Safety performance will be monitored by the Elliott Hall Caretaker. The policy is reviewed annually by the committee following consultation with Staff and Users.

Design of the building will be in accordance with current Building Regulations, it will provide a user friendly environment free, as far as is practicable, from risk to, supporters, contractors and staff. The building will also be DDA.

## Training and Development of Staff

The current staff and volunteers have the skill base to effectively manage the facility post completion. The group operates a continuous programme of training and development for both staff and volunteers. Need is identified through appraisal and supervision. Through the membership with Young Leicestershire, Step Out are able to identify the mandatory training required to ensure good practice.

## How Will the Project be measured?

Implementation of Step Out Plan will be measured by the Step Out Management and reported back to all committees quarterly.

The committee is responsible for meeting the aims and objectives of the facility on a daily basis. Growth has been set at 2% in the first year with a more conservative target of 3% for subsequent years, the committee feel this is an achievable target within the current financial climate; they will measure the financial performance of the project from monthly reports by the treasurer.

Full compliant reports for all funds and grants received and follow the accurate reporting procedures adhered to. Annual accounts will be externally monitored.

# Elliott Hall

## Building Capital

### **Funding Breakdown for Capital and Revenue Costs**

#### General

A group development member will be appointed to raise the profile of the building and the groups that use Elliott Hall, to attract funding and raise membership.

The group will be successful in attracting grants, donations, fund raising sponsors to complete projects.

The projects aim is to be completed end July 2017 and ready to be used during summer holidays.

Fundraising events will focus on youth provisions and activities for the community.

#### **Step Out**

Canteen income will increase with attendance and there will be new opportunities to increase sales.

Membership will increase due to membership and general group promotions.

Existing activities will benefit from improved facilities attracting new members.

New activities will be marked and promoted by the different groups which increase income.

Overheads will remain relatively stable with the exception of energy cost, but this will be lower as solar panels are currently being installed July 2017.

There will be additional volunteering opportunities in all area, as new clubs and activities unfold.

Step Out is working with Young Leicestershire over the next 12 months to become a charity organisation.

#### **Our Vision**

Our vision after five years is to be less dependent of local government funding, grants and carry on offering the same funding and working and supporting the local people of the community

#### **Community**

Elliott Hall and all groups using the building will be working with the local community groups and people offering different services, which can all be accessed. We will also be offering some free time when the community can use the building. This will be either using the drop in PSCO coffee and chat or the cancer complementary therapy treatments which are planned later in 2017. We are also looking to limit the use of hall on a Sunday to keep the residents happy, but we know occasional usage will occur, but will endeavour to keep this to the minimum. Sunday will be allocated to deep cleaning and necessary repairs.

## Hire Charges

Group Costing	Price per hour (£)
Community Groups in South Wigston	14.00
Community Groups Outside SW	15..50
Business Use	20.00
Short Term Contact (6 months)	14.00
Long Term Contract (12 months)	12.00

## Building Costing Of Project.

	Price per game (£)
Category	Price
New stair case for second fire escape, price includes, architect, structural engineer report and building fees.	£12000.00
Electrical work to bring the building up to standard	£5900.00
New 2 <sup>nd</sup> set of toilets to separate the men's and ladies with new disabled addition.	£2700.00
Secondary glazing to reduce noise level and improve insulation.	£6000.00
Kitchen on upper floor including appliances	£7000.00
Removal of rubbish, decoration works	£4000.00
Building Insurance	£1200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£38800.00</b>

## Sustainability of Project

The club has been sustainable since its inception largely due to a combination of public funding, local fundraising, a high level of membership underpinned by a sound governance structure.



We acknowledge our biggest challenge in the foreseeable future will be to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the public purse. This will only be achieved by meeting the expectations of our current membership and encourage new members who may have different aspirations to use our facilities.

The Youth Club provides a significant level of financial support for all sections. Included within our plan is the provision of a tuck shop and canteen to the main hall, this will allow for social fundraising outside of normal youth activities without impacting on the daily use of the current facility.

Our governance structure is strong and committed, with regular meetings of all sections to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the organisation. Our finances are overseen not only by our treasurer but an independent accountant examiner. We have a proven track record of successfully managing funding from the TCV Health Lottery Grant, Shires County Council, Wigston Rotary Club, South Wigston Working Group, South Wigston Residents Forum, as well as local trader's donations.

### Usage

Elliott Hall will be operated from 9am to 10pm Monday to Saturday, Sunday 10am till 10pm.

We have been working with different organisations from around Leicestershire who will be using the building during the day. There will be activities for all people to take part in.

Step Out Youth Group 6-16 yrs

Get Doing Keep fit classes 18-60yrs

Cheer Leading 4-30yrs

MF Sports 11-19yrs

Cancer Drop In Centre (NO AGE)

Coffee Morning with PSCO (NO AGE)

Free Style 4-40yrs

Drama 6-70yrs

So as you can see the building is being put to good use offering lots of different activities for all.

Please look at the graphs on page 15-16 that shows the usage planned for 2017/2018

# Elliott Hall

UPPER HALL							
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun

**Upper Hall  
Main Users**

9.00										
9.30										
10.00	Parkland School					Free Style Dance				
10.30										
11.00										
11.30										
12.00										
12.30										
13.00										
13.30										
14.00										
14.30	Cance r Drop in centr e									
15.00										
15.30										
16.00										
16.30										
17.00			Free Style Dance							
17.30	Step Out									
18.00										
18.30										
19.00										
19.30										
20.00										
20.30										
21.00										
21.30										
22.00										
LOWER HALL										
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun			

Lower Hall

Main Users

Get Doing

Cheer Leading

SWM Drama

9.00	Get Doing					
9.30						
10.00						
10.30						
11.00						
11.30						
12.00					Cheer Leading	
12.30						
13.00						
13.30						
14.00						
14.30						
15.00						
15.30						
16.00	Cheer		Leading			
16.30						
17.00						
17.30						
18.00						
18.30						
19.00						
19.30	S W M				S W M	
20.00						
20.30						
21.00						
21.30						
22.00						

Address:  
14 Albion Street,  
South Wigston,  
LE18 4SA.

Email: [stepoutsouthwigston@gmail.com](mailto:stepoutsouthwigston@gmail.com)  
F: [www.facebook.com/stepoutsouthwigston/](https://www.facebook.com/stepoutsouthwigston/)

## Contact

Carl Walter 07880715656 (Elliott Hall Step Out)

Rob Elliott 077441894 (Elliott Hall Building)

Aimee Hall (Step Out)




# Working Together For The Youth & Community

Supported By



Oadby & Wigston  
Borough Council

elliott hall



# Budgets & Costing 2017-2018

## Budget 2018-2022

2017-2018

## INCOME

## CASH/CHEQUES RECEIVED

	Pre-start income	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Membership & Subs					280	240	240	290	290	290	290	290	280	2,490
General Youth Club Activities														-
Confectionary/Tuck-shop Sales					130	130	145	145	145	145	150	160	165	1,315
OWBC Get Doing					60	60	60							180
Upper Floor Hire														-
Step-Out					128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	128	1,152
Dance Academy					1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,260	11,340
Parklands Primary							240	180	240	180	240	240	240	1,560
Get Doing							390	390	390	390	390	390	390	2,730
Lions							48	48	48	48	48	48	48	336
Cancer Drop-In														-
PCSO														-
TCV					1,000									1,000
Lower Floor														-
Cheer Leaders					224	224	224	224	224	224	224	224	224	2,016
Drama Group					360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	360	3,240
M&F Sport					480	480	480	480	480	480	480	480	480	4,320
Occasional Hire							150	150	150	150	150	150	150	1,050
Shire Grant					3,768									3,768
Shire Grant 2					7,000									7,000
Rotary					100									100
Florance Turner					500									500
														-
<b>TOTAL £</b>	-	-	-	-	15,290	2,882	3,725	3,655	3,715	3,655	3,720	3,730	3,725	44,097

## EXPENDITURE

## Pre-start Expenses

Salaries/Wages														-
Additional Coaching Staff					520	520	520	520	520	520	520	520	520	4,680
Rent					60	60	60	60	60	60	100	100	100	660
Rates					800	800	800	830	830	830	830	830	830	7,380
Building Maintenance														-
Electricity					200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	1,800
Water					70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	630
Gas					50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	450
Alarms					70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	630
Solar Panels					25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	225
Refuse Collection					180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	1,620
Cleaning Materials					100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	900
Building Insurance					150	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	550
Contents Insurance					100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	900
Employee/Public Liability Insurance					400									400
Licences					261									261
TV Licence					1,200									1,200
Equipment					147									147
Marketing and Promotion					250			100	100	100	100	100	100	850
General Office Expenses					150			50	50	50	50	50	50	450
Telephones/Mobile/Internet														-
Postages					55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	55	495
Photocopier					10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	90
Training					70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	630
Bank Charges					150			150		150			150	600
Affiliation fees														-
Accountancy (inc annual audit)														-
Fire Extinguishers Service													180	180
														-
<b>TOTAL £</b>	-	-	-	-	5,018	2,360	2,360	2,690	2,540	2,690	2,580	2,580	2,910	25,728
Income Less Expenditure	-	-	-	-	10,272	522	1,365	965	1,175	965	1,140	1,150	815	18,369
Opening balance - bank					-	10,272	10,794	12,159	13,124	14,299	15,264	16,404	17,554	
Closing balance - bank					10,272	10,794	12,159	13,124	14,299	15,264	16,404	17,554	18,369	

# Agenda Item 19



**Policy, Finance and  
Development  
Committee**

**Tuesday, 25 July  
2017**

**Matter for  
Information**

**Title:                   Housing White Paper: Increase in Planning Fees in the Borough**

**Author(s):                                   Adrian Thorpe  
   (Planning Development and Regeneration Manager)**

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## **1.       Introduction**

- 1.1.   The Government published its Housing White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' on 7 February 2017. It provides the context for local authorities to increase the nationally set planning fees by 20% from July 2017.
- 1.2.   This report was considered and noted by the Council's Development Control Committee on 15 June 2017.

## **2.       Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that following the Council's Section 151 Officer's reply to the Department of Communities and Local Government on 9 March 2017, Members note a 20% increase in planning fees in the Borough in order to invest this additional fee income in the planning department.

## **3.       Information**

- 3.1.   The Housing White Paper 'Fixing our broken housing market' includes proposals for boosting local authority capacity and capability to deliver, improving the speed and quality with which planning cases are handled, while deterring unnecessary appeals.
- 3.2.   Following the publication of the White Paper, the Council received a letter from the Department of Communities and Local Government on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2017 inviting the Council to increase the nationally set planning fees by 20%. This is on the basis that the additional fee income is invested in the planning department. This is in recognition of the difficulties in recruiting and retaining planners and others with specialist skills and is intended to boost local authority capacity and capability to deliver.
- 3.3.   The Borough Council's planning department has first-hand experience of the issues that the additional fee income is intended to tackle. Over the last 18 months the department has lost a number of very experienced planning staff. A loss of skills, experience and local knowledge such as this is particularly challenging in terms of continuing to be able to offer a good quality of service to residents and developers and maintaining performance, for example in terms of meeting statutory timescales. It has often been necessary to employ agency staff at significant additional cost to the Council. Whilst this approach provides some short term resource, it does not assist with resourcing the department and in building resilience in the long term.
- 3.4.   The additional fee income will be extremely valuable in supporting and developing the planning department in a number of ways including:
  - Improving working practices to assist in retaining experienced staff;
  - Provision of planning and specialist skills to support and improve resilience of the

- Council's planning function; and
  - Improving the use of information technology in the department to enable a more efficient service.
- 3.5. The Department of Communities and Local Government has confirmed that the additional fee income can be invested in both Strategic/Local Planning and Development Management. It acknowledges that both elements of planning departments within local authorities are important to ensure the delivery of the Government's proposals set out in the Housing White Paper.
- 3.6. The Government's letter required the Council's Section 151 Officer to reply indicating the Council's intention to increase planning fees by 20% and to confirm that the amount raised through these higher fees will be spent entirely on planning functions. This was provided by Martin Hone to the Department of Communities and Local Government on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017.
- 3.7. Given that planning fees are nationally set, the Government is currently in the process of making the necessary amendments to the Regulations to enable planning fees to be increased. As soon as this process is complete, the Council will be able to start charging the higher fees.

**Background Documents:**

Report entitled 'Housing White Paper: Increase in Planning Fees in the Borough' by the Planning Development and Regeneration Manager to the Development Control Committee on 15 June 2017.

**E-mail:**     adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

**Tel:**        (0116) 257 2645



<b>Implications</b>   Housing White Paper: Increase in Planning Fees in the Borough	
<b>Finance</b>	The amount of additional income each year will vary dependent upon the fee income received. For 2017/18 the estimated income generated from planning application fees is £190,000. A 20% increase to this amount would result in an additional income of £38,000.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Legal</b>	The Government is to amend the Regulations to enable local authorities to increase the nationally set planning fees by 20%.
<b>Martin Hone</b> Interim Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Decreasing Financial Resources (CR1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Regulatory Governance (CR6)</b>
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Balanced Economic Development (CP3)</b>
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovation (V4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b> Providing the grant will assist in service improvements through effective innovation and customer focus.
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Adrian Thorpe</b> Planning Development and Regeneration Manager	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>



<b>Policy, Finance and Development Committee</b>	<b>Tuesday, 25 July 2017</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Title:** **Proposed Revised Organisational Policies**

**Author(s):** **Karen Pollard (Interim Corporate Resources Manager)**

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## **1. Introduction**

This report summaries four key Organisational Policies that have been revised to give the Council a clearer understanding when dealing with issues relating to the management of employees. The policies are created by the Human Resources Team. They are the Grievance Policy, the Maternity Policy, the Sickness Absence Policy and the Lone Worker Policy.

## **2. Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to approve the Organisational Policies so that they can be applied to the way the Council manages its employees.

## **3. Information**

### **3.1. Grievance Policy (Appendix A)**

The policy has been revised to encourage staff to deal with matters informally. The informal approach is robust and will reduce the amount of time taken to deal with each grievance. It also will lead to better outcomes and will reduce the time taken for all involved in the process. It will also lessen the impact on employees. The policy includes a formal procedure where a full investigation can be carried out. The appeal for grievance is at Officer level, as this is not a policy in itself which can result in dismissal. If the grievance leads to a disciplinary, then the Appeals panel will consist of Members.

### **3.2. Maternity Policy (Appendix B)**

This revised policy gives clearer guidance to employees who are taking maternity leave. By focusing on maternity leave only the Policy gives a question and answer section to help with issues creating a more efficient process. It complies with national legislation.

### **3.3. Sickness Absence Policy (Appendix C)**

The revised policy has been developed to improve attendance at work. It gives managers wider opportunities when dealing with sickness absence. One change allows for absence relating to personal tragedies to be discounted for trigger purposes. In order to comply with the Equalities Act 2010, additional absence is allowed for people with a disability related illness. This policy is designed to reduce sickness absence therefore delivering greater efficiencies for Council. Managers will receive training on how to implement to new policy.

### **3.4. Lone Worker Policy (Appendix D)**

This is a new Policy. It has been produced following consultation with the employees who have been designated as lone workers. It is designed to keep our employees safe when they are working in the community and on their own. Managers will have to identify which employees are lone workers. Lone workers will attend a meeting every six months so that the Council can adapt its policy to suit the ever changing external environment. Members are also classified as lone workers when they are out in the community or working in their surgeries. A briefing note is being prepared and will be delivered by the end of September 2017.

**Background Documents:**

Appendix A - Grievance Policy and Initial EA Assessment  
Appendix B - Maternity Policy and Initial/Full EA Assessment(s)  
Appendix C - Sickness Absence Policy and Initial EA Assessment  
Appendix D - Lone Worker Policy and Initial EA Assessment

**E-mail:** karen.pollard@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

**Tel:** (0116) 257 2727

<b>Implications</b>   Proposed Revised Organisational Policies	
<b>Finance</b>	No significant implications.
<b>Chris Raymakers</b> Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits	
<b>Legal</b>	The Sickness Absence Policy and Maternity Policy comply with legislation.
<b>Anne Court</b> Director of Services / Monitoring Officer	
<b>Corporate Risk(s) (CR)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Regulatory Governance (CR6)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Organisational/Transformational Change (CR8)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Other Corporate Risk(s)</b> The Lone Worker Policy aims to reduce the risk to employees by introducing measures that responds to the external environment.
<b>Karen Pollard</b> Interim Corporate Resources Manager	
<b>Corporate Priorities (CP)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Effective Service Provision (CP2)</b>
<b>Karen Pollard</b> Interim Corporate Resources Manager	
<b>Vision &amp; Values (V)</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Accountability (V1)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Teamwork (V3)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Innovation (V4)</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Customer Focus (V5)</b>
<b>Karen Pollard</b> Interim Corporate Resources Manager	
<b>Equalities &amp; Equality Assessment(s) (EA)</b>	See attached.
<b>Karen Pollard</b> Interim Corporate Resources Manager	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Initial EA Screening</b> ( <i>Appendices A, B, C, and D</i> ) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Full EA Assessment</b> ( <i>Appendix B</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not Applicable</b>

# OADBY & WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Grievance Policy and Procedure 2017



Policy Version Number: 1  
Committee Approval:  
GMB: 07/02/17  
EIA: 30/05/17

Policy Author: A. Collin  
TU Approval:  
Unison: 07/02/17  
Date of Policy Review: 07/22



**Oadby & Wigston**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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## 1.0 Background

A grievance is a concern, problem or complaint that an employee may wish to raise with their employer.

As an employer, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council ("the Council") aims to encourage employees to raise such issues so that they can be resolved in a way that is reasonable and fair to all concerned.

## 2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Grievance policy and procedure is to provide the Council with the means to deal with grievances promptly (not hastily), consistently and fairly.

Issues such as bullying and harassment are excluded from this Policy and are instead to be dealt with under the Equality and Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure.

## 3.0 Scope

This policy and procedure does not apply to the Chief Officers; namely the Director of Services and the three Statutory Officers – the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Director of Services (Monitoring Officer) and the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer). Reference should be made to the Constitution of the Council and the appropriate Standing Order pursuant to the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 in respect of these Officers.

## 4.0 Equal Opportunities

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to combat unlawful discrimination and provides general and specific duties organisations must follow in relation to Equality in the workplace. The Council aims to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origin), religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.

## 5.0 Exclusions

Not all matters are suitable matters to be raised, addressed and resolved under this Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Matters that cannot be raised as a grievance include the following:-

1. Grievances that are the subject of, or appropriate to a collective dispute (Two or more employees). These must be handled separately through discussions with a Trade Union. If those raising a collective grievance are not in a union, someone from the collective will have to be put forward to lead the collective grievance.
2. Issues where “Protected Disclosure” matters are raised. This should be dealt with separately under the Councils Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.
3. Matters over which the Council have no control such as matters determined by legislation, statute and regulations, unless the Council is in breach of the same.
4. Dispute over the grading of a post or salary.
5. Issues such as bullying or harassment (please refer to the Equality and Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure)

If you have any doubt whether a grievance can be initiated under this policy please ask the HR team.

## 6.0 Mediation

The use of mediation to resolve grievances is to be encouraged by both parties. External mediation may be used if the use of an internal mediator is deemed inappropriate. Mediation is not a resolution tool to determine which party is right or wrong, mediators are there to ask questions, ascertain information and help to uncover underlying problems with the hope that it will assist the parties to understand any issues or concerns the other may have and help them to clarify the options for resolving such issues.

Neither the Council nor the employees are compelled to undergo mediation and could be used at both the informal and formal stage.

## 7.0 Informal Grievance Procedure

### 7.0 Informal Grievance Procedure

Any employee wishing to raise a grievance must do so without unreasonable delay and informally in the first instance. Grievances must be raised within 10 working days of any incident that gives rise to the complaint or within 10 working days of a final incident, where there has been a series of complaints.

If an employee wishes to raise a grievance outside of the 10 working days, this can only be agreed by the mutual consent of the Senior Management Team (“SMT”) and Human Resources (“HR”) team.



## **7.1 Informal Discussion**

Informal grievances are to be raised with an employee's Line Manager who should then seek advice from the HR team, or if the grievance is against the Line Manager it can be raised with HR if that is deemed more appropriate. The employee and Line Manager (or HR if more appropriate) will meet informally to discuss the nature of the grievance and ways to resolve the grievance.

# **8.0 Formal Grievance Procedure**

## **8.0 Formal Grievance Procedure**

Where the informal grievance procedure cannot resolve matters, then employees may submit their grievance formally in writing within 5 working days of receiving the outcome of the informal procedure to HR by completing the Formal Grievance Form in Appendix 3.

The Council reserves the right to bring in a Third Party to conduct the Formal Grievance procedure if the Council deems it more appropriate.

### **8.1 Formal Meeting**

Upon receiving notification of the formal grievance, an Appointed Officer from the pool set out in Appendix 2 will be appointed to investigate the formal grievance as soon as practically possible at a Formal Meeting. At this meeting, employees will be allowed to discuss their grievance and how they feel it should be resolved in the presence of a minute taker.

While employees will be given every opportunity to explain their case fully, explanations must confine to matters that are directly relevant to the grievance only. Focussing on irrelevant issues or incidents that took place long before the matter in hand is not helpful and can hinder the effective handling of the grievance.

The Appointed Officer can make a decision on what appropriate action to take, if any, at the Formal Meeting to resolve the grievance or they may decide to adjourn the meeting if they feel they need to further investigate or consider all the facts before reaching their final decision.

Employees have the statutory right to be accompanied at the Formal Meeting. Please refer to Appendix 1 to see how you may be represented.

A member of the HR team will be in attendance to offer guidance on this Policy and Procedure.

No form of recording equipment will be allowed into the Formal Meeting.

### **8.2 Investigation**

If an investigation is required it will be carried out by the Appointed Officer. The investigation is a fact-finding exercise to collect all the relevant information surrounding the grievance to enable the Appointed Officer to fully consider the facts to make an informed decision. This is not an opportunity for witnesses or employees who have been called up as part of the investigation to offer opinions, hearsay or speculation.

Witnesses will have the opportunity to be accompanied to any investigatory meetings, as set out in Appendix 1.

The Appointed Officer may determine following the investigation whether the grievance needs to progress any further or not. If it is determined not to progress any further, the employee has 5 working days in which to appeal the decision in writing to HR.

Once the investigation is completed, the Formal Meeting will reconvene to discuss the outcome of any investigation.

### **8.3 Notification of Outcome of Formal Meeting**

The outcome will be reaffirmed in writing. The letter will include the outcome of the grievance, details of the action to be taken to resolve the grievance (if necessary), how to appeal the outcome and the grounds on which an appeal can be made.

## **9.0 Appeal**

An appeal may be lodged against the outcome of the Formal Meeting on the following grounds:-

- 1) The conclusion and/ or recommendations are unreasonable either because they are not supported by the findings of the Appointed Officer;
- 2) There has been a procedural error; and/ or
- 3) New evidence, relevant to the case, has come to light since the time of the investigation.

Appeals must be made to HR within 5 working days of receiving the letter notifying the employee of the outcome. The appeal will then be sent to the Monitoring Officer who will determine if the appeal can be accepted based on the above three grounds.

The purpose of the Appeal is to consider whether the process of the grievance investigation was fair and/ or whether the conclusions and recommendations are reasonable in all of the circumstances. The purpose is not to reinvestigate the grievance.

The appeal will be heard by two different Appointed Officers from Appendix 2. A different member of HR will also be in attendance to offer guidance on this Policy and Procedure.

Employees have the statutory right to be accompanied at the appeal hearing. Please refer to Appendix 1 to see how you may be represented.

This is the final stage of the grievance procedure and the decision reached by the panel is final. There is no further right of appeal.

No form of recording equipment will be allowed into the Appeal hearing.

## 10.0 Cases where there is an overlap of a Grievance and Disciplinary

Where an employee raises a grievance during a disciplinary process, the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both cases concurrently.

## 11.0 Malicious Grievances

If an employee raises a grievance and it is found to be deliberately malicious or includes false allegations at any stage, disciplinary action will be taken in line with the Councils Disciplinary Policy and Procedure whereby dismissal could be the ultimate sanction.

Similarly this will apply if any employee/ witness are found to deliberately give false information at any Investigation Meeting or at any Formal Meeting they may be called to attend.

## Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The table below outlines the roles and responsibilities of those concerned by this policy and procedure:

<b>Senior Management Team</b>	At least one member of Senior Management Team together with a member of HR must approve grievances raised that are outside the 10 day deadline.
<b>Line Managers</b>	<p>Line Managers are responsible for dealing with and resolving informal grievances raised by their employees.</p> <p>Line Managers will provide assistance to employees where a genuine grievance has been raised and seek to distinguish between actual grievances and difficulties with their work.</p>
<b>Employees</b>	<p>Employees must ensure they understand the content of this policy and procedure and co-operate fully with it.</p> <p>Employees must raise Grievances with their Line Manager in the first instance or HR if more appropriate, but must distinguish between genuine grievances and difficulties at work.</p> <p>Employees are under duty to maintain a standard of conduct and performance under the Council's Visions and Values that is acceptable to the Council which does not give rise to grievances.</p>
<b>HR</b>	<p>HR will provide advice and guidance on this policy and procedure.</p> <p>HR will arrange a competent note taker to be present at Formal, Investigatory and Appeal stages.</p> <p>A member of HR will be in attendance during Formal meetings, hearings and appeal hearings to offer guidance on this Policy and Procedure.</p> <p>One member of the HR Team together with a member of SMT</p>

	must approve grievances raised that are outside the 10 day deadline.
<b>Trade Union/ workplace colleague</b>	Employees have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or workplace colleague during the formal and appeal stages of this policy and procedure.  No external representation is permitted.
<b>Appointed Officer</b>	The Appointed Officer (set out in Appendix 2) will be appointed to independently and impartially hear the grievance that reach formal stage and investigate if necessary.  If necessary, different Appointed Officers will be used to hear any appeals.
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	The Monitoring Officer will determine whether any appeals received can progress to an Appeal Hearing based on the three appeal grounds on Page 5.

## Appendix 2: Appointed Officers

Below are employees who can be selected to hear, investigate and hear any potential appeal grievances that reach the formal stage. (Please note this list is correct at the time of publication and may change over the course of time)

### **Corporate Resources**

1. Health and Safety Officer

### **Planning, Development and Regeneration**

1. Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager
2. Facilities and Administration Manager
3. Planning Policy Team Leader

### **Finance**

1. Finance and Revenues and Benefits Manager
2. Revenues Team Leader
3. Accountant

**EDOS**

1. Health and Leisure Manager
2. Operations Manager
3. Recycling Co-ordinator
4. Fleet Manger

**Community**

1. Housing Services Manager
2. Property Manager
3. Environmental Health Team Leader
4. Senior Income Officer

**Customer Service**

1. Business Transformation Manager
2. Customer Service Team Leader
3. Customer Service Supervisor

**Chief Officers**

1. Chief Executive
2. Director of Services

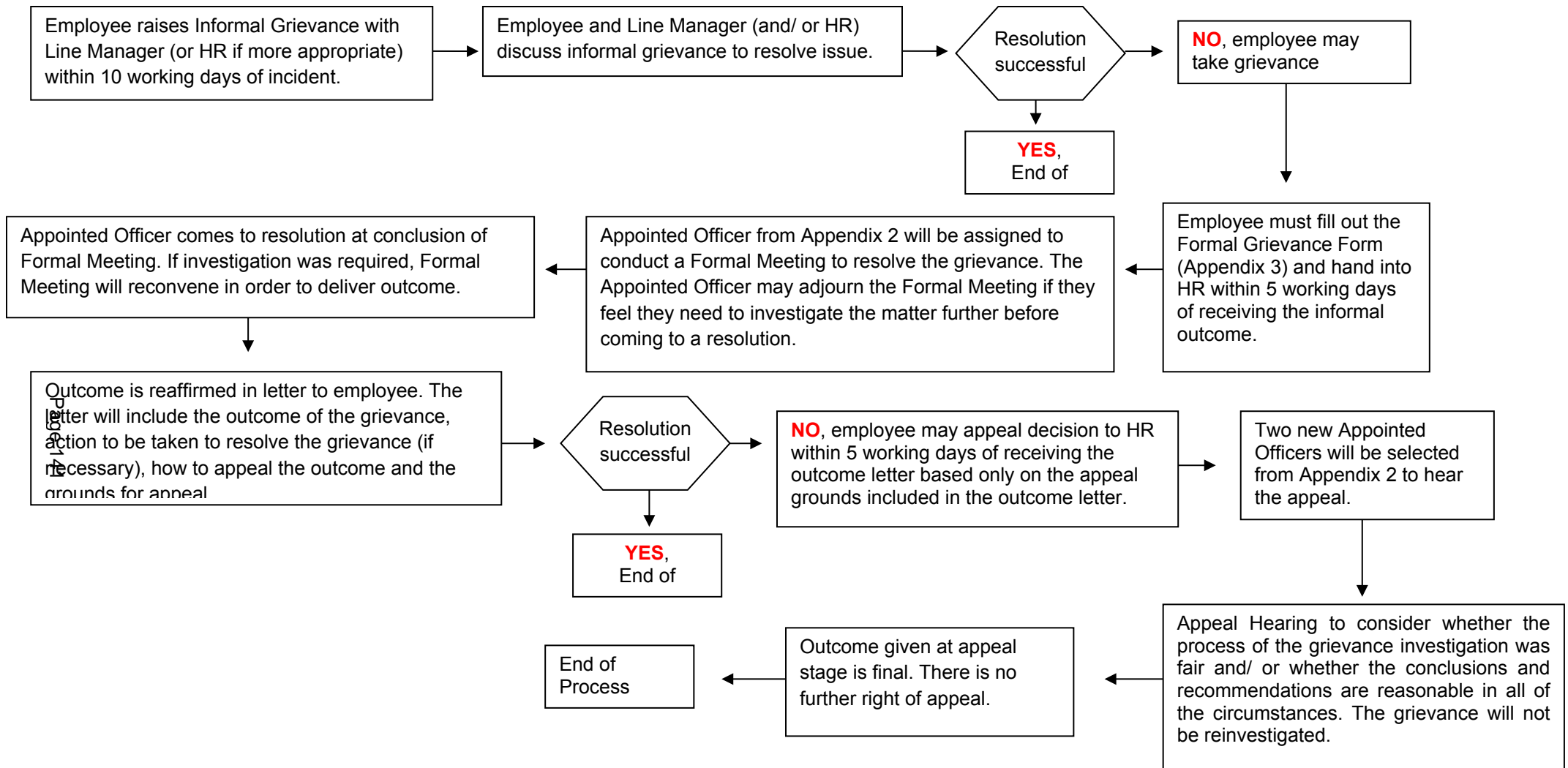
## Appendix 3: Formal Grievance Form

The form overleaf should be completed by an employee raising a formal grievance when the informal procedure has been unsuccessful in providing a resolution.

**Formal Grievance Form**  
**Private and Confidential**

Name:
Service Area/ Team:
What is the nature of the grievance?
What action has already been taken informally to resolve your grievance? (Include who has considered it, when and what the outcome was)
What outcome are you seeking?
Signed (Employee):
Date:

## Appendix 4: Grievance Process Flowchart



**NOTE:** This is a Reference Guide only and is not a substitute for reading the policy in full.





# EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

## PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

<b>Name of Policy/Function: Grievance Policy and Procedure/ Human Resources</b>		This is <b>new</b>
	Y	This is a <b>change</b> to an existing policy
		This is an <b>existing</b> policy, Function, not previously assessed

<b>Date of screening</b>	30 May 2017
--------------------------	-------------

### 1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

The aim for the Grievance Policy and Procedure is to provide Council employees with a mechanism to raise any grievances they have with their employment.

### 2. Are there external considerations?

*e.g. Legislation/government directive etc*

There is no legislation/government directive when dealing with a grievance in the workplace. However there is advice, guidance and best practice on how to handle grievances through employment specialists ACAS and the EEF whose guidance has been incorporated into this policy.

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

All Council employees can use this policy and procedure to raise any concerns they have with their employment.

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

The desired outcome is that employees who wish to raise a grievance can do so in order to alleviate any concerns they have regarding their employment.

### 5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

This policy and procedure has been sent to the two Trade Unions recognised by the Council (GMB and Unison). They were given three weeks to make any comments and recommend any alterations but no comments were made by either Trade Union. The policy was sent to all staff as well for consultation for three weeks also following the three weeks given to the Trade Unions. Only two staff replied with any comments.

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

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

There are no concerns at this stage regarding the possibility of inequalities/negative impacts. This policy does not discriminate as it will be applied equally to all employees regardless of their protected characteristics.

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

**Positive** – *It could benefit*

**Negative** – *It could disadvantage*

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

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's disabilities.
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's race.
Age	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's age.
Gender Reassignment	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of if an employee has had a gender reassignment.
Sex	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's sex.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's sexual orientation.
Religion/Belief	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's religion/belief.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of an employee's marital/civil partnership status.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral. This policy will be applied equally regardless of whether an employee is pregnant or on maternity.

## 8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected

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

No. Policy only applies to employees of the Council.

**9. Are there any human rights implications?**

No. Fairness will be practiced to everyone throughout this policy.

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

The policy could be made available in large print if requested by an employee. The policy avoids the use of jargon and has been written in a style of English that is easier to understand and all abbreviations explained in the first instance.

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

*i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation*

No

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

Yes. There is scope for the Council to use external investigators if that is deemed more appropriate to do so.

**13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?**

No. This is a review.

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

N/A

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

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

Completed by Andrew Collin  
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date 30/05/2017

Countersigned by Karen Pollard  
(*Head of Service*)

Date 30/05/2017

Screened by: Veronika Quintyne

Date: 27/06/2017

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

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

# Maternity Policy and Procedure 2017



Policy Version Number: 1  
Committee Approval:  
GMB: 11/11/16  
EIA: 13/6/17

Policy Author: M. Lathom  
TU Approval:  
Unison: 11/11/17  
Date of Policy Review: 07/22



**Oadby & Wigston**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Appendix 2: Enhanced Maternity Pay Agreement Form

## 1.0 Background

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council ("the Council") is committed to ensuring equality and diversity across the organisation. It will ensure that it supports the employees covered by this policy and procedure not only through its statutory obligations, but also as a supportive employer who recognises the importance of family life and its balance with work. The Council encourages open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible.

## 2.0 Purpose

This policy and procedure is designed to ensure that any employee who becomes pregnant during the course of their employment is aware of the statutory rights to maternity leave and pay. It sets out the role and responsibilities of those Officers who play a part in ensuring its effective delivery; the employee, HR team, line manager and Health and Safety Officer.

## 3.0 Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all Council employees including those on fixed term contracts and secondments. It does not apply to agency or casual workers. The Council reserves the right to revise and change policies and procedures from time to time.

## 4.0 Legislation relating to this document

- Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014
- Maternity and Adoption Leave Regulations 2014

## 5.0 Equal Opportunities

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to combat unlawful discrimination and provides general and specific duties organisations must follow in relation to Equality in the workplace. The Council aims to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origin), religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.

## 6.0 Glossary

• EWC	Expected week of childbirth
• CML	Compulsory Maternity Leave
• OML	Ordinary Maternity Leave
• AML	Additional Maternity Leave
• MA	Maternity Allowance
• SMP	Statutory Maternity Pay
• OMP	Occupational Maternity Pay
• SMP1	The form to Claim MA if you are not entitled to SMP
• MATB1	The maternity certificate which is issued by your Doctor or Midwife at the end of the 2nd trimester and confirms a viable pregnancy
• Qualifying Week	15th week before the EWC
• DSE	Display Screen Equipment



## 7.0 Introduction

### 7.0 Introduction

The policy will guide expectant and new mothers through everything you need to know and be aware of during your pregnancy and after the birth of your baby. The pack is for information only and in no way alters your conditions of employment.

The policy explains your rights, benefits and the options available to you before and after the birth of your baby.

Once you have informed your manager of your pregnancy we advise that you make an appointment with a member of the HR team who will be able to go through the policy in more detail with you, discuss the arrangements of your leave and answer any questions you have relating to maternity leave and pay. A member of the HR team will be able to explain to you the notification periods you must comply with in order to be eligible for maternity leave and pay.

## 8.0 Notification of pregnancy

### 8.0 Notification of pregnancy

You should notify your line manager and a member of the HR team as soon as possible if you are pregnant, this is important so the Council can ensure the Health and Safety of you and your baby.

You must however inform your line manager and the HR team no later than the end of the 15th week before the Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC) in order to be entitled to take maternity leave and receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP). You must inform your line manager by confirming in writing the following information;

- The fact that you are pregnant and wish to take maternity leave
- The date your baby is due
- The date you would like your maternity leave to start

You must also provide the HR team with your MATB1 form, this is usually available from your doctor or midwife by the end of the second trimester of your pregnancy.

## 9.0 Health and Safety

### 9.0 Health and Safety

Once you have informed the Council that you are pregnant your line manager will arrange to carry out a maternity risk assessment with you, this is to ensure there is minimal risk to you and your unborn baby whilst carrying out your duties. Your maternity risk assessment will be reviewed every 3 months by your line manager. Your risk assessment may be reviewed before the 3 months if you or your line manager feels it is necessary to do so.

You will also be asked to carry out a DSE work station risk assessment to ensure your work station area is set up appropriately for you during your pregnancy.

Both risk assessments should be passed to the HR team and will be reviewed by a member of the HR team in conjunction with your line manager and the Health and Safety Officer.

If a risk is identified during either risk assessment the Council will seek to reduce or eliminate the risk as far as is reasonable practicable. Identified risks may be reduced or eliminated by temporary adjusting your working conditions or hours, or offering you suitable alternative work.

Any adjustments will remain in place for the duration of your pregnancy or until it is identified as no longer being a risk.

If the Council is unable to apply any reasonable adjustments in order to reduce or eliminate any risk/s then paid leave maybe considered as an alternative. This will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and will be discuss with employees on a case by case basis.

## 10.0 Employees undergoing IVF treatment

### 10.0 Employees undergoing IVF treatment

If you are planning to undergo a round of IVF treatment we strongly recommend you inform your manager as soon as you feel comfortable to do so.

Your manager or a member of the HR team will be able to meet with you if you wish to go through the options available to you in relation to time off for medical appointments.

It is recommended that you discuss any planned appointments with your line manager and agree how this time off will be taken. There are a number of options open to employees wishing to take time off for medical appointments including flexi leave, annual leave or an agreed amount of unpaid leave.

You will be entitled to paid time off for antenatal appointments from the point of plantation of the fertilised ova, if your treatment is successful. Any further medical appointments relating to your pregnancy will come under time off for antenatal care as per section 9.0 of this policy.

If your treatment is unsuccessful you will be entitled to paid time off for any related appointments for a further two weeks from the date a negative result is confirmed.

If you become unwell following any treatment and are not able to attend work due to sickness or you are advised by your doctor/GP to rest following any treatment then the sickness policy will apply. As with any period of sickness if you are off work due to sickness

for more than 7 calendar days the Council does require you to provide a Fit Note from your doctor or GP.

Your entitlement to occupational and statutory sick pay is not affected if you are off work due to sickness following any treatment.

## 11.0 Antenatal care and appointments

### 11.0 Antenatal care and appointments

Once you have advised the Council that you are pregnant, you are entitled to take reasonable paid time off work to attend antenatal appointments made on the advice of a doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor. You will be asked to provide evidence of the advice of your doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor if you wish to take any paid time off for antenatal care or appointments. Antenatal care may include relaxation and parent craft classes that you have been advised to attend by your doctor, midwife or health visitor.

You should give your manager reasonable notice and, when possible, you should try to make appointments as near to the start or end of the working day as possible.

In order to be entitled to paid time off you are required to produce a certificate from a doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor stating that you are pregnant. With the exception of the first appointment, you should also produce evidence of the appointment, such as an appointment card, if requested.

## 12.0 Maternity Leave

### 12.1 Entitlement to Maternity Leave

You will be entitled to take up to 52 weeks maternity leave providing you have 26 weeks continuous service at the end of your qualifying week and are still employed during this week and you have given the correct amount of notice of your intention to take maternity leave. There are three types of maternity leave;

- Compulsory Maternity Leave (CML). It is a legal requirement that all new mothers take a minimum of two weeks' leave starting the day after the birth. CML forms the first two weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave.
- Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML). All employees are entitled to take up to 26 weeks' OML.
- Additional Maternity Leave (AML). All employees are entitled to take up to 26 weeks' AML. AML commences the day after OML ends.

### 12.2 Starting your Maternity Leave

You can start your maternity leave at any time after the beginning of the 11<sup>th</sup> week before your expected week of childbirth (unless your baby is born prematurely before

the 11<sup>th</sup> week before your EWC in which case it will start earlier). You can start your maternity leave on whichever date is the earlier of;

- Your chosen start date
- The day after you give birth
- The day after any day on which you are absent from work for a pregnancy related reason in the four weeks before the EWC.

You must give the Council the correct notice of the date you intend to start your maternity leave as set out in section 7.0 'Notification of Pregnancy'.

You are able to change the date you intend to start your maternity leave providing you give 28 days notice. If you wish to bring forward your maternity leave you must give 28 days notice of the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonable practicable and if you wish to postpone your maternity leave you must inform the Council 28 days before the original date agreed or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonable practicable.

The Council will respond in writing to your notification of leave plans within 28 days, confirming the date on which you are expected to return to work if you were to take your full 52 week entitlement to maternity leave.

Providing that you are fit and well enough to work you can continue up to the date you give birth.

## 13.0 Rights during maternity leave

### 13.0 Rights during maternity leave

During your ordinary maternity leave and your additional maternity leave, you are entitled to receive all your contractual benefits, except salary. For example;

- You will continue to accrue annual leave and bank holidays
- You will remain in the Local Government Pension Scheme, contributions will continue whilst you are receiving any maternity pay
- Your continuous service will continue to accrue

Your salary will be replaced with either enhanced maternity pay or statutory maternity pay providing that you meet the qualifying criteria.

## 14.0 Contact during maternity leave

### 14.0 Contact during maternity leave

The Council reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with you from time to time. If you would like regular contact during your maternity leave please discuss this and agree arrangements with your line manager. The Council may contact you during your maternity leave to discuss your plans to return to work, any special arrangements, training that you may require to help you return back to work easily and updating you on developments at work whilst you have been absent. Such discussions do not constitute work and are, therefore, unpaid.

If you would like to be forwarded any job vacancies at the Council whilst you are on maternity leave please discuss this with a member of the HR team.

## 15.0 Keeping In Touch (KIT) days

### 15.0 KIT Days

With the exception of the compulsory part of your maternity leave which is the first two weeks after giving birth, you are able to work up to 10 KIT days during your maternity leave. If you wish to work a KIT day you can without losing any entitlement to maternity leave or maternity pay. KIT days are subject to mutual agreement therefore the Council cannot insist that you work any KIT days and you cannot insist the Council allows you to work any KIT days.

If you wish to work any KIT days you should arrange this with your line manager. It is important that the amount of hours you agree to work is sufficient to be able to allow you to carry out work that is relevant and contributes to the needs of the service.

Any part day worked as a KIT day counts as a full day against your 10 day entitlement. You will be paid for the work that you carry out either by the hour, ½ day or full day, this should be agreed in advance with your manager. If you work any KIT days during the paid part of your maternity leave then your pay for that day will not exceed your normal day rate meaning your KIT day/s will be topped up from SMP.

Please be aware that, depending on where in the month your KIT days fall, it may not be possible to pay you until the following month due to Payroll deadlines.

## 16.0 Maternity Pay

### 16.1 Maternity Pay

As long as you meet the criteria set out below you will be eligible to receive 39 weeks Statutory Maternity Pay, this will commence from the first day of your maternity leave. If you have at least 1 year's local government service you will also be able to apply for the Council's Occupational Maternity Pay scheme if you wish to. The Statutory Maternity and Occupational Maternity pay schemes are outlined in the table in section 16.4.

### 16.2 Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

You will be eligible to receive SMP if you meet the following criteria;

- You have given the correct notification of your pregnancy as set out in section 7.0 of this policy.
- You have provided the Council with your MATB1 certificate
- You have 26 weeks' continuous service at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the date your baby is due
- In the eight weeks up to and including the 15<sup>th</sup> week before your baby is due, your average weekly earnings exceeded the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions.

The rate of SMP varies each year. To find out the current rate of SMP please visit <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay> .

### 16.3 Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP)

You will be eligible for the Council's Occupational Maternity Pay if in addition to the above criteria you also meet the following;

- You have at least one year's continuous service with the Council by the 11<sup>th</sup> week before the EWC
- You intend to return to work after your maternity leave ends for at least 3 months and;
- You have signed the Occupational Maternity Pay agreement form which can be found in appendix 2 of this policy

### 16.4 Maternity Pay Table

‘Standard Maternity Pay Entitlement’		‘Occupational Maternity Pay Entitlement’	
<b>Weeks 1-6</b>	The equivalent of 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due.	<b>Weeks 1-6</b>	The equivalent of 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due.
<b>Weeks 7-39</b>	Lower rate SMP or 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due if this is less.	<b>Weeks 7-18</b>	The equivalent of 50% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due plus lower rate SMP. This will not exceed 90% of your average weekly earnings.
		<b>Weeks 19-39</b>	Lower rate SMP or 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due if this is less.
<b>Weeks 40-52</b>	Unpaid	<b>Weeks 40-52</b>	Unpaid

## 17.0 Annual Leave and Maternity Leave

### 17.1 Annual Leave

During your maternity leave you will continue to accrue your annual leave and bank holidays in the usual way.

You are encouraged to take all your annual leave before you commence your maternity leave, unless you are planning to take a short period of leave and wish to start and end your maternity leave in the same annual leave year.

Annual leave cannot be paid in lieu under any circumstances other than if you decided not to return to work at the end of your maternity leave.

At the end of your maternity leave you may wish to consider using holiday entitlement that has been accrued in the leave year in which you are returning, thereby extending your total period of leave.

### 17.2 Bank Holidays

You are entitled to take any Bank Holidays which fall during your OML and AML as paid leave. These will be accrued during your maternity leave and taken as paid leave before returning to work.

Any Bank Holidays accrued during your maternity leave must be taken immediately prior to your return to work, thereby extending your total period of leave (The amount of bank holidays will be calculated on a pro rata basis for part time staff).

#### 17.2.1 Part time working and Bank Holidays

If you work part time or have your annual leave entitlement given to you in hours, you can choose to take all your annual leave entitlement including your bank holidays before commencing your maternity leave, or choose to have your bank holiday entitlement calculated separately. You will then be able to take the bank holidays you would have accrued during your maternity leave immediately after your maternity leave ends.

## 18.0 Returning to Work

### 18.1 Returning to work

Unless you inform us otherwise it will be assumed that you will return to work after 52 weeks.

If you wish to return to work earlier than at the end of 52 weeks it would assist us if you confirm as soon as convenient during your maternity leave your expected return to work date. You must however as a minimum give the organisation 8 weeks' notice. Failure to give this notice could result in having to postpone your return to the original expected return date.

If you are unable to return to work at the end of your maternity leave due to sickness or injury you must report this in line with the organisations "Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedure".

## 18.2 Return to work options

There are a number of options available to new mothers when deciding to return to work after maternity leave;

- **Return to work immediately after Maternity Leave**  
If you return to work after a period of ordinary maternity leave you are entitled to return to work to the same job as before commencing your maternity leave. You may return to work to the same hours and conditions as before you went on maternity leave. *(Any major changes which may affect your post would be notified to you personally during your maternity leave and the necessary consultation undertaken.)*
- **Return to work in order to share the remainder of your leave with your partner**  
You may return to work before your 52 weeks of maternity leave has ended in order to share the remaining leave with your husband/partner. This is referred to as 'Shared Parental Leave'. If you are considering the option of sharing your leave please speak to a member of the HR team as soon as reasonable practicable.
- **Return to work immediately after maternity leave to a different job within Local Government**  
You are also entitled to accept a job with another authority whilst on maternity leave without having to refund occupational maternity pay or lose continuous local government service. The same applies if you apply and gain a promotion or you apply for and are successful in filling a lower graded post whilst you are on maternity leave; you can return to work to the new post without losing any entitlements.
- **Request to work flexibly**  
You may be entitled to request a flexible working arrangement if:
  - You have at least 26 weeks continuous service with the organisation and;
  - You have not made an official request for flexible working within the last 12 months.

Please be aware that if you request to reduce your hours and your request is accepted you will be expected to take any annual leave accrued from your full time hours before commencing any part time working hours.

## 18.3 Risk Assessments

When you return to work your line manager will complete a further maternity risk assessment and as long as no risks are identified this will be your final risk assessment.

## 18.4 Breast feeding

If you are breast-feeding when you return from maternity leave, and want to discuss arrangements to either express milk or feed your baby, please speak to a member of the HR team.

## 18.5 Not returning

If you decide not to return to work following your maternity leave you must give the Council notice of your resignation in accordance with the terms of your contract, e.g. if your contract states a notice period of 2 months you must give a minimum of 2 months' notice before your expected date of return. Where the appropriate notice is not given we reserve the right to



require you to return to work from the expected date of return until the notice period is complete. The more notice you can give us of your resignation, the better.

## 19.0 Pension

### **19.0 Pension**

Pension contributions will continue to be taken during your paid maternity leave, your contributions will continue at the same rate as if you were at work and will be deducted from your maternity pay.

Once your unpaid period of maternity leave commences your pension contributions will be suspended. You have the choice upon your return to work whether you would like to repay the pension contributions that accrued during your unpaid part of maternity leave. If you wish to repay the contributions for this period you must do so within 30 days of your return to work.

In order to repay your pension contributions you must complete an 'APC quote request form'. The pensions section will then be able to calculate and send out a quote directly to you for the amount due. You will then have the option to decide if you wish to repay the amount or not. The form can be found by following the link below.

[http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/pensions/information\\_for\\_current\\_pension\\_scheme\\_members/increasing\\_your\\_pension\\_benefits.htm](http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/pensions/information_for_current_pension_scheme_members/increasing_your_pension_benefits.htm)

# Appendix 1 – Roles and Responsibilities

## Roles and Responsibilities

<b>Line Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the risks to the health and safety of women employees who are pregnant, have recently given birth or who are breastfeeding, ensuring they are not exposed to risks identified by the risk assessment. They must ensure they conduct a thorough risk assessment and submit a copy to HR.</li> <li>Ensure that HR paperwork is completed in a timely manner so that individuals are accurately recorded as absent on maternity leave and are restored to payroll upon their return. HR should be notified in a timely manner if there are any changes in the working patterns of the employee upon their return from maternity leave.</li> <li>Ensure that the employee has taken the correct amount of annual leave in line with this policy before commencing Maternity Leave</li> </ul>
<b>Employees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees should notify their Line Manager in writing of their intention to take maternity leave and attach the MATB1 form.</li> <li>Must inform their Line Manager if they intend to return to work earlier than the end of their full maternity period, if their proposed date changes, or if they intend to vary their contracted hours.</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resources (HR)</b>  <b>Corporate Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR is responsible for ensuring the timely processing of the maternity information and forms and instructing payroll to the correct payment of maternity pay.</li> <li>Where assistance from HR is unavailable or not permissible a suitably trained officer from Corporate Resources will be nominated to assist and advise.</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Health and Safety Officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Corporate Health and Safety Officer will review and advise on the outcome of all Maternity Risk Assessments</li> <li>The Corporate Health and Safety Officer will review and advise on the outcome of all Maternity related DSE Work Station Risk Assessments</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 – Occupational Maternity Pay Agreement

### Occupational Maternity Pay Agreement Form

‘Standard Maternity Pay Entitlement’		‘Occupational Maternity Pay Entitlement’	
<b>Weeks 1-6</b>	The equivalent of 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due.	<b>Weeks 1-6</b>	The equivalent of 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due.
<b>Weeks 7-39</b>	Lower rate SMP or 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due if this is less.	<b>Weeks 7-18</b>	The equivalent of 50% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due plus lower rate SMP.
		<b>Weeks 19-39</b>	Lower rate SMP or 90% of your average weekly earnings calculated in the eight weeks up to and including the 15th week before your baby is due if this is less.
<b>Weeks 40-52</b>	Unpaid	<b>Weeks 40-52</b>	Unpaid

I, the undersigned, confirm that:

- I have one year's continuous service at the end of the 11th week before my baby is due.
- It is my intention to return to work following my maternity leave.
- I agree that, if I do not return to work for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council or another local authority for a minimum of three months directly following my maternity leave, I will pay back the difference between the ‘Occupational Entitlement’ and the ‘Standard Entitlement’, prior to the date on which my employment terminates. I understand that outstanding monies may be deducted from any pay (including holiday pay) owed to me by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.

Signature: ..... Print Name: .....

Date: .....



# EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

## PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

<b>Name of Policy/Function:</b>	Y	This is <b>new</b>
<b>Maternity Policy and Procedure</b>		This is a <b>change</b> to an existing policy
		This is an <b>existing</b> policy, Function, not previously assessed
		This is an existing policy/function for <b>review</b>

<b>Date of screening</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
--------------------------	----------------------------

### 1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that any employee who becomes pregnant during the course of their employment is aware of the statutory and contractual rights to maternity leave and pay. The policy sets out the role and responsibilities of those Officers who play a part in ensuring its effective delivery; the employee, HR team, line manager and Health and Safety Officer.

### 2. Are there external considerations?

*e.g. Legislation/government directive etc*

Health and Safety Act 1974  
Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999  
Equality Act 2010  
Shared Parental Leave Regulations 2014  
Maternity and Adoption Leave Regulations 2014  
Green Book

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

All Council employees

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

The desired outcome is that this policy and procedure sets out a clear and transparent approach that is to be applied to those wishing to take maternity leave.

The policy should be easy to understand and guide employees, managers, HR staff and the Health and Safety Officer through the maternity leave process to ensure a fair and consistent approach is applied to all.

#### 5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

Consultation has taken place with both the recognised trade unions within the Council, GMB and Unison. The feedback received from this was positive. Consultation has taken place with all staff within the council either via email or staff receiving a hard copy of the policy from their Manager or Union representative. Feedback from this was considered and again was generally positive.

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

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

There are no concerns about any negative impacts.

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

**Positive** – *It could benefit*

**Negative** – *It could disadvantage*

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

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Neutral
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral
Age	Neutral
Gender Reassignment	This policy will need to be considered when any Paternity/Maternity Support Leave Policy is reviewed this will be to ensure that any pay received whilst on Maternity/Paternity/Maternity Support Leave is applied fairly and equally.
Sex	This policy will need to be considered when any Paternity/Maternity Support Leave Policy is reviewed this will be to ensure that any pay received whilst on Maternity/Paternity/Maternity Support Leave is applied fairly

	and equally.
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Religion/Belief	Neutral
Marriage and Civil Partnership	This policy will need to be considered when any Paternity/Maternity Support Leave Policy is reviewed this will be to ensure that any pay received whilst on Maternity/Paternity/Maternity Support Leave is applied fairly and equally.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive, a risk assessment of the workplace must be carried out for employees who are pregnant or returning from maternity leave and any actions would be taken to address any issues

**8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?**

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

No

**9. Are there any human rights implications?**

Yes, the Council has a duty of care to ensure that the workplace is a safe and healthy environment

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

No

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

*i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation*

No

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

No

**13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?**

Yes

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

N/A
-----

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

We are satisfied that an initial screening has been carried out and a full equality assessment **is required\*** (please delete as appropriate).

Completed by Melissa Lathom  
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date 15/06/2017

Countersigned by Karen Pollard  
(*Head of Service*)

Date 15/06/2017

Screened by: Veronika Quintyne

Date: 22/06/2017

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

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



## EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

### **PART 2 – FULL EQUALITY ASSESSMENT**

**15. Summarise the likely negative impacts for relevant groups identified in the screening process**

N/A

**16. What consultation/involvement activities have taken place or will need to take place with groups/individuals from each relevant equality group?**

Consultation has already taken place with the recognised trade unions and all staff members as detailed above.

**17. What other research has been or will need to be carried out to help you with the assessment?**

- Research into current legislation relating to Maternity Leave
- Research has been carried out to see how other Local Authorities manage the maternity leave process

**18. Results of research/consultation**

*i.e. what does it tell you about the negative impacts?*

N/A



## 19. Conclusions & Action Planning

You should explain what and how negative impacts have been reduced or removed and how positive impacts are to be improved or included.

Your final decisions or recommendations may include making immediate changes, stopping or proceeding with a new policy, justifying a decision or adding objectives/targets to the service development plan/equality scheme (long term changes).

You could use the template below to record your conclusions/actions. You should also make reference to any additional monitoring or research that is still required, or was not retrievable at the point of assessment, but will be required in subsequent reviews or in order to complete actions.

<b>Equality Group</b>	<b>Details of possible disadvantage or negative impact</b>	<b>Action to be taken to address the disadvantage or negative impact</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
<b>Age</b>				
<b>Disability (physical, visual, hearing, learning, disabilities, mental health)</b>				
<b>Gender/ Transgender</b>				
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>				
<b>Race/ ethnicity</b>				
<b>Religion or belief</b>				
<b>Sexual orientation</b>				
<b>Other socially excluded groups (low literacy, socio-economic etc)</b>				
<b>Other factors</b>				

that may lead to inequality				
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## 20. How will you monitor, evaluate and check the policy in the future?

- The policy will be reviewed every 5 years.
- The policy will be updated if there are any amendments to legislation
- Employees, managers, HR and H&S Officer will be encouraged to give feedback on the policy and how it has worked in practice for them as Officers either delivering it or following it.

## 21. When will a review take place?

*In accordance with the Policy document, where appropriate or subject to legislative change.*

- The policy will be reviewed every 5 years.
- The policy will be updated if there are any amendments to legislation

## Please complete

We are satisfied that a full assessment has been carried out.

Completed by Melissa Lathom  
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date 15/06/2017

Countersigned by Karen Pollard  
(*Head of Service*)

Date 15/06/2017

Screened by: Veronika Quintyne

Date: 22/06/2017

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

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

OADBY & WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Sickness Absence Management Policy and Procedure 2017



Policy Version Number: 1  
Committee Approval:  
GMB: 07/02/17  
EIA: 21/02/17

Policy Author: S. Jones  
TU Approval:  
Unison: 07/02/17  
Date of Policy Review: 07/22



**Oadby & Wigston**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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**Appendix 1: Role and Responsibilities**

**Appendix 2: Trained Officers to carry Absence Management Hearings and Appeals**

**Appendix 3: Managing Sickness Absence Procedure Flow Chart**

**Appendix 4: Return to Work Meeting Form/Informal Improvement Notice Form**

## 1.0 Background

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (“the Council”) is committed to ensuring equality and diversity across the organisation. It will ensure that it supports the employees covered by this policy and procedure not only by complying with its statutory obligations, but also by being a supportive employer who recognises the importance of managing sickness absence fairly and consistently. The Council encourages open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible.

## 2.0 Purpose

This policy sets out the procedures for reporting, recording and managing both short and long-term sickness absence in a fair and consistent manner. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of those Officers who play a part in ensuring its effective delivery; the employee, Human Resources team, and line manager.

## 3.0 Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all employees of the Council. It does not apply to contractors or agency workers.

Unless otherwise locally agreed, the Council will adhere to the National Joint Council's Green Book.

The Policy may be overridden by changes to relevant legislation (where applicable).

At every stage of this process, the employee will be afforded the opportunity to put forward their reasons for absence and any mitigating circumstances they wish to be considered. The line manager will then decide the outcome of the meeting in accordance with this policy and procedure including any reasonable adjustments/support based on the sickness absence level and what they have heard during the meeting.

Employees have the right to appeal any warning issued or dismissal from their employment resulting from this policy and procedure; please refer to the Appeals Process at section 14 for details.

Only in exceptional circumstances, which includes but is not limited to personal tragedy; bereavement; planned operations; line managers (or other designated persons) may opt out of all or parts of this policy and procedure for managing an employee's sickness absence. Compassionate or unpaid leave may be granted under those circumstances or absence may be discounted for the purpose of sickness triggers. A line manager (or other designated person) considering allowing an exemption should first consult with the Human Resources team.

## 4.0 Glossary

Below is a list of terms used within this policy and procedure.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>7<sup>th</sup> day of absence</b>	7 days from the start of absence, including the first day of absence and any non-working days
<b>Adjusted Sickness Trigger</b>	These are increased targets as a reasonable adjustment to disability related absence
<b>Colleague</b>	Another employee of the Council who does not fall into the category of 'Line Manager' or 'Other designated person' as set out in this policy
<b>Disability</b>	Defined by the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if he or she "has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [his or her] ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"
<b>Improvement Notices</b>	This will be a target or set of targets over a fixed period of time to improve sickness absence
<b>Fit note</b> (formerly known as a sick note)	A statement from the employee's GP noting reasons for absence and likely return to work date and/or any reasonable adjustments required
<b>Line Manager</b>	The employee's usual line manager
<b>Long-term absence</b>	Absences for periods exceeding 4 weeks
<b>Occupational Health</b>	A group of independent health advisors used by the Council to assess an employee's health and well-being
<b>OSP</b>	Occupational Sick Pay
<b>Other designated person</b>	An employee's supervisor/team leader/foreman or a member of the Human Resources team
<b>RTW</b>	Return to Work
<b>Short-term absence</b>	Absences for periods of less than 4 weeks
<b>Sickness Review Meeting (SRM)</b>	A meeting held with the employee whilst the employee is absent to establish support and the likely return to work date
<b>Sickness Triggers</b>	A sickness trigger is a measure of the number of occurrences of absence within a defined period which if reached will result in the formal process commencing as outlined in this policy
<b>Sickness Trigger Meeting</b>	A meeting that is held once an employee's absence has met a sickness trigger under this policy and procedure
<b>SSP</b>	Statutory Sick Pay
<b>Usual Start Time</b>	<p>This is the time the employee would ordinarily start work e.g. an employee who normally starts between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., would be expected to call between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.</p> <p>For those employee's required to work fixed shifts, this is the shift start time.</p> <p>Out of hours arrangements are dealt with locally – see Section 5.1 for details.</p>
<b>Warning</b>	This can consist of a written or final written warning

## 5.0 Notification of Absence

Employees must give notification of their absence by telephone within 1 hour of their usual start time. Sufficient notice should be given where there are planned meetings, appointments or deadlines looming and by no later than 1 hour after the employee's usual start time.

A telephone call should be made by the employee to their line manager where possible.

Other designated person: In the absence of the employee's line manager, the employee should speak to their supervisor/team leader/foreman/senior. Where this is not possible, the employee must contact a member of the Human Resources team.

The employee must not contact a colleague to report sickness absence or ask for a message to be passed on, nor leave a voicemail for their line manager or other designated person. Direct contact must be made with the employee's line manager or other designated person as listed above.

No other form of contact is acceptable (not limited to text messaging, social media, email, written or other form of communication) save for exceptional circumstances where the employee is unable to speak. In these circumstances, the employee must elect another person to call on their behalf where possible.

The employee must notify the line manager (or other designated person) of:

- Their reasons for absence
- Their likely return to work date
- For stress-related absence, whether this is work-related
- Any outstanding diary commitments for the foreseeable period of absence
- Any outstanding deadlines due within the foreseeable period of absence

### 5.1 Out of Hours

Employees who work outside of normal working hours (before 8:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and after 4:30 p.m. on Fridays) should adhere to the local arrangements within their department for the notification of sickness absence.

### 5.2 7<sup>th</sup> Day of Absence

The employee must notify their line manager (or other designated person) on or near to the 7<sup>th</sup> day of absence of their likely return to work date and provide a valid fit note from the 8<sup>th</sup> day of absence where applicable. The 8<sup>th</sup> day is calculated by actual days, not working days.



## 6.0 Long-term Absence

This applies to sickness absence that exceeds or is likely to exceed a period of 4 weeks (regardless of the number of hours you are contracted to work within that 4-week period).

Sickness review meetings will be undertaken for long-term absences or recurring periods of absence for the same reason.

The frequency of meetings will be determined by the reasons for absence but where appropriate will be no less than one meeting within each 4 weekly period of absence.

The meetings will be carried out by the employees line manager (or other designated person) and a Human Resources representative.

The purpose of the meeting will be to identify any support the Council can offer including any reasonable adjustments, and any steps the employee can take to facilitate an earlier return to work. At this point a referral to Occupational Health may be considered (see Referral to Occupational Health at section 7 for details).

For long-term absence where an employee has reached the limit of their entitlement to full Occupational Sick Pay, the formal process of managing sickness absence will be invoked. See Stage 2 – Formal Process at 11.2 for more information.

## 7.0 Referral to Occupational Health

An employee may be referred to Occupational Health for further advice on their medical condition and likely return to work date, including any reasonable adjustments/support required to facilitate an earlier return to work.

Usually for sickness absences exceeding or likely to exceed 4 weeks, however the following are examples of absences that may be an exception to this rule:

- Fractures/broken bones that are healing normally without complications
- Operations or medical procedures where there are no complications
- Employee's receiving chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy
- Sickness absence relating to personal stress/anxiety
- Imminent consultant referral
- Previous Occupational Health report(s) relating to the same absence provides no further referral is required

Please note that where there is a positive recommendation from Occupational Health for an employee to return to work and this is not supported or endorsed by the GP then medical reports will be sought from the GP (subject to the employee's consent) and an expert opinion may be sought.

## 8.0 Returning to Work

Employees should notify their line manager of the date they will be returning, prior to their return to work.

The line manager (or other designated person in the line manager's absence) will undertake a Return to Work Meeting (Appendix X) on the same day the employee returns where possible.

### **8.1 Informal Sickness Trigger Meeting**

Where the line manager has identified that an employee has met a sickness trigger and there are no existing improvement notices or warnings on file, an informal sickness trigger meeting will be undertaken at the same time as the return to work meeting where possible. See 'Sickness Triggers' at section 9 for more information.

### **8.2 Existing Warnings/Improvement Notices on file**

If there is an existing improvement notice or warning on file, the employee will be dealt with under the next stage of the Managing Sickness Absence Procedure. See Stage 2 – Formal Process at 11.2 for more information.

## **9.0 Sickness Triggers**

Periods of absence that will trigger this policy are set out below:

- 3 or more periods of absence within a rolling 12 month period
- 10 or more days absence within a rolling 12 month period

Where it has been identified that an employee has met a sickness trigger, the line manager (or other designated person in their absence) should invoke the Managing Sickness Absence Procedure set out below.

Additional allowances are set for those absences relating to disability before a trigger is met. Please refer to the Disability Related Absence section (section 10) for details.

## **10.0 Disability Related Absence**

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the grounds of his or her disability. This also applies to employees who become disabled during their employment.

Defined by the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if he or she "has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [his or her] ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".

### **10.1 Adjusted Sickness Triggers**

If sickness absence is related to a disability, the Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments including (but not limited to) an increase in sickness absence triggers as follows:

- 5 periods of absence within a rolling 12 month period

- 15 or more days absence within a rolling 12 month period

In addition to these triggers and when considering reasonable adjustments in respect of an employee's disability, the Council will generally be guided by recommendations from its Occupational Health provider. Each case will be dealt with on its own merit and the reasonable adjustment(s) will apply only to the disabled employee unless otherwise agreed.

Where there is a combination of disability related absence and absences that are unrelated to a person's disability, the above Disability Related Absence triggers will apply.

The Managing Sickness Absence Procedure will be invoked once one or more of the above sickness absence triggers has been met.

In instances where the employee's attendance has met or exceeded the above trigger points and/or they are unable to return to work following long term sickness absence and no reasonable adjustments or redeployment are possible, the employee will be invited to a Stage 3 Absence Management Hearing. Please see Stage 3 – Final Formal Process for details.

### **10.2 Absences unrelated to disability**

Where all absences within a rolling 12 month period are unrelated to a person's disability, normal sickness triggers will apply. See Sickness Triggers at section 9 for more information.

## **11.0 Managing Sickness Absence Procedure**

### **11.1 Stage 1 - Informal Sickness Trigger Meeting**

This stage will only be considered where there are no existing warnings/improvements notices on file.

The employee does not have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague at this stage; however the employee can request to be accompanied if they wish. The meeting will be postponed for up to 5 working days whilst the employee secures suitable representation. If suitable representation is not sourced/ arranged within that time, the meeting will be held in the absence of representation.

The options at this stage are:

- No further action – the process will restart if any sickness trigger is met in the future
- Referral to Occupational Health (where further medical opinion/advice is required) – this can be combined with another outcome (See Referral to Occupational Health at section 7 for more details)
- Informal Improvement Notice

### **11.1.1 Informal Improvement Notice**

Where an Informal Improvement Notice is issued, the employee will be required to meet the target of no further absence within an 8 week period.

### **11.1.2 Informal Improvement Notice Review**

At the end of the 8 week period (or sooner where further absence occurs), the employee will be invited to a review meeting with their line manager (or other designated person in the line manager's absence) to assess the employee's progress.

If no further absence has occurred within the 8 week period, the review period will end. However the Improvement Notice will remain on file for a further 6 months.

Absences that occur within the 6 month period following satisfactory completion of the Informal Improvement Notice, may automatically progress to Stage 2 – Formal Process.

Where further absence occurs within the 8 week Informal Improvement Notice period, the review meeting will be held within 5 days of the employees return to work. The review meeting can be held at the same time as the return to work meeting.

The employee will be informed at the review meeting that the matter will progress to Stage 2 – Formal Process due to the employee not meeting the target set at the informal stage.

## **11.2 Stage 2 – Formal Process**

Employees will be given no less than 5 working days notice of a Stage 2 Absence Management meeting and will be entitled to be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

The meeting will be conducted by the employee's line manager (or other designated person in the line manager's absence) in the presence of a member of the Human Resources team who will take notes at the meeting.

The options at this stage are:

- Referral to Occupational Health (if not previously exhausted) – this can be combined with another outcome (See Referral to Occupational Health at section 7 for more details)
- Written warning
- Formal Improvement Notice

### **11.2.1 Written Warning**

A written warning will be live for a period of 6 months and will remain on file for a further 6 months. Further absence within this period may automatically invoke Stage 3 – Formal Process.

### **11.2.2 Formal Improvement Notice**

Where a Formal Improvement Notice is issued, the employee will be required to meet the target of no more than 1 occasion or 3 days of absence within a 4 month period. This will remain on file for a further 6 months.

### **11.2.3 Formal Improvement Notice Review**

At the end of the 4 month period (or sooner where further absence occurs), the employee will be invited to a review meeting with their line manager (or other designated person in the line manager's absence) to assess the employee's progress. The employee is entitled to be accompanied at the review meeting by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

If no further absence has occurred within the 4 month timeframe, the review period will end. However the Formal Improvement Notice will remain on file for a further 6 months.

Absences that occur within the 6 month period following satisfactory completion of the Formal Improvement Notice, may automatically progress to Stage 3 – Formal Process.

Where further absence occurs within the 4 month Formal Improvement Notice period, the employee will be invited to attend a review meeting allowing at least 5 days notice. The employee is entitled to be accompanied at the review meeting by a trade union representative or workplace colleague.

The employee will be informed at the review meeting that the matter will progress to Stage 3 – Formal Process owing to the employee being unable to meet the target set at the informal stage.

## **11.3 Stage 3 – Final Formal Process**

The final formal stage in this procedure is to hold an Absence Management Hearing.

### **11.3.1 Continuing Long-Term Absence where full Occupational Sick Pay is exhausted**

Where an employee's absence has caused them to reach the limit of their entitlement to full Occupational Sick Pay, the final formal process of this policy and procedure will automatically be invoked, even where sickness absence continues. This will apply in cases where a foreseeable return to work date within a reasonable period is unknown.

A referral to Occupational Health is required in these circumstances, if this option has not already been exhausted (see Section 7 of this policy and procedure).

### **11.3.2 Absent Management Hearing**

Employees will be issued with a report containing all documentary evidence relative to this period of absence, including notes from previous meetings.

Employees will then be given no less than 5 working days notice of a Stage 3 Absence Management Hearing following receipt of the aforementioned report. Employees will be entitled to representation by a trade union representative or workplace colleague at the Hearing.

The Absence Management Hearing will be conducted by a Panel of two separate independent line managers and a member of the Human Resources team, who will also take notes of the meeting.

The options at this stage are:

- Final written warning
- Dismissal
- Extension to previous Formal Improvement Notice/Stage 3 Final Improvement Notice (in exceptional circumstances only)

### **11.3.3 Final written warning**

A final written warning will be live on an employee's file for 6 months and will remain on file for a further 6 months. Further absence within this period will invoke a further Absence Management Hearing where it is likely the employee will be dismissed, provided all avenues of reasonable support have been exhausted.

### **11.3.4 Extension to previous Formal Improvement Notice/Stage 3 Final Improvement Notice (in exceptional circumstances only)**

In exceptional circumstances, the Panel may decide that it is appropriate to extend the employee's existing Formal Improvement Notice after hearing the employee's reasons for absence and any mitigating circumstances, and after considering the evidence presented to them.

The period of extension shall not exceed 2 months.

Where there is no existing Formal Improvement Notice on file (i.e. only warnings have been issued previously) and further absence has occurred due to exceptional circumstances, the Panel may implement a Stage 3 Final Improvement Notice for a period of 2 months.

The target for this period should be: No further absence within a 2 month period.

If an employee fails to meet the targets set by the extended Formal Improvement Notice/Final Improvement Notice, a further Absence Management Hearing will be held where it is likely the employee will be dismissed, provided all avenues of reasonable support have been exhausted.

### **11.3.5 Dismissal**

Where it is deemed that the employee is incapable of fulfilling the contract of employment owing to their absence levels, they will be dismissed (with the appropriate notice unless otherwise agreed). This will usually apply where there has been limited or no improvement in sickness absence levels despite the employee being afforded a reasonable opportunity to improve.

Dismissal will also be considered where the employee is unable to return to their substantive role (after all reasonable adjustments have been considered) and there are no suitable redeployment opportunities available.

## 12.0 Failure to attend

Where an employee is unable to attend any meeting, they must give sufficient notice outlining their reasons for non-attendance. A second meeting will be scheduled for a mutually convenient date and time.

Non-attendance at a second scheduled meeting of any sort will result in the meeting going ahead in the employee's absence.

## 13.0 Other Absences

### 13.1 Absence during Annual Leave

A fit note is required for absences that occur during an employee's annual leave and the correct reporting procedures for absence must be followed.

Annual leave cannot be reinstated for absences notified retrospectively or where the correct reporting/notification procedures have not been followed.

### 13.2 Accidents at Work

All accidents/incidents that occur in the workplace must be recorded, particularly where this causes or is likely to cause sickness absence. Absences of this type will not contribute to a sickness trigger.

### 13.3 Stress Related Absence

Employees experiencing personal stress, anxiety or depression may be supported by Human Resources and through the Employee Assistance Programme.

Employees experiencing work-related stress, anxiety or depression will be dealt with under the Council's Stress Management Policy and Procedure and may also be supported by Human Resources and through the Employee Assistance Programme.

### 13.4 Planned Operations

Planned operations would ordinarily be taken as sickness absence. Employee's can request to utilise annual leave or flexi-leave if they wish.

Depending on the type of operation, this absence is likely to be discounted when calculating sickness triggers and may even be exempt from this policy, subject to your line manager's discretion and in consultation with HR.

Cosmetic surgery must be taken as annual leave or flexi-leave.

### **13.5 Pregnancy Related Absence**

Pregnancy related absence will be dealt with under the Council's Maternity Policy.

### **13.6 Time off for IVF**

This will be dealt with under the Council's Maternity Policy.

## **14.0 Exclusions to Occupational Sick Pay**

### **14.1 Occupational Sick Pay**

An employee's entitlement to Occupational Sick Pay is set out in the Contract of Employment.

### **14.2 Absent without leave**

The Council reserves the right to suspend Occupational Sick Pay for any employee who is absent without leave, up to and including the first day of absence. Where an employee fails to arrive for work and does not notify the Council of their absence, they will be deemed to be absent without leave. This also applies where an employee fails to return after a period of authorised leave (e.g. annual leave) and again fails to notify of their continuing absence.

### **14.3 Health Appointments**

There is no right to paid time off to attend planned doctor, dentist or hospital appointments. Appointments must be made outside of working hours where possible or at a time which causes minimal disruption to the working day (e.g. lunchtime, early, late appointments, etc). Employees may be required to make up the time (this will otherwise be unpaid) or utilise the flexi-time system where applicable. Annual leave may also be used if preferred.

For consultant/hospital appointments only, there may be an exception to this rule. Where an employee is required to attend a consultant/hospital appointment more than once in any 3 month period, the employee can put in a request for this time off to be paid.

There is no automatic right to paid time off under these circumstances and each case will be considered on its own merit. Employees should send a written request to their line manager who will discuss the matter with the employee before making a decision.

Usually requests for paid time off to attend consultant/hospital appointments will relate to more serious illnesses, and it is expected that the employee makes this known to their line manager/HR to ensure appropriate support can be given.

### **14.4 Failure to follow the correct notification procedures (including the submission of fit notes)**

In accordance with the National Joint Council's Green Book, the Council may stop Occupational Sick Pay for those employees who fail to:

1. Immediately notify of their absence as set out in this policy and procedure.



2. Contact their line manager (or other designated person) on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of absence as set out in this policy and procedure.
3. Provide a valid doctor's fit note from the 8<sup>th</sup> day of absence and subsequent fit notes (where applicable) no later than the expiry date of an existing note.

#### **14.5 Abuse of the Council's sickness scheme**

In accordance with the National Joint Council's Green Book, the Council may stop Occupational Sick Pay for any employee who:

1. Abuses the sickness scheme – this will include but is not limited to:
  - a. non-attendance to an Occupational Health referral,
  - b. non-attendance to a sickness review meeting,
  - c. non-attendance to a sickness trigger/review meeting,
  - d. non-attendance to an Absence Management Hearing,
  - e. working a second job that is similar to or the same as the employees existing role whilst absent from work,
  - f. refusal to undertake alternative work/duties within their capability to facilitate an earlier return to work.
2. Is absent on account of sickness due or attributable to deliberate conduct prejudicial to recovery.
3. The employee's own misconduct or neglect.
4. Active participation in professional sport.
5. Injury while working in the employee's own time on their own account for private gain or for another employer.

## **15.0 Appeals Process**

An employee has the right to appeal against any warning issued (i.e. written and final written warning) and/or against dismissal from their employment.

Appeals should be made in writing to Human Resources within 5 working days of a decision. An appeal must be lodged on at least one of the following criteria:

- The sanction is disproportionate to the level or frequency of absence
- Mitigating circumstances were not reasonably considered when deciding the sanction

An appeal cannot be lodged where an employee wishes to put forward new information and/or mitigating circumstances which had not been raised during the 'Managing Sickness Absence Procedure'. It is deemed that the employee would have been given a reasonable opportunity to put forward this information and/or mitigating circumstance during this process.

For the Hearing, Human Resources will appoint two independent managers with no prior involvement in the matter to consider the grounds for appeal. A member of the Human Resources team will attend to take notes at the Appeal Hearing and to provide advice and guidance to the Panel on the policy and pertinent legislation. This will form the Panel for an Appeal Hearing.

For appeals against dismissal, the Panel will consist of 3 independent Elected Members with no prior involvement in the matter to consider the grounds for appeal. A member of the Human Resources team will attend to take notes at the Appeal Hearing and to provide advice and guidance to the Panel on the policy and pertinent legislation.

### **15.1 Appeals Hearing**

A Hearing will be arranged as soon as is practicable following receipt of an employee's appeal, where the employee will be afforded an opportunity to put forward their case and any further documentary evidence in support of their appeal.

After considering an employee's appeal, a decision will be made by the Panel as follows:

- Appeal is unsuccessful – warning/dismissal remains in force.
- Appeal is successful – warning/dismissal is overturned.

### **15.2 Successful Appeal**

Where an employee successfully appeals their warning/dismissal, the Appeal Panel will decide an appropriate outcome as follows:

- A lesser warning – i.e. where a final written warning has been issued, this can be reduced to a written warning. For dismissal, a final written warning should be considered.
- A final Formal Improvement Notice – Target: No further absence over a 4 month review period. This should include any appropriate support mechanisms/reasonable adjustments that have not already been exhausted.
- Referral to Occupational Health – Where this has not already been exhausted or where circumstances regarding the absence have significantly changed since the previous referral. This can be combined with another outcome.
- Redeployment – where this option has not already been exhausted and where a suitable vacancy is available.

## Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The table below outlines the roles and responsibilities of those concerned by this policy and procedure:

<b>Senior Management Team</b>	At least one member of Senior Management Team must approve cases of dismissal arising from this policy and procedure.
<b>Line Managers</b>	<p>Line Managers are responsible for managing sickness absence fairly and consistently in line with this policy and procedure.</p> <p>Line Managers will conduct both the informal stage and the first part of the formal stage of this policy and procedure for their own employees.</p> <p>Line Managers will form the panel for the Absence Management Hearing and Appeals Hearing as required.</p>
<b>Employees</b>	<p>Employees must ensure they understand the content of this policy and procedure and co-operate fully with the sickness absence procedures; failure to do so may affect entitlement to sick pay and/or may be deemed to be misconduct and dealt with according to the Disciplinary policy and procedure.</p> <p>All employees who are unable to attend work due to sickness have a responsibility to notify their Line manager as to the nature of the sickness and anticipated length of absence.</p>
<b>Human Resources</b>	<p>Human Resources will provide advice and guidance on this policy and procedure and pertinent legislation.</p> <p>Human Resources will arrange a competent note taker and adviser for meetings held beyond the informal stage of this policy and procedure.</p>
<b>Trade Union/ workplace colleague</b>	<p>Employees have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or workplace colleague during the formal stages of this policy and procedure.</p> <p>No external representation is permitted.</p>
<b>Elected Members</b>	<p>Three independent Elected Members will form the Panel for the Appeal Hearing.</p> <p>They will have no prior involvement with the matter and will consider the matter independently.</p>

### **Corporate Resources**

1. Health and Safety Officer
2. Elections Manager

### **Planning, Development and Regeneration**

1. Planning, Development and Regeneration Manager
2. Facilities and Administration Team Leader
3. Planning Policy Team Leader
4. Planning Control Team Leader

### **Finance, Revenues and Benefits**

1. Finance, Revenues and Benefits Manager
2. Principal Accountant
3. Accountant
4. Benefits Team Leader
5. Revenues Team Leader
6. Senior Recovery Officer
7. Senior Revenues Officer

### **EDOS**

1. Health and Leisure Manager
2. Operations Manager
3. Fleet Manager
4. Recycling Co-ordinator
5. Waste Collection Foreman
6. Clean and Green Foreman

### **Community**

1. Housing Services Manager
2. Property Manager
3. Environmental Health Team Leader
4. Senior Income Officer

### **Customer Service**

1. Customer Service and Transformation Manager
2. Customer Service Team Leader
3. Customer Service Supervisor

### **Senior Management Team**

1. Chief Executive
2. Director of Services
3. Director of Finance and Transformation

# Appendix 3: Managing Sickness Absence Procedure

Employee calls in sick

Line Manager records absence within iTrent and notes whether the employee has met a sickness trigger

Sickness Review Meeting (depending on length and reasons for absence)

Employee returns to work following sickness absence

Line Manager conducts Return to Work meeting and instigates the relevant stage (below)

## Stage 1 – Informal Sickness Trigger Meeting

Note: This stage should only be considered where there are no existing warnings/improvement notices on file.

Line Manager conducts Informal Sickness Trigger Meeting

Note: this meeting can be conducted at the same time as the return to work meeting.

Employee gives reasons for absence and any mitigating circumstances to be considered

Line Manager decides the outcome:

No further action – process resets

Informal Improvement Notice – see Informal Improvement Notice below

Referral to Occupational Health – can be combined with another outcome

Employee is informed of the outcome and given a copy of the meeting form

### Informal Improvement Notice

Live for 8 weeks

Review meeting is held at 8 weeks or sooner if further absence occurs:

No further absence – Informal Improvement Notice remains on file for 6 months

Further absence during notice period – Move to Stage 2

## Stage 2 – Formal Process

Note: This stage is considered where the employee has defaulted at the informal stage or the informal improvement notice remains on file.

Line Manager conducts Formal Sickness Trigger Meeting with HR

Employee gives reasons for absence and any mitigating circumstances to be considered

Line Manager decides outcome:

Referral to Occupational Health – can be combined with another

Written warning – live for 6m

Formal Improvement Notice – see Formal Improvement Notice

Employee is informed of the outcome and given a copy of the meeting form

### Formal Improvement Notice

Live for 4 months

Review meeting is held at 4 months or sooner if further absence occurs:

No further absence – Formal Improvement Notice remains on file for 6 months

Further absence during notice period outside of target – Move to Stage 3

## Stage 3 – Final Formal Process

Note: This stage is considered where the employee has defaulted at stage 2 or during the period warnings/improvement notices are on file.

Line managers must compile and send an absence report within 5 days of default/employees return to work

HR appoints a Panel

Employee is invited to attend Absence Management Hearing

Employee gives reasons for absence and any mitigating circumstances to be considered

Panel decides the outcome:

Final Written warning – live for 6 months

Dismissal - approved by SMT

Extension to/Stage 3 Formal Improvement Notice – live for 2 months Referral to Occupational Health – can be combined with another

Review meeting is held by Panel at 2 months or sooner if further absence occurs:

No further absence – on file for 6 months

Further absence during notice period – Repeat Absence Management Hearing

## APPEALS – to be lodged within 5 days of the decision

There is no right to appeal at the informal stage of this process

Only available at the formal stage. Appeals against dismissals will be heard by Elected Members. All other appeals heard by 2 independent managers.

## Appendix 4: Return to Work Form

Employee:  Line Manager:

Job title:  Section:

Absent from\*:  /  /  :   
\*Date and time

Absent to\*:  /  /   
\*Date and time

Absence leads up to/immediately after (please tick):

No. of days absent\*:   
\*Working days

Weekend
<input type="checkbox"/>

Annual leave
<input type="checkbox"/>

Bank holiday
<input type="checkbox"/>

Absence reason\*:   
\*Insert from iTrent

Were the correct reporting procedures followed? Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'No', please state reason:

### Absence History

Absences within the preceding 12 months:

Days
<input type="text"/>

Periods
<input type="text"/>

Existing warning/improvement notice (please tick):

Note: the most recent sanction supersedes all others

Please tick if there are no existing warnings/improvement notices and complete Part 2 of this form (overleaf): ☐

### Improvement notices:

Informal ☐  
Formal ☐  
Extension to Formal Improvement Notice ☐  
Final Formal (following appeal) ☐

### Warnings:

Written ☐  
Final Written ☐

Please confirm if the warning/improvement notice selected above is:

Live (within its active period) ☐ On file ☐

Date warning/improvement notice was issued  /  /

### Overview of Return to Work Discussion

<input type="text"/>	
Meeting date:	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>

<b>Employee</b>		<b>Manager</b>	<b>Job</b>	
Signature:		Title:	Signature:	
Print name:		Print name:		

**Oadby and Wigston Borough Council**  
**PART 2 – Informal Sickness Trigger Meeting Form**

V.1 January 2017

Is the employee ok to proceed with this meeting unaccompanied? (Please Yes ☐ No ☐  
 tick)

If 'No', please insert rescheduled meeting date here\*  
 (\*must be within 5 days of the Return to Work meeting where possible)      \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

**Sickness Trigger**

Sickness trigger(s) met within the preceding 12 months from the date of return - relating to absences as set out in the attached report (attach iTrent report).

3/5* or more periods of absence	
10/15* days or more within one period	

\*Note: increased trigger applies to employees registered as disabled

**Overview of Discussion**

**Mitigating circumstances/absences to be excluded**

	Approved by HR:

**Outcome (Please tick)**

**No further action** ☐

**Referral to Occupational Health\*** ☐ \*Note: this can be combined with another outcome

**Informal Improvement Notice\*\*** ☐ Review Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

\*\* Live for 8 weeks, on-file for 6 months  
 (8 weeks from date of issue)

<b>Target</b> (include additional support/targets as required):	<b>Target Period:</b>
No further absence	8 weeks

<b>Employee</b>		<b>Manager</b>	<b>Job</b>
		Title:	
Signature:		Signature:	
Print name:		Print name:	

**Informal Review Meeting** (please choose one option)

Targets completed to satisfaction ☐

Date 'on-file' to: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

**OR** Further absence during target period ☐

Absence from: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_ to \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_

---



<b>Employee</b>		<b>Manager</b>	<b>Job</b>	
		Title:		
Signature:			Signature:	
Print name:			Print name:	



# EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

## PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

<b>Name of Policy/Function:</b>		This is <b>new</b>
<b>Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure</b>	Y	This is a <b>change</b> to an existing policy
		This is an <b>existing</b> policy, Function, not previously assessed
		This is an existing policy/function for <b>review</b>

<b>Date of screening</b>	21 June 2017
--------------------------	--------------

### 1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

This policy sets out the procedures for reporting, recording and managing both short and long-term sickness absence in a fair and consistent manner. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of those Officers who play a part in ensuring its effective delivery; the employee, Human Resources team, and line manager.

Its overall aim is to reduce and manage sickness absence in a fair and consistent manner.

### 2. Are there external considerations?

*e.g. Legislation/government directive etc*

Equality Act 2010 – Disability discrimination

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

All Council employees – management of their absence

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

To reduce the overall level of sickness absence across the Council.

To ensure that managers apply the policy and manage absence in a manner that is fair and consistent to all employees.

## **5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?**

Benchmarking was carried out to assess the Council's rate of absence against the national average and locally against other Councils.

Research of other Council's policies and their application of such policies.

Legal advice was sought from the Council's legal team, particularly in respect of the wording around disability.

Staff were consulted with on the policy with a very small number making comments, including some union. Where practicable, these comments were incorporated into the policy.

A prediction exercise was carried out to assess how staff are likely to be affected by the changes in the new policy.

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

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

Concerns were raised over the sickness triggers, however these are needed in order to be able to appropriately manage short-term sporadic absence and the predication exercise proved that this would not pose a negative impact overall.

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

**Positive** – *It could benefit*

**Negative** – *It could disadvantage*

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

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Positive – additional triggers are in place for those employees with a known disability
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral
Age	Positive applies to all employees regardless of age and

	provides a provision to opt-out of the policy for long-term absences such as bereavement, personal tragedy.
Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Religion/Belief	Neutral
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive – pregnancy related absences do not count towards a sickness trigger.

## **8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?**

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

Whilst in some circumstances this may increase absence (e.g. homelessness), the Council offers external support through its Employee Assistance Programme in these cases.

## **9. Are there any human rights implications?**

Yes, the Council has a duty of care to ensure equality and dignity at work.

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

Yes – new sickness triggers have been introduced for disabled employees that were never in place previously.

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

*i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation*

No

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

No – unless the Contractor is a line manager, in which case they will be responsible for the management of sickness absence within their team. Training will be given.

## **13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?**

No

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

N/A

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

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

Completed by Sarah Jones Date 21/06/2017  
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Countersigned by Karen Pollard Date 22/06/2017  
(*Head of Service*)

Screened by: Veronika Quintyne Date: 21/07/2017

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

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

OADBY & WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Lone Worker Policy and Procedure 2017



Policy Version Number: 1  
Committee Approval:  
GMB: 07/02/17  
EIA: 30/05/17

Policy Author: K.Pollard  
TU Approval:  
Unison Page 195 07/02/17  
Date of Policy Review: 07/22



**Oadby & Wigston**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: Policy and Guidance for Lone Working**
- Appendix B: Generic Risk Assessment**
- Appendix C: Risk Assessment Flow Chart**
- Appendix D: Hints and Tips**
- Appendix E: Summary Guide**

## 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure adequate systems are in place to assess the risks a lone worker may face and ensure the health, safety and welfare to reduce the risks of lone working so far as is reasonably possible and practicable.

Lone working is common in many Council activities and recognises that lone workers face particular problems.

## 2.0 Definition

A lone worker is anyone who works in isolation from their colleagues without close or direct supervision. It could be an employee in an office working early or late, a single person in a workshop, park or someone working at home. For a non exhaustive list of people who work outside of normal office hours.

## 3.0 Scope

This Policy applies to all employees permanent or temporary of the Council and includes any agency, contractors or visiting professionals employed to provide services on their behalf.

## 4.0 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure:

1. Lone workers are identified
2. That risks inherent in lone worker situations are assessed and suitable precautionary measures taken
3. There is a local safe system of work which:
  - a) Records the whereabouts of lone workers
  - b) Tracks the movement of lone workers
  - c) Follows an agreed system for locating employees who deviate from their expected movement pattern
  - d) Identifies when lone working is no longer appropriate



## 5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### **Chief Executive (CEO)**

- Take overall responsibility for health & safety across the Council, and leads in setting corporate policy and direction.

### **Senior Management Team (SMT)**

It is the responsibility of Senior Management Team to ensure that:

- Employees are made aware of the contents of this lone working policy, including amendments, as and when they are made, and have access to a copy of this policy.
- The effectiveness of, and the adherence to, the lone working policy is monitored regularly.
- The lone working policy is reviewed regularly and revised as necessary.
- Suitable and sufficient training is identified and provided for all employees.
- Suitable and sufficient resources (money, people, time, materials and equipment) are provided to meet health and safety requirements.
- Adequate insurance cover (Employers' Liability Insurance, Motor Insurance, etc.) are provided.

### **Managers and Team Leaders**

It is the responsibility of Managers, Team Leaders and Senior Management Team to ensure that they:

- Are aware of the Lone Worker Policy
- Carry out risk assessments for every job. This should be carried out using the guide which is attached to the report at Appendix A.
- Ensure that actions and recommendations arising from the risk assessments are implemented fully and that suitable arrangements are made to monitor this implementation.
- Implement systems to identify those employees who do not report or return at the expected time.
- Monitor and review feedback from the organisation on lone worker risk and seek to improve processes.
- Monitor and update this policy as appropriate.

- Report to SMT any situation where the risk cannot be controlled in consultation with Health and Safety Officer
- Adequate arrangements are made for employee welfare.
- Safe systems of work (including safe operating procedures) are developed and implemented as appropriate.
- Identify and recognise service specific health and safety requirements and arrange suitable training.
- Suitable and sufficient arrangements are made for monitoring and updating the Corporate Risk Register.
- Managers and Team Leaders are kept up to date with respect to relevant health and safety legislation that affected work area.

Any risks arising from their work are reported so that control measures can be put in place. To report to your Manager or Health and Safety Officer any situations where the risk assessments have to be reviewed.

The Manager must ensure that suitable precautions are in place, such as:

- a) Mobile telephones/radios
  - b) Team working
  - c) Access to the Corporate Risk Register
  - d) Reporting to an agreed arrangement such as Service 24
  - e) Personal alarms - Issued to all lone workers. New starters will be issued with one at induction.
- To support employees who are victims of violence and aggression. All staff can access the 24 free helpline for support. Details of this support will be issued at induction. Face to face counselling is available to all staff.
  - Ensure details of all incidents and employee safety concerns are recorded, as well as investigated as appropriate.

### **Health and Safety Officer**

It is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer to:

- Ensure that Managers offer the appropriate protection to Lone Workers.
- Investigate serious incidents with Managers.
- Review the Lone Worker Policy when legislation changes or an incident happens that prompts a review.

- Arrange the six monthly meetings with Lone Workers with support from the Human Resources Team.
- Administer the Central point for Customer Alert Service.
- Chair the Health and Safety Group.
- Collect data on the Incident reports and includes them in the annual Health and Safety that goes to Committee.

## **Employees**

It is the responsibility of an employee to ensure that they:

- Ensure their own safety whilst at work and the safety of those that might be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Follow Council procedures and guidelines for lone working.
- Ensure any incidents are reported via the correct procedures.
- Attend all mandatory training that is deemed appropriate by the nominated Health and Safety officer and Human Resources.
- Alert managers to any activity carried out, which involves working alone for more than one hour.
- Comply with any precautionary measures including guidelines laid down by Lone Worker Policies.
- Provide any of the following information that may be needed for the safe system of work:
  - a) Working alone at the beginning and end of the normal working hours
  - b) Daily out of base work place
  - c) Detail of the make, model, colour and registration number of the vehicle being used.
  - d) Notifying any changes to the daily out of base work plan (i.e. ad-hoc or “spur of the moment” visits).
  - e) Informing key person on return to base.
- Report any unsafe or potentially unsafe situations, and to report incidents in which violence or aggression or threats using the incident reporting procedure, including any near misses.
- Take reasonable care for own safety and not expose themselves to unnecessary risk.
- Attend any events to assist the Council to improve the safety and wellbeing for lone workers.

## 6.0 Equal Opportunities

The Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to combat unlawful discrimination and provides general and specific duties organisations must follow in relation to Equality in the workplace. The Council aims to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of age, being or becoming a transsexual person, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity or national origin), religion, belief or lack of religion/belief, sex or sexual orientation.

# Appendix A: Procedures and Guidance for Lone Working

## Introduction

This Procedure and Guidance for Lone Working should be read in conjunction with the Lone Working Policy.

Lone workers are at a potentially greater risk than their office based counterparts who work with other colleagues. They are also at significant risk from the threat of verbal and physical abuse. The issue of violence will need to be considered for all identified lone workers.

This document will explain the importance of risk assessments and the safe system of work that your manager will undertake to ensure your safety.

It will also give you guidance on how to prepare for meetings and visits away from the office.

## Definition

Lone Workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, usually at locations away from a fixed base. The main categories of workers affected by this definition within Oadby and Wigston Borough Council are:

- mobile workers who travel to varying locations and work away from their fixed base
- those working at fixed bases with limited personnel cover, often one person carrying out their duties alone
- those carrying out maintenance or contracted duties on other premises
- those home working in a home office setting
- those working outside normal working hours
- staff who are on a journey, travelling

The Lone Working Policy covers any duty undertaken by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council at any time of the day or night.

## Identifying Lone Workers

All job descriptions will need to be examined by the Managers so that lone workers can be identified. Each Manager will keep an up to date register of lone workers and inform the Human Resources Team of the contents on a regular basis and also at any change of content.

## **Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments must be carried out to identify risks to lone workers and control measures introduced to minimise the risks wherever practicable. These requirements are applicable to all work situations/activities and in particular where employees are working alone or outside normal working hours. The identified lone worker must have a risk assessment conducted that examines two aspects:

- Task
- Work environment

Lone workers should not be at any more risks than other employees, however in order to achieve this; extra control measures may be required. Precautions chosen will need to take into account the normal work activities and also foreseeable emergencies e.g. equipment failure, illness and accidents.

The risk assessment should consider all the factors that may endanger a lone workers health and safety. These may include the following:

- Can the risks of the job be controlled by an individual working on their own or does the workplace present a special risk to lone workers?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- The remoteness or isolation of the workplace
- the nature of the activity and time of day it is being conducted,
- Are there any particular risks faced by certain groups of people for example new starters or pregnant women working alone?
- Is the person medically fit competent, mature and suitable to work alone?
- Consider both routine and foreseeable emergencies, which may impose additional burdens on the individual.
- What happens if the person becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency? Lone workers should be capable of responding correctly to emergencies. Risk assessment should identify foreseeable events and emergency procedures should be established and employees trained in them. Lone workers should have access to first aid facilities.
- What training is required to ensure competency in safety matters? Training is particularly necessary where there is limited supervision to control, guide and support in situations of uncertainty. Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced to understand the risks involved in their work. The manager should set limits on what can and cannot be done while working alone.

They should ensure employees are competent to recognise their own limitations, for example when it is necessary to stop work and seek advice from a supervisor.

- People working alone may face greater security risks than other workers. If there is an accident there may be nobody to help them and they may also run an increased risk of violence. The security of the Employee whilst visiting must be considered particularly how people working on their own will be able to stay in contact with their supervisor.
- There needs to be procedures set up for the employees to report incidents, accidents, etc. This includes discussion of any incidents at a team meeting as a standard agenda item.
- Ensure that all Employees that visit are provided with the necessary equipment, training, instruction or demonstration.

Where the risk assessment has identified the lone working risk category, as shown in the table below to be **Low**; **Medium** and **High** - and the need for measures to control risk to lone workers, appropriate control measures must be implemented to ensure a safe system of work.

There is a **Generic Risk Assessment** at **Appendix (B)** and also a **Risk Assessment Flow Chart** shown in **Appendix (C)** that will assist Managers in completing the risk assessment for the individual officer.

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Minimum Requirements</b>	<b>Examples of Lone Workers</b>
<b>Low Risk</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Contact their manager, or nominated representative, when they start work and supply their location</li><li>2. Contact their manager, or nominated representative, when they finish work.</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• home workers</li><li>• visiting other Councils in work hours</li><li>• meetings in buildings where other persons are present</li><li>• street cleansing duties (unless data indicates there is a risk).</li></ul>

<b>Medium Risk</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contact their manager, or nominated representative, when they start work and supply their location or if various calls are going to be made throughout the day then details of these locations and approximate times will be required</li> <li>2. Contact their manager, or nominated representative at mid day</li> <li>3. Contact their manager, or nominated representative, when they finish work.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolated staff at a Council property e.g. Boulter Crescent Community Flat</li> <li>• Visiting Officers e.g. Planning, Housing, Environmental – where no data exists to inform that a risk exists</li> <li>• Includes enforcement action, evening meetings on exit from the building on your own or where no other staff / persons are on site.</li> </ul>
<b>High Risk</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure access to arrangements such as the Service 24 system is available and used</li> <li>2. Ensure your manager knows where you are going and estimated time scales (day time only)</li> <li>3. Contact your manager when you are no longer in the high risk category (day time only)</li> <li>4. Special situations may automatically be high risk.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees on call out (early morning / late evening), where data indicates there is a risk</li> <li>• Enforcement action (where there could be a risk) or where the manager / lone worker identify a high risk situation.</li> <li>• Special Situations such as call outs (evening or early morning), enforcement action (where data exists that a risk is posed); if any situation becomes violent.</li> <li>• <i>You can not define high risk situations exhaustively; consequently the use of other information streams need to be utilised to allow both the manager and the lone worker to make an <b>INFORMED</b> decision on the risk that may be faced by the lone worker.</i></li> </ul>

### Safe System of Work

Where the risk assessment identifies a risk to the employee a safe system of work, taking into account normal and abnormal working conditions and foreseeable emergency situations must be implemented.



When establishing and reviewing a safe system of work, consideration should be given to the following:

- avoiding the need for lone working altogether,
- maintaining sufficient staff numbers at a base to prevent lone working,
- a system of regular contact on arrival at and/or departure from the appointment(s),
- the provision and use of a mobile telephone or radio,
- the provision of an alarm/screechers,
- checking the credentials of the customer and the meeting place arranged,
- arranging appointments or meetings in public places,
- arranging for staff to be accompanied when meeting suspect customers,
- avoiding arranging meetings off site at the close of business,
- using a whiteboard in the office to track staff movements,
- using a duress signal e.g. an unusual but plausible person's name in a conversation as a code word for an emergency situation,
- using arrangements such as Service 24 as a lone worker contact point
- lowering the amount of cash/valuables the employee is carrying,
- varying the route to be followed to avoid predictable travelling schedules,
- whether or not the lone worker can safely handle the plant, equipment and goods by themselves,

Other important considerations are that;

- staff know the procedures and rigidly stick to them,
- contact times agreed are adhered to,
- contact last thing at night before a worker goes home is imperative,
- the escalation process, should the worst happen, is effective, uncomplicated and efficient,
- responsibilities and duties are known by each individual.

### **Information and Instruction**

Each employee required to carry out lone work must receive training and information on the risks associated with any work activity. Each employee should also be informed of any specific requirements for control of risk, the Lone Working Policy, and the need to consult known information sources, such as the Customer Alert System to establish the likely status of the customer and any potential risk they represent.

**Appendix D – Hints and Tips** on personal safety both at work and at home, taken from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, is a helpful document that should be used in planning meetings.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

PPE must be issued to an employee when the risk assessment has shown it to be necessary for safe operation. The 'Defender Ultimate Personal Safety Alarm' units are regarded as PPE. The work activities being undertaken will identify other PPE necessary to the task, e.g. high visibility jacket; mobile telephone/radio etc. Where PPE is issued each employee must be trained in the correct application and use of the equipment.

### **Accident/Incident Reporting**

In addition to accidents, incidents and near misses that occur on our premises, any accident, incident or near miss which occurs whilst working away from base must also be reported in line with Council policy.

The Guidelines for Reporting Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses are available on the Council's Intranet under the 'Health and Safety' banner.

### **Records**

Where the risk assessment indicates the need for a system to manage the risk to lone workers, records must be kept of all employees training and equipment issued. A suitable system for recording daily contact with the employee must be implemented where the Manager should know where any of their staff members are at all times during their working hours.

While it is for each manager to implement a system which is best suited to his/her section's needs, the following methods are suggested:

- a reporting system for all members of staff to confirm whether they are in or out of the building.
- This shall include lunch time, end of working day and periods of leave.
- Use of diaries (electronic or paper) detailing -
  - address of appointment
  - time of appointment
  - contact name
  - telephone number
- It will be the responsibility of individuals to -
- Use the "In/Out" system correctly.

- leave a diary of appointments accessible to colleagues
- keep the diary accurate and up-to-date

Where an electronic diary is used, the individual and their manager should ensure that the manager can access the diary.

A **Summary Guide** giving the responsibilities of all members of staff under the Lone Working Policy is attached at **Appendix (E)**.

# Appendix B: Generic Risk Assessment



**Oadby & Wigston**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

Date: 17 May 2017 Next Review Date: Annually unless there are changes in circumstances

Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

### Task Definition:

Lone Working – where the officer is carrying out their normal duties **without** close supervision, usually at locations away from a fixed base.

### Persons at Risk:

- 1** Mobile workers who travel to varying locations and work away from their fixed base; those working at fixed bases with limited personnel cover, often one person carrying out their duties alone.
- 2** Those carrying out maintenance or contracted duties on other premises; those homeworking in a home office setting.
- 3** Those working outside normal working hours; staff who are on a journey and or travelling.

Ref:	Activity	Hazard Identified	Inherent Risk	Risk Assessed			Control Measures	Residual Risk			Notes
				L	S	R		L	S	R	
1	Traffic Movements	Driving	Traffic Accidents	1	3	1	Localise all visits by area or Post Code to reduce travelling.  Emergency procedures to call office.	1	2	2	

**Likelihood (L)**  
1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

**Severity (S)**  
1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Highly probable

5 Severe

#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
S2	2	4	6	8	10
S3	3	6	9	12	15
S4	4	8	12	16	20
S5	5	10	15	20	25

**LEVEL OF RISK**  
**HIGH (RED)** – Activity should be stopped until the risk is reduced  
**MEDIUM (YELLOW)** – Risk reduction measures are required within a defined time period  
**LOW (GREEN)** – Risk to be controlled as far as reasonably practicable



## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

Date: 17 May 2017 Next Review Date: Annually unless there are changes in circumstances

Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

2	Traffic Movements	Driving	Getting Lost / Car Jacking	2	2	4	Use Google Maps or road map book. Planning routes beforehand and familiarisation with the area of visits. Keep all doors and boot locked and don't highlight that you are lost. At traffic lights leave sufficient space to be able to drive away. Do not get boxed in. Park with vehicle in direction of exit especially in a Cul-de-sac.	1	2	2	
3	Site Visits	Visits to 'site' as part of the role. Including inspection, reading meters, collecting samples, meeting contractors etc.	Potential injury; violence	2	3	6	Staff who are appointed are competent for the role. Staff under training are supervised and accompanied where appropriate. Staff covered by the risk assessments relevant to the 'site' e.g. different companies or contractor's works. Staff provided with PPE as defined by the job description and additional task specific local risk assessments conducted for their role. PPE includes winter coats, protective footwear, waterproofs, wellington boots etc.	1	3	3	

**Likelihood (L)**  
1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

**Severity (S)**  
1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Highly probable

5 Severe

#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
S2	2	4	6	8	10
S3	3	6	9	12	15
S4	4	8	12	16	20
S5	5	10	15	20	25

**LEVEL OF RISK**

**HIGH (RED)** – Activity should be stopped until the risk is reduced

**MEDIUM (YELLOW)** – Risk reduction measures are required within a defined time period

**LOW (GREEN)** – Risk to be controlled as far as reasonably practicable



## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

Date: 17 May 2017 Next Review Date: Annually unless there are changes in circumstances

Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

4	Home Visits	Visiting in customers home	Potential Violence or Injury	3	3	9	<p>Violence and Aggression training. Prepares staff to identify &amp; deal with such incidents.</p> <p>Procedures for lone working.</p> <p>Initial sift of visits to sort higher risks i.e., high-rise flats or drug dens. Local knowledge and communication between officers.</p> <p>Before visit, check case to see if potentially violent is listed on Customer Alert System.</p> <p>Contact between supervision and visiting officer by telephone and / or site visit. Emergency procedure for danger. Monitoring &amp; tracing procedures in place.</p> <p>Call in at the end of day if not returning to the office.</p> <p>Use buddy system &amp; visit in pairs if potential</p>	2	2	4	

### Likelihood (L)

1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

5 Highly probable

### Severity (S)

1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Severe

#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
S2	2	4	6	8	10
S3	3	6	9	12	15
S4	4	8	12	16	20
S5	5	10	15	20	25

### LEVEL OF RISK

**HIGH (RED)** – Activity should be stopped until the risk is reduced

**MEDIUM (YELLOW)** – Risk reduction measures are required within a defined time period

**LOW (GREEN)** – Risk to be controlled as far as reasonably practicable



## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

Date: 17 May 2017 Next Review Date: Annually unless there are changes in circumstances

Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

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						<p>problem is identified or ensure interview is in a controlled environment. Management support.</p> <p>Competent staff that recognise their own limitations.</p> <p>Reporting of any incident where there is cause for concern, for example, threatened or actual violence.</p> <p>Feedback to officers on any action taken.</p> <p>Officer has right to terminate assessment.</p> <p>Pets in home. Right to ask customer to remove pets.</p> <p>Occupational Health / Counselling service available.</p> <p>Review of risk assessment.</p>				
5	Home Visits	Visiting customers in home	Non Physical Violence (Verbal aggression)	2	3 3	<p>Any threats to an individual including behaviour that is felt to be unacceptably intimidating by the officer.</p> <p>Reporting and recording procedures in place. Investigate reported incidents and give feedback to individual on any action taken. Inform manager; manager</p>	2	2	4	

### Likelihood (L)

1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

5 Highly probable

### Severity (S)

1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Severe

#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
S2	2	4	6	8	10
S3	3	6	9	12	15
S4	4	8	12	16	20
S5	5	10	15	20	25

### LEVEL OF RISK

**HIGH (RED)** – Activity should be stopped until the risk is reduced

**MEDIUM (YELLOW)** – Risk reduction measures are required within a defined time period

**LOW (GREEN)** – Risk to be controlled as far as reasonably practicable



## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

Date: 17 May 2017 Next Review Date: Annually unless there are changes in circumstances

Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

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							completes CAS form re adding to list of individuals. Competent Staff with interpersonal skills. Officer has right to withdraw and terminate assessment. Team benchmarking for acceptability on limits. Management support.				
6	Home Visits	Visiting customers in own home	Alcohol or Drug abuse	3	2	6	Competent Staff who can use their own judgement to assess the degree of imminent risk and recognise their own limitations. Right of officer not to enter property and terminate the assessment. Management support.	1	2	2	
7	Home Visits; Pedestrian or Traffic movements	Theft or Mugging for personal equipment	Personal Injury	2	3	6	Bags with IT equipment to be stored in boot between visits. If threatened give up equipment and call police and management to report incident, get support and crime number. Reporting procedures.	1	3	3	

**Likelihood (L)**  
1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

**Severity (S)**  
1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Highly probable

5 Severe

#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
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## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

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Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

							Investigation of circumstances and give feedback to team. Occupation Health / Counselling service available.				
8	Work related	Stress	Depression / Sick Leave	2	3	6	Monitoring & Review of workload. Generic Job description (Varied work) Identify training issues and make training available. Annual Individual performance management meetings. Involving team approach to deliver targets. Recognition & praise of new ideas and successes at team meetings. Team members valued. Feedback, encouragement, communication and team-working to achieve goals. Open management structure. Back to work interviews. Occupation Health services.	1	3	3	

### Likelihood (L)

1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

### Severity (S)

1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Highly probable

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#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
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### LEVEL OF RISK

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## Risk Assessment Form

Ref: **LW/0001**

Task: **Lone Working (Visiting) - Generic**

Date: 17 May 2017 Next Review Date: Annually unless there are changes in circumstances

Assessment Team: Manager/ Visiting Officer

9	Pedestrian Movements	Working outdoors	Sun / Dehydration / Getting wet / Foot injuries	3	3	9	Wear sensible clothing to protect from sunburn. Take bottled water for hydration. Protective wet weather clothing supplied. Protective footwear supplied.	2	2	4	

### Likelihood (L)

1 Rare  
2 Unlikely  
3 Possible  
4 Probable

5 Highly probable

### Severity (S)

1 Insignificant  
2 Minor  
3 Moderate  
4 Major

5 Severe

#	L1	L2	L3	L4	L5
S1	1	2	3	4	5
S2	2	4	6	8	10
S3	3	6	9	12	15
S4	4	8	12	16	20
S5	5	10	15	20	25

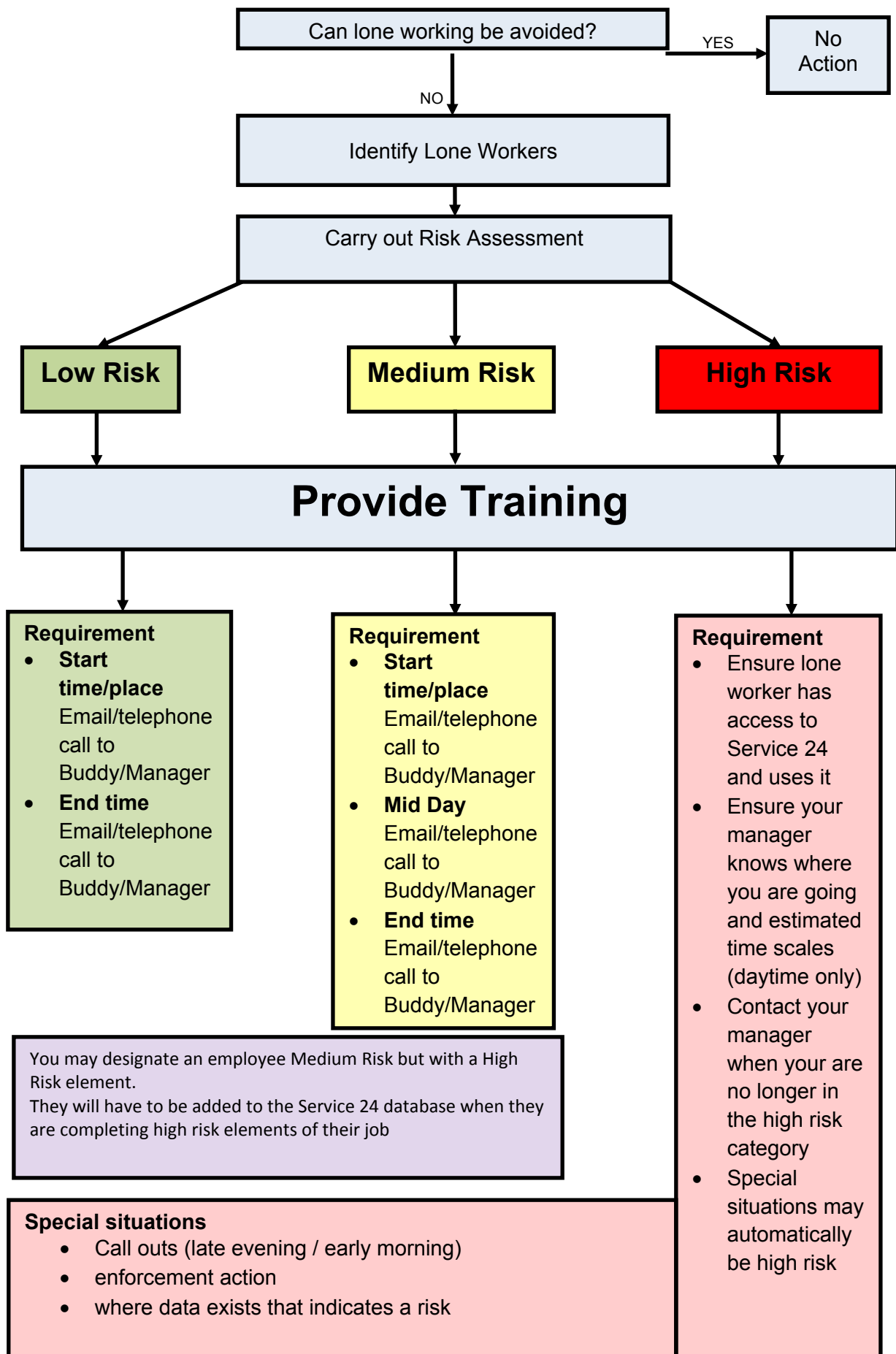
### LEVEL OF RISK

**HIGH (RED)** – Activity should be stopped until the risk is reduced

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**LOW GREEN** – Risk to be controlled as far as reasonably practicable

## Appendix C: Risk Assessment Flow chart



## Appendix D: Hints and Tips

*Suzy Lamplugh Trust are the pioneers of personal safety. They campaign, educate, and support people to help reduce the risk of violence and aggression for everyone. Below are some hints and tips on personal safety both at work and at home taken from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust website.*



**WORKING ALONE ON THE FRONTLINE** - For example receptionists, customer service officers:

- Ensure you have a means of communicating with others.
- Some form of emergency alarm system should be in place which will enable you to summon assistance if necessary. Is it tested? Do people know how to respond?
- Make sure that any cash is kept out of sight.

### **WORKING FROM HOME**

- Try not to advertise that you work from home to prospective customers.
- Consider setting up a buddy system with someone so they know your plans for the day. Think about asking your 'buddy' to call you 10 minutes into any meeting with a new customer to check that you are ok and feel comfortable with them. Have a predetermined code word ready in case you want to summon help.
- If customers have to come to your house, use rooms that are as professional looking as possible.
- When visiting others, conduct your own dynamic risk assessment on the door step before you enter.
  - Give some thought before you arrive as to what exit strategies you could use if you felt uncomfortable or threatened.
  - If you feel at all uncomfortable or unsure, make an excuse and leave. Trust your instincts and be mindful of the fact that you are entering someone else's territory. Your presence there may be unwanted and/or pose a threat.
  - As you enter, make a note of how the door opens and closes so that you can leave quickly, if necessary.
  - Give the customer an idea of how long the meeting will take and try to adhere to this.
  - Avoid actions or words which may appear judgemental, aggressive or an invasion of privacy or space.
- It is important that a tracing system is in place that enables your employer/colleagues to know where you are and who you are with at all times.
- Risk assessments should be carried out by your employer to identify any risks related to the people, environment or tasks involved in your job.
- You also need to be able to make quick risk assessments yourself, which can help you decide how safe a situation is and what action you should take to avoid danger.

## MEETINGS AND VISITS AWAY FROM THE OFFICE

			
1	<b>Planning Your Meeting</b>	<p><b>Before you leave the office</b>, think about any difficulties that may arise and how you may handle them.</p> <p><b>Discuss</b> with your manager any meetings or visits which you think may be confrontational.</p> <p>If meeting someone for the first time, <b>consider a first appointment in the office</b>. If this is not possible, ask for a telephone number and ring back to confirm the arrangement.</p> <p><b>Take</b> a colleague with you if you think it will help your safety.</p>	<p><b>DO NOT Dress</b> in an inappropriate way.</p> <p>(See your manager if you need any further advice about this).</p>
2	<b>Before Leaving the Office</b>	<p><b>Record</b> the details of your appointments in your diary (including addresses, names and telephone numbers).</p> <p><b>Leave</b> your diary available for colleagues to see.</p> <p>Record that you are <b>`out`</b> of the offices and your <b>estimated time of return</b>.</p> <p><b>Remember</b> your Identity Card.</p>	<p><b>DO NOT Go</b> straight home after an appointment without first notifying your colleagues.</p> <p>If your colleagues have not heard from you by a pre-agreed time, they will start emergency procedures. This will include calling the police.</p> <p>Forget your Identity Card!</p>
3	<b>When Reaching the Place Your Meeting is to be Held</b>	<p>Do <b>identify</b> yourself using your identity card.</p> <p>Make sure you know <b>how to get out of the building</b> or premises in a hurry (this includes reasons of emergency such as fire <u>as well as</u> threats of violence).</p> <p>If possible, <b>allow the other person to go into the room first</b> and make sure you have a clear line of escape at all times. Do not enter if the customer is not present.</p> <p>Do not run hands on a banister or stair rail in communal areas as there may be hypodermic needles taped to them.</p> <p>Sit in a position where you can easily reach the exit door.</p>	<p>If you feel violence is a possibility <b>DO NOT</b> talk to someone in a dangerous place, such as the top of a staircase, in a restricted space or a place where there is equipment that could be used as a weapon</p> <p><b>Block</b> off either your own or the other person's line of exit.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> sit too close to the Customer.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> give out any personal details</p>
4	<b>During Your Meeting</b>	<p><b>Listen carefully</b> to what is said, even if it is abusive. Agree if possible.</p>	<p><b>DO NOT</b> adopt a confrontational or aggressive posture</p>

		<p><b>Try to keep relaxed</b> and move about occasionally.</p> <p>Ask the Customer to <b>remove pets</b> from the room if they make you feel uncomfortable.</p> <p><b>Telephone</b> your colleagues and give them your up-to-date situation, if you are delayed beyond your estimated time of return.</p>	<p>(crossed arms, hands on hips, pointing finger)</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> deal with someone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Always trust your instinct.</p> <p>If you are on a building site, <b>DO NOT</b> stand close to scaffolding or foundation trenches and always wear the correct PPE</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> go straight home after an appointment without letting your colleagues know.</p>
5	<b>If there is a Sign of Aggression Developing</b>	<p>Consider <b>postponing</b> the meeting if you feel it may cool the atmosphere.</p> <p><b>Reduce</b> eye contact by turning sideways for example to look at the site under discussion.</p> <p>If the other person produces a weapon of any kind or threatens to use violence, <b>leave at once</b>.</p> <p>Leave by moving <b>backwards gradually</b>, but be prepared to move quickly if necessary.</p> <p>If you have a <b>personal alarm</b>, use it as a last resort to frighten the aggressor, and then run away.</p>	<p><b>DO NOT</b> respond in kind to abuse, rudeness or threats.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> maintain eye to eye contact for long periods.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> touch somebody who is angry.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> try to talk anyone into putting down a weapon.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> turn your back to the aggressor.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> expect anyone to help you when your personal alarm is sounded.</p>
6	<b>On Returning to the Office</b>	<p><b>Mark</b> yourself 'In' and make sure your colleagues know you are back.</p> <p><b>Report</b> all cases of aggression or violence to your manager.</p> <p>Remember that producing a weapon or threatening violence are breaches of the peace and should also be <b>reported to the Police</b>. Your manager will help you with this.</p> <p>Make it your responsibility to <b>record</b> the incident using the Customer Alert System and in the council's Accident/Incident book, if you have suffered an injury.</p>	<p><b>DO NOT</b> be afraid to tell your manager or colleagues about any incident of violence or aggression, or threat which has concerned you.</p>

7	<b>If you see a Colleague in Difficulty</b>	<p><b>Try to defuse</b> the situation by stopping and taking an obvious interest in what is happening.</p> <p><b>Ask</b> politely and quietly if there is anything you can do to help.</p> <p><b>Be prepared to call</b> for assistance from passersby, other staff or the Police.</p> <p><b>Assist</b> your colleague to leave the scene as soon as safely possible.</p> <p><b>Report</b> the situation to your manager immediately on return to your work base.</p>	<p><b>DO NOT</b> become involved, in physical contact unless as a last resort, and then only to defend yourself or your colleague.</p> <p><b>DO NOT</b> prolong any conflict - the safety of you and your colleagues is your only consideration.</p>
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## TRAVELLING FOR WORK

### Public Transport

- Obtain timetable and fare information before travelling to prevent you waiting around for long periods at bus stops or stations.
- When waiting for public transport after dark, try to wait in well-lit areas and near emergency alarms and CCTV cameras.
- If you work for an organisation that receives unwelcome attention from the public, try to hide anything that would make you identifiable as an employee of that organisation.

### Walking

- Plan ahead. Before you go out, think about how you are going to get home, e.g. what time does the last bus/train leave?
- Avoid danger spots like quiet or badly-lit alleyways, subways or isolated car parks. Walk down the middle of the pavement if the street is deserted.
- Try to use well-lit, busy streets and use the route you know best.
- Try to walk against oncoming traffic to avoid kerb crawlers.
- If something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable, act upon your instinct. It may be better to move away before a problem arises.

### Taxis and Minicabs

- Ask the Licensing Officer to put together a list of licensed taxi or minicab companies for such firms in your area.
- Try to carry the telephone number of a licensed taxi or minicab firm with you at all times or add a suitable booking app to your phone.
- When making a booking, ask for the driver and/or car details and confirm them when the cab arrives. Also ask the driver whose name the taxi/cab is booked under.
- When you are in the cab, avoid giving out any personal details.
- If the driver makes you feel uneasy for any reason, trust your instincts and ask them to stop in a busy area and let you out.
- Always book your minicab in advance. Un-booked cabs are illegal and potentially very dangerous.

## Driving

- *Keep the car in good working order and ensure you have enough fuel and if possible, join a national breakdown organisation.*
- *Keep valuables: bags, mobile phones, computers out of sight*
- *Keep the doors locked when driving.*
- Put together an emergency kit for your car. This might include an extra coat, bottle water, a torch, spare change and an emergency mobile telephone charger.
- When driving to meetings, try to plan where you will park before you go. Park as close to your destination as possible. If you will be returning after dark, consider what the area will be like then and try to park near street lights.
- *When parking in a car park, consider where the entrances and exits are. Try to avoid having to walk across a lonely car park to get to your car. Do not park near pillars or barriers. If you can, reverse into your space so you can drive away easily. Avoid multi storey car parks – if you must use one, choose a space near the exit and away from pillars, and reverse into the space.*
- When approaching your car, be aware of your surroundings; have your keys ready and check that no one is inside before entering quickly.
- If you break down, check out your surroundings and only get out of your car when and if you feel it is safe to do so.
- Road rage incidents are rare and can often be avoided by not responding to aggression from other drivers.
- If the driver of another car forces you to stop and then gets out of his/her car, stay in your car, keep the engine running and if you need to, reverse to get away
- *Do not pick up hitchhikers.*



## **Personal Possessions**

- Keep valuables such as wallets in a secure inside pocket, or use a money belt.
- Keep purses in a closed bag.
- Keep your mobile phone out of sight.
- In public places keep your bag or briefcase on your lap – if you have to put it on the floor, secure the strap.

## Appendix E: Summary Guide

**This sheet summarises the responsibilities of all members of staff under the Lone Working Policy.**

**It is not a substitute for the policy itself, a copy of which can be seen on the Council's Intranet or from your Manager.**

Under the **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**, employees have the following responsibilities:

- (a) to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves;
- (b) to take reasonable care for the health and safety of any other person who may be affected by their work;
- (c) to co-operate with the employer to help achieve (a) and (b).

**You should therefore:**

- 1. Follow at all times any procedures or guidance you are given by your Manager.
- 2. Assist with the risk assessment of your work activities.
- 3. Keep your diary and "In/Out" information up-to-date at all times.
- 4. Telephone your section if you are likely to return later than you have forecast.
- 5. Notify the Human Resources team immediately of any changes to your contact numbers, car registrations or other details that are kept in case of an emergency.
- 6. Report to your manager any incident which results in or threatens violence to your safety or damage to your personal possessions or council equipment.



**Oadby & Wigston**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

### PART 1 - INITIAL SCREENING

<b>Name of Policy/Function:</b>		This is <b>new</b>
<b>Lone Worker Policy</b>		This is a <b>change</b> to an existing policy
		This is an <b>existing</b> policy, Function, not previously assessed
	Y	This is an existing policy/function for <b>review</b>

<b>Date of screening</b>	30 May 2017
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#### **1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure adequate systems are in place to assess the risks a lone worker may face and ensure the health, safety and welfare to reduce the risks of lone working so far as is reasonably possible and practicable.

Lone working is common in many Council activities and recognises that lone workers face particular problems.

#### **2. Are there external considerations?**

*e.g. Legislation/government directive etc*

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 – Duty of Care

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

All Council employees.

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

To give advice and put measures in place to protect workers of the council who are alone for a proportion of the time while carrying out duties for the council. To carry out a risk assessment for each post at the council to identify which posts are lone workers

To engage and consult with employees who are lone workers in order to increase health and safety awareness with managers and individuals.

#### 5. Has any consultation/research been carried out?

Three workshops have taken place with lone workers in March this year to seek the views from lone workers about how we can look after them better and to review the current arrangements.

The Health and Safety at Work Act gives employers legal requirement ensure that workers are safe when carrying out their duties. The Management Health and Safety 1999 also expects employers to provide a safe working environment.

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

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

There are no concerns about any negative impacts. Lone workers will meet every 6 months to discuss their satisfaction with the current arrangements. If anything negative is raised during those events.

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

**Positive** – *It could benefit*

**Negative** – *It could disadvantage*

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

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Positive, a risk assessment of the workplace must be carried out for employees with disabilities and any areas identified that are additional requirements would be provided
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral
Age	Positive, a risk assessment of the workplace must be carried out for employees who are young persons and any areas

	identified that are additional requirements would be provided
Gender Reassignment	Neutral
Sex	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Neutral
Religion/Belief	Neutral
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral
Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive, a risk assessment of the workplace must be carried out for employees who are pregnant or returning from maternity leave and any actions would be taken to address any issues

**8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected?**

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

No

**9. Are there any human rights implications?**

Yes, the Council has a duty of care to ensure that the workplace is a safe and healthy environment

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

In carrying out the review, it shows the Council is acting to promote equality of opportunity (being fair) in addressing perceived /unmet need for staff/the public (those pregnant/disabled) in identifying opportunities where none or little existed before.

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

*i.e. not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation*

No

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

Yes

**13. Is a Part 2 full Equality Assessment required?**

No

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

N/A

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

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

Completed by Karen Pollard  
(Policy/Function/Report written)

Date 31/05/2017

Countersigned by  
(*Head of Service*)

Date

Screened by: Veronika Quintyne

Date: 22/06/2017

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

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