



TO COUNCILLOR:

Mrs R H Adams
N Alam
L A Bentley
G A Boulter (Chair)
J W Boyce

Mrs L M Broadley
F S Broadley
D M Carter
M H Charlesworth
F S Ghattoraya

Mrs S Z Haq (Vice-Chair)
Miss A Kaur
K J Loydall JP
Mrs S B Morris
R E R Morris

Dear Sir or Madam

I hereby **SUMMON** you to attend a meeting of the **SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE** to be held at the **COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON** on **TUESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019** at **6.00 PM** for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Wigston
18 November 2019

Mrs Anne E Court
Chief Executive

ITEM NO.

AGENDA

PAGE NO'S

1. Apologies for Absence

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

2. Appointment of Substitutes

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

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

1 - 3

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

5. Action List Arising from the Previous Meeting

4

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



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6. Petitions and Deputations

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

7. Council Performance Update (Q2 2019/20) 5 - 24

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

8. Oadby and Wigston Housing Strategy (2019-2024) 25 - 38

Report of the Head of the Built Environment

9. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024) 39 - 53

Report of the Housing Manager

10. Housing Service Improvement Plan (November 2019) 54 - 63

Report of the Housing Manager

For more information, please contact:

Democratic Services

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Council Offices
Station Road, Wigston
Leicestershire
LE18 2DR

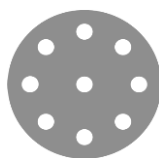
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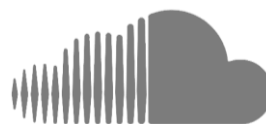
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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES ON TUESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2019
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

G A Boulter	Chair
Mrs S Z Haq	Vice-Chair

COUNCILLORS

Mrs R H Adams
N Alam
L A Bentley
J W Boyce
D M Carter
M H Charlesworth
F S Ghattoraya
Miss A Kaur
K J Loydall JP
Mrs S B Morris
R E R Morris

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

D M Gill	Head of Law & Democracy / Monitoring Officer
S Hinds	Deputy Chief Executive
Miss J Sweeney	Democratic & Electoral Services Officer

16. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

17. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES

None.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 04 June 2019 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

20. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The Action List of the previous meeting held on 04 June 2019 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.

21. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

None.

22. COMMUNITY GARDEN - BLABY ROAD PARK (PRESENTATION)

The Committee received a presentation from Julie Richards, on behalf of Garden Organics. The presentation provided details in relation to a local Community Garden that is proposed to be located at Blaby Road Park, South Wigston.

It was requested that a full report to outline the proposal for the project be taken to the next meeting of Full Council on 24 September 2019 for approval.

It was moved by Councillor John Boyce, seconded by Councillor Kevin Loydall and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) A full report be taken to next Full Council meeting; and**
- (ii) The contents of the presentation be noted.**

23. BROCKS HILL AS A LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

The Committee gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 6 - 16 of the agenda reports pack) which asked it to consider the declaration of Brocks Hill Country Park as a Local Nature Reserve.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

Following the required consultation, the Council's Legal Services team sign the declaration document and Brocks Hill Country Park be declared as a Local Nature Reserve.

24. COUNCIL PERFORMANCE UPDATE (Q1 2019/20)

The Committee gave consideration to the report (as set out in pages 17 - 80 of the reports pack) which asked it to note the update regarding the progress during quarter one of the 2019/20 financial year towards achieving the priorities of the Council's Objectives.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The contents of the report be noted.

25. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

The Committee gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 81 - 93 of the

agenda reports pack) which asked it to approve the Temporary Accommodation Protocol and the Temporary Accommodation Strategy.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) The Temporary Accommodation Protocol and the Temporary Accommodation Strategy be approved and implemented with immediate effect; and**
- (ii) The contents of the report be noted.**

26. UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE (Q1 2019/20)

The Committee gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 94 - 97 of the agenda reports pack) which asked it to note the update provided regarding the implementation of the Universal Credit and its impact within the Borough.

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The contents of the report be noted.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8:40 PM



Chair

Tuesday, 26 November 2019

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Agenda Item 5

SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE

ACTION LIST

Arising from the Meeting held on Tuesday, 03 September 2019

No.	Minute Ref. / Item of Business	*Action Details / Action Due Date	Responsible Officer(s)' Initials	Action Status
1.	7. – Community Garden – Blaby Road Park	Members requested a full report be presented at the next Full Council Meeting, to provide further details on the outlined proposal of the project. <i>Due by Sep-19</i>	DaGi	On Target to Complete
2.	9. – Council Performance (Q1 2019/20)	Information to be provided at the next meeting with regards to case completion time periods, that are currently being achieved by the Lightbulb project. <i>Due by Nov-19</i>	AdTh	Report Update (Agenda Item 7)
3.	9. – Council Performance (Q1 2019/20)	Information to be provided at the next meeting with regards to the ongoing kitchen and bathroom replacement customer satisfaction surveys. <i>Due by Nov-19</i>	AdTh	Verbal Update
4.	9 – Council Performance (Q1 2019/20)	Members requested that a breakdown of figures be provided in relation to visitor statistics for individual leisure sites. <i>Due by Nov-19</i>	AvLe	Report Update (Agenda Item 7)

* | All actions listed are those which are informally raised by Members during the course of debate upon a given item of business which do not form part of - but may be additional, incidental or ancillary to - any motion(s) carried. These actions are for the attention of the responsible Officer(s).



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 26 November 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Corporate Performance Update (Q2 2019/20)**

Report Author(s): **Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive)**

Purpose of Report:	To provide an update on progress during Quarter Two of the 2019/20 Financial Year towards achieving the priorities of the Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's Strategic Objectives as agreed in 2019. The report combines updates on key service delivery achievements coupled with the Council's key performance indications in a single report.
Report Summary:	<p>There are 94 Key Performance Indicators for our Corporate Plan Objectives. These are categorised by each objective and service delivery arm. Each target has been graded using the Red/Amber/Green status ranking system.</p> <p>There is also a "blue" ranking and this is for indicators where work has yet to begin, and therefore cannot be ranked. Out of the 94 indicators, 90 were due for reporting as at the end of Quarter One. Of the 90, 77 were green status, 10 were amber status, and 3 were red status. This equates to 86% Green, 11% Amber and 3% Red.</p>
Recommendation(s):	<p>A. That the performance of the Council against its Corporate Objectives in delivering services be noted.</p> <p>B. That the recommendation in Section 3.8 be agreed, and work on alternative sites commence.</p>
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Strong Borough Together" (Vision) Accountability (V1) Innovation (V4)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	<p>Reputation Damage (CR4) Organisational/Transformational Change (CR8)</p>
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	<p>There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.</p>

Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	Corporate Plan 2019 -2020
Appendices:	None.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. As part of the Council's ongoing development to performance management and reporting, 2019/20 sees the next stage in how we measure and report Council performance (alongside the standard finance and statutory reporting framework).
- 1.2. The Council has produced 94 new Key Performance Measures for 2019/20, and these measures relate to each of the Council's three new Corporate Objectives as part of the Council's new five year Corporate Plan (2019-2024)
- 1.3. These measures are "outcome" based measures, meaning that they identify key deliverables for the authority that actively work towards meeting the Corporate Objectives, and will allow for greater accountability and transparency. This will mean that the public, Members and Officers can clearly see how the Council is performing against its objectives, and if it isn't, then why it isn't.
- 1.4. The narrative from each service highlights the key activities, issues and outcomes that they have been working on, delivered or encountered during the second quarter of the year, and these directly correlate to achieving the Council's Corporate Plan.

2. Corporate Performance

- 2.1. The following report provides analysis and statistics on the performance of the indicators used to monitor our progress against the Council's new Corporate Objectives.
- 2.2. There are three main objectives, with these being:
 - Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities
 - Growing the Borough Economically
 - Effective Service Provision
- 2.3. There are 94 Key Performance Indicators for our Corporate Plan Objectives. These are categorised by each objective and service delivery arm. Each target has been graded using the Red/Amber/Green status ranking system. There is also a "blue" ranking and this is for indicators where work has yet to begin, and therefore cannot be ranked. Finally, there is a "white" rating where the indicator cannot be met due to circumstances outside of the Council's control. The scoring system has been applied using the following definitions:

- Green** Target fully achieved or is currently on track to achieve target
- Amber** Indicator is in danger of falling behind target
- Red** Indicator is off target or has been completed behind the deadline target.

2.4. Out of the 94 indicators, 90 were due for reporting as at the end of the financial year.

Of the 94:

77 were green status

10 were amber status

3 were red status

This equates to 86% Green, 11% Amber and 3% Red. The previous quarter was 87%, 11% and 2% respectively.

The following table identifies the Council's performance, by objective and service delivery section.

Chart 1: Performance Table by Corporate Objective

Quarter Two 2019/20	Green		Amber		Red	
	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage
Overall Performance						
All Targets Due	77	86%	10	11%	3	3%
Corporate Priority						
Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities	33	92%	3	8%	0	0%
Growing the Borough Economically	12	75%	3	19%	1	6%
Providing Excellent Services	32	86%	4	11%	1	3%

Chart 2: Performance Table by Service Delivery

Quarter Two 2019/20	Green		Amber		Red	
	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage	Number of Indicators	Percentage
Overall Performance						
All Targets Due	77	86%	10	11%	3	3%
Department						
Built Environment	17	71%	6	25%	1	4%
Community & Wellbeing	28	97%	0	0%	1	3%
Customer Service & Transformation	9	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Finance & Resources	10	84%	1	8%	1	8%
Law & Democracy	12	80%	3	20%	0	0%
Senior Leadership Team	1	100%	0	0%	0	0%

(Continued overleaf)

3. Built Environment

3.1 2019-20 Housing Capital Programme

A Housing Capital Programme and budget of £2,541,200 for 2019/20 was approved by Policy, Finance and Development Committee on 11 June 2019. At the end of the second quarter £975,838 (38%) of the total budget had been committed and/or spent on delivering the agreed programmes of work and a detailed breakdown is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

3.2 Housing Voids

The voids turnaround time for Q2 was 25 working days against a target of 20 working days, which is an improvement of 12 working days from Q1.

During Q2 there was a total of 27 'normal' voids which were worked on by the Housing Maintenance Team for an average of 16 working days. The exceptions are due to 3 sheltered properties which were hard to let and had to be advertised more than once due to no bids. Therefore, although the properties were completed within target the delay was due to there being no tenant to move in. The housing team continues to work to improve the voids process and weekly meetings are taking place to monitor the progress of voids.

3.3 Homelessness

Homeless applications during 2019/20 are as follows:

Quarter 1 (2019/20)	47
Quarter2 (2019/20)	30

There are currently 15 households in temporary accommodation comprising:

6	The Council's own stock
1	A property on a long-lease from Paragon Asra (PA) Housing
5	Bed & Breakfast (B&B)
2	Council-owned Belmont House Hostel (134 Station Road, Wigston) – note: that a family in the Council's stock is in the process of being moved in to the recently vacant room at Belmont House, but this had not been completed at the time of writing this report
1	Privately leased property

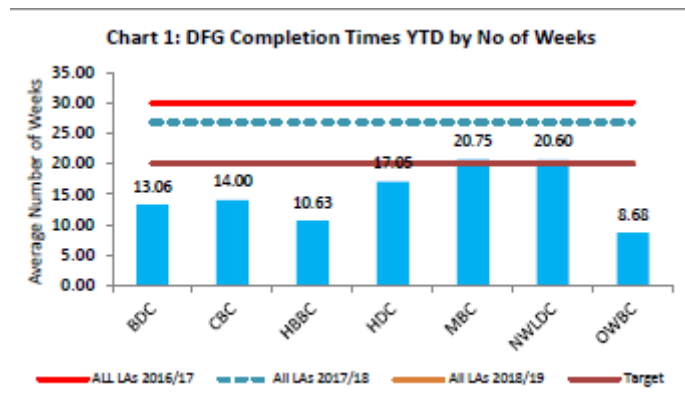
A total of 7 properties have been returned from use in temporary accommodation to HRA (general use) since the beginning of the financial year.

3.4 Gas Safety

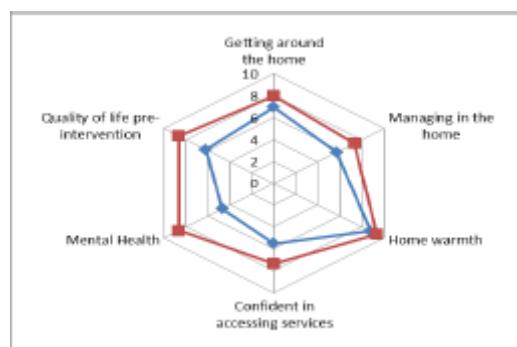
In terms of servicing and annual gas safety test, 100% compliance has been achieved as of 7th November.

3.5 Lightbulb

In quarter 2 the average completion time for DFGs in the Borough was 8.68 weeks, this is well below the target of 20 weeks and demonstrates good performance compared to other districts as shown in the chart below.

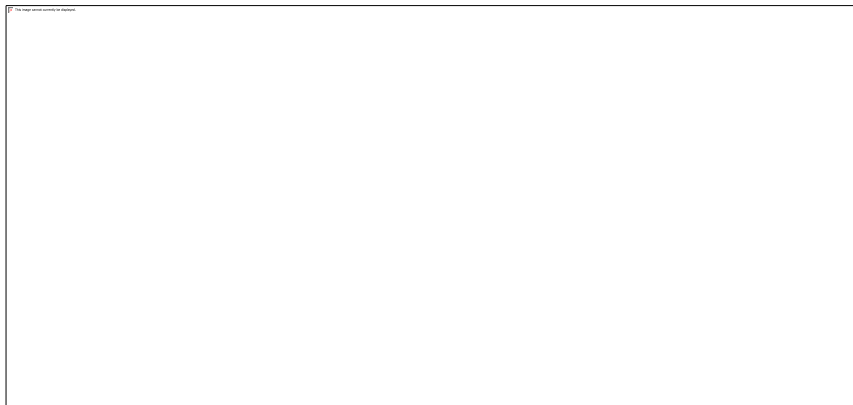


The chart below reflects the person-centred outcomes across the Lightbulb partnership, and reflects an improvement in service users quality of life and in particular the areas of Home warmth, Mental Health and Quality of Life (compared to pre-intervention). When surveyed on completion of works 100% of service users said that Lightbulb had achieved everything they wanted from the service.



The number of active cases at the end of quarter 2 was 72. During this period a total of 25 referrals were received for assessment, 3 cases were completed and a total of 8 cases dropped out (cancellations). The reasons for drop outs across the partnership are shown in the chart below. It has been identified that the most common reason for drop outs is 'High Contribution' as a result of the means test which is set by Government. Lightbulb is actively seeking to reduce the dropout rate by working with customers to ensure alternative solutions are explored prior to DFG and customers are helped with finding funding to finance high contributions.

Of the active 72 cases Officers are now in receipt of a detailed breakdown of these cases and combined with the new arrangements for Lightbulb staff to work from the Council offices will oversee the monitoring of these cases throughout the process. Good progress is being made with regards to closer working between Borough Council and Lightbulb officers, which will include hot desking and regular meetings to discuss cases.



With regard to Brexit considerations , Lightbulb staff have checked for suppliers that have a UK base and established that the larger suppliers such as Stannah and AKW are UK based, therefore mitigating risk.

Refresher training has taken place for Lightbulb staff covering a range of topics including dementia friendly; diabetes awareness; raising awareness on carers and support; case noting and MOT's training; isolation and loneliness; and, First Contact Plus.

Work has begun with First Contact to include referrals for Home Support Grants to help with underspend and Housing Enablement Team funding has now been agreed and is being mainstream funded via CCG's from 2020.

3.6 Cleaning Services

Since Monday 1 July 2019 the cleaning service for the Council's corporate buildings and housing sites has been provided in-house following the termination of the contract with the previous external contractor. A 12 month improvement plan to increase the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the service within existing budgetary provision commenced with immediate effect and during the first three months of implementation good progress has been made in achieving the improvements identified.

3.7 Horsewell Lane Play Area

This project has been split into two parts; phase 1 dealt with the essential repairs to the safety surface, gate and play equipment and was completed on 22nd July.

Phase 2 is for additional play equipment to be added into the area. A specification has been drawn up for the equipment and this was sent out for quotations on 18th October with a return date of 13th November. The installation is expected to start on or about 7th January 2020 depending on weather conditions. It is anticipated that all works will be completed before Friday 14th February 2020 when schools break up for half term.

3.8 Ervins Lock

In 2001 planning permission was given to Wimpey Homes to build houses on land adjacent to the Grand Union Canal in South Wigston. A condition of the planning permission stated the developer would build a pedestrian footbridge at Ervins Lock. This was not achieved as the costings for the bridge were considered by the developer to be prohibitive. Discussions with the council led to this condition being removed and replaced with a contribution of £30,000 to improve the environment within the vicinity of the canal.

In 2005, Members agreed that the £30,000 developer contribution should be spent on construction of a footbridge at Ervins Lock providing that additional funding could be sought.

OWBC then opened negotiations with British Waterways (now Canal and River Trust) who supplied designs of bridges they felt could be adapted to suit the location of Ervins Lock. Leicestershire County Council indicated an interest in the project and the designs were forwarded to them to refine for the location. LCC estimated the cost of the project would be in the region of £60 - £70,000.

Over the period 2005 -2008 grant applications were made to various bodies including Heritage Lottery Fund but were unsuccessful.

Due to the high costs and lack of success in obtaining funding other options were investigated for the bridge location including:

- Upstream of the lock – ruled out due to the height a bridge would need to be above the navigation to allow boats through, meaning the structure would be highly visually intrusive;
- Across the lock walls – not acceptable to British Waterways due to putting too great a load onto the lock walls;
- Utilising Pochins Bridge upstream of the lock – this bridge is not directly accessible from land owned by the council, it is in poor condition and is the maintenance responsibility of Canal and River Trust. There is a right of access across it for the landowner (originating from when the canal construction dissected the land) from one side to the other but not the public. The landowner has been approached but has refused permission for public access across his land.

The Council subsequently allocated further capital funding for the project by which time, British Waterways had become the Canal and River Trust and the organisation had changed from a statutory corporation to a charitable organisation. Much of the negotiating had to start again as the new organisation had a different set up with some staff changes.

In 2016 an external consultant, William Saunders Ltd, was appointed to produce a design that could be submitted for planning approval. Their design was for a bridge of brick construction which they informally submitted to CRT for comment. CRT raised no objection to the principal of a bridge but they considered the design to be 'heavy' due to the brick construction and 'utilitarian' and issues were raised about the parapet design and width of towpath at the proposed installation location.

The design was then discussed with Leicestershire County Council's Heritage Adviser; the design was amended to retain the brick piers but changes were made to the parapet to make it more bespoke. Following this, surveys were undertaken, a design and access statement drawn up and the planning application was submitted in June 2018.

As a statutory consultee for the application, CRT responded to say that they were disappointed their advice (to make the bridge less bulky by using a steel frame design instead of brick piers) had not been taken into consideration. They suggested a site meeting to discuss what they considered to be alternative ideas.

At the site meeting (August 2018) CRT put forward suggestions for alternatives (which included putting the bridge across the lock walls) but then proceeded to rescind the ideas once they realised their suggestions were not practical for the site.

OWBC subsequently asked William Saunders to draw up an alternative plan based on CRT comments for a design with steel piers. This was submitted to planning in September 2018 following a request for an extension of time on the original application. LCC Heritage Adviser and CRT were sent revised drawings for comment.

CRT sent a letter back in October 2018 acknowledging the change in design but with further queries. LCC Heritage Adviser retained the view that brick piers would be better from a conservation point of view.

At Development Control Committee on 5th October 2018 both designs were shown to Members who granted permission to the brick design. Subsequently, CRT made it clear they would not enter into any further discussion unless a steel design was agreed.

Over the next few months OWBC tried to engage CRT in further discussion to try and resolve the situation. However, they did not respond to emails or telephone messages.

In an attempt to break the deadlock a meeting with the County Councils' Heritage Adviser was held on 15th July 2019. The Heritage Adviser conceded he would be prepared to accept a steel design subject to ensuring the finer detail was of sufficient quality to enhance the canal side environment and not detract from the conservation area status.

This information was communicated to CRT who were invited to suggest how the above might be achieved. Their response was to suggest a site meeting with representatives from each of their departments; the earliest date they could meet was 7th August 2019.

At this meeting CRT were represented by their Area Planner, Engineer for Third Party Works and a representative from their Landscape Conservation and Urban Design Team. These people were all suggested by CRT as being the representative of all areas of their work with the exception of Estates who were unable to attend. Frustratingly, the Engineer for Third Party Works opened by saying that he had three fundamental reasons that the bridge should not go ahead and pointed out that CRT has a 'Code of Practice for Works Affecting the Canal and River Trust' which he did not believe had been taken into account.

The areas he cited as not meeting the Code of Practice to his satisfaction were:

- headroom between the waterway and the bridge;
- the location of the lock bywash (culvert) in relation to the bridge foundations; and
- the obstacle the bridge will present to CRT maintenance teams lowering stop planks into the navigation in order to carry out works.

Officers pointed out that if CRT felt these fundamental areas had not been satisfactorily addressed they should have raised them at the time they responded to the planning consultation; Officers have subsequently provided documentary evidence to CRT to show that

- a) a survey of the culvert had been carried out and this was addressed by a planning condition;
- b) the stop plank issue had previously been addressed by OWBC agreeing to grant CRT access over OWBC land for maintenance purposes;
- c) headroom had already been discussed and agreed that, whilst the amount of headroom did not meet the Trusts Code of Practice, the space was greater than the headroom at both Crow Mill Bridge and Pochins Bridge and this was not therefore seen as an issue.

Disappointingly, on 17th October 2019 a letter was received from CRT (copy attached) stating '...the Trust have concluded that siting a bridge in the location proposed would not be economically or practically attractive to either organisation. As such the Trust have reluctantly decided that it is unable to accept this proposal.' The letter does suggest that

CRT would be willing to consider other locations for a bridge but it is considered by Officers that these options have been exhausted for the reasons given above.
Since 2016 the council has incurred the following expenditure on this project:

Professional fees	£5,550
Surveys and utility information	£3,079
Fees to CRT for access permits / permissions etc.	£3,310
Planning application submission	£468
Total	£12,407

In addition to the above, more than 120 hours of Officer time has been taken up by this project since 2016.

Taking into consideration the letter from CRT, together with the costs and officer time already incurred Officers advise that this project should not proceed further and that an alternative scheme to spend the original £30,000 on enhancement works in the vicinity of the canal be investigated.

3.9 **Outdoor Fitness Equipment**

This project is to install eight items of outdoor fitness equipment into Blaby Road Park, South Wigston and Willow Park, Wigston.

The specification has been drawn up and invitations to quote will be sent out week commencing 28th October with a return date of late November. The installation date will be as soon after New Year as possible with all works completed by 31st March 2020.

(Continued overleaf)

3.10 Exception Reporting

In order to highlight potential areas for improvement, this section details the targets that have been given a "Red" or "Amber" Status for the Built Environment.

Reference	Measure/Activity	Target	Corporate Objective	Sub-Objective	Service	September 2019 Commentary	September Forecast
BPE 36	Implementation of a Tenant and Leaseholder investment strategy.	Tenant and Leaseholder strategy implement by March 2020.	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities	Informing, Including and Understanding our Communities	Built Environment	Action plan production due to be completed by December 2019.	Amber
GBE 4	Working with Key Businesses within the Borough, create a Town Centre Board that enables collaborative working for our town centres.	Board Created and running by Christmas 2019.	Growing the Borough Economically	Delivering Development of the Town Centres	Built Environment	The Town Centre group for Wigston is following a slightly different model than previously set up and that adopted by the other groups. Key retailers have agreed to liaise with other businesses in the town and feedback issues/progress to Officers. Whilst this model has the potential to work for Wigston the lack of engagement does not bode well for the development of an overarching Town Centre Board.	Red
GBE 14	Review the current Investor and Business Prospectus and develop an new prospectus that will attract new business interest to the borough.	Launch new Prospectus by October 2019.	Growing the Borough Economically	Attracting people and business to the Borough	Built Environment	Progression with this document has been limited in that little has changed since the production of the previous edition. The format will be revamped and new content added, the difficulty is the paucity of good quality sites and opportunities to showcase.	Amber
GBE 16	To have established a mechanism to effectively liaise with landowners, developers, businesses and the LLEP to bring forward new employment land and premises and to promote the Borough as a location for businesses to invest	Mechanism established to bring forward new employment land by 31/12/19	Growing the Borough Economically	Attracting people and business to the Borough	Built Environment	Funding submission made to LLEP, awaiting outcome. Target date may slip as all available information may not be ready before the end of Q3.	Amber
GBE 17	To have collaborated with key businesses in the Borough to expedite developments within the borough.	Successful arrangements made to begin delivery of housing and business sites by 31/12/19	Growing the Borough Economically	Attracting people and business to the Borough	Built Environment	Some progress to note with the potential for moving a large national businesses in old and unfit premises and location to a new unit within the Borough. Discussions are progressing in this regard.	Amber
PES 3	Void times for normal voids (those not requiring major works) kept to a minimum.	20 working days	Providing Excellent Services	Excellence for our Customers	Built Environment	25 working days. This includes a hard to let sheltered property which was advertised weekly over 2 month period.	Amber
PES 5	Improve Customer Satisfaction with the repairs service delivered by the Housing Service.	100% of repairs surveyed, with 95% satisfaction rates for those returned.	Providing Excellent Services	Excellence for our Customers	Built Environment	Upon member suggestion, the Council are undertaking a procurement to appoint external professional surveyors. Appointment of contractor due in December, with work to be undertaken immediately.	Amber

4. Revenues and Benefits

- 4.1 The Revenues and Benefit Teams are responsible for the administration and collection of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) for the Borough of Oadby and Wigston.
- 4.2 The Benefits Team also receives, assesses and administers the Housing Benefit service as well as facilitating the implementation of Universal Credit which will ultimately replace Housing Benefit for most working-age claimants.

5. Revenues

- 5.1 The Revenues Team is responsible for administering and collecting £30m of Council Tax and £12m of Non-Domestic Rates which it does on behalf of Leicestershire County Council, the Leicestershire Police Service, the Combined Fire and Rescue Service and Central Government as well Oadby and Wigston Borough Council itself.
- 5.2 The section is set specific collection targets for these income streams which are then included in the annual budget as part of the Council's core funding. Performance is measured through a comprehensive series of indicators which are reported to the area's management. Collection rates and arrears levels also are also reported as part of the Council's Key Performance Indicators.

5.3 Collection Rates

Council Tax has fallen behind its target for this time of year. The Revenues and Recovery Teams have had several staff changes in this financial year due to cover arrangements being made for maternity leave. New staff have been recruited and action has been taken to reduce the backlog which had built up following year end. While the backlog has reduced significantly, sickness absence has impacted and further work is ongoing to clear it and kept up to date. In addition, Business Rates is now administered by the Revenues team following a restructure, training has been carried out and quality checking is carried out on work.

These factors have caused a short term negative impact on collection rates although actions are taking place to mitigate any impact. The collection rate for the 18/19 debit for Council Tax at 1st October 2019 was 98.60%.

Percentage of Debit Collected (Accumulative)	July (%)	August (%)	September (%)
Council Tax			
Actual collection	38.71%	47.95%	57.31%
Target	39.60%	49.00%	58.50%
Actual Collection 2018/19	39.26%	48.42%	57.64%
Non Domestic Rates			
Actual collection	37.98%	47.08%	55.80%
Target	38.05%	46.83%	55.92%
Actual Collection 2018/19	39.37%	47.41%	55.88%

5.4 Property Statistics

	July	August	September
No of Council Tax Properties	23,409	23,409	23,424
No of Council Tax Direct Debits	17,620	17,644	17,654
No of Single Person Discounts	7,252	7,245	7,252
No of Businesses	1437	1437	1437
No of Business in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief	652	652	652

5.5 Recovery Statistics

In the 2nd quarter of 2019/20, the Team has sent a total of 1609 reminders for Council Tax payments and 54 to Business Rates accounts. Court action statistics are listed below.

	July	August	September
Council Tax			
No of Summons Issues	130	277	245
No of Liability Orders	100	203	0 *
No referred to Enforcement Agents	66	211	117
Business Rates			
No of Summons	12	4	13
No of Liability Orders	18	1	0

* Due to recovery / magistrates timetable no liability orders granted in September. However, we had two hearings in October which produced 228 liability orders.

As a direct result of the above court actions action 21 accounts have been paid in full while 112 arrangements to pay have been made.

6. Benefits

- 6.1 The Benefits Team administers a total caseload of around 2845 claimants. New claims are processed against an average time target of 15 days.

	July	August	September	Total Q2
No of new claims processed	69	64	75	128
Avg. time taken per claim (days)	15.68	13.73	15.45	15.55 Year to date

At the end of quarter 2, the average time taken to process a new claim was 15.55 days. Performance in the year being slightly below target, 15.55 days still represents a level of service well above the national average which is around 20 days.

Changes in circumstances are processed against an average time target of 8 days which is approximately the national average

	July	August	September	Total Q2
No of changes received	723	627	654	2004
Avg. time taken (days)	5.84	3.48	4.39	4.77 Year to date

(Continued overleaf)

The Team also administers Discretionary Payments for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

No of people in receipt (total)	July	August	September
Discretionary Housing Payment	34	35	37
Discretionary Council Tax Support	17	20	24

7. Universal Credit (UC)

7.1 Activity

Universal Credit related activity continues to increase as more residents claim Universal Credit. In particular there has been 56% increase in quarter 2 in Universal notifications relating to Council Tax Support. There are approximately 400 people receiving Universal Credit in Oadby and Wigston with 240 tenants (Private, Council and Housing Associations) receiving housing costs through Universal Credit. Ultimately around 700 claimants will move from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit but there will also be other people who receive legacy benefits but not housing benefit.

Activity	July	August	Sept	Q2 total
Housing Benefit Stop notices	27	38	18	83
Universal Credit Enquiries	160	140	151	451
UC notifications for CTS	399	443	458	1300

7.2. Rent Collection and Rent Arrears

There is a lot of evidence that suggests that once a tenant migrates from Housing Benefit onto UC, they are more likely to fall into arrears because of the nature of UC, which is paid in arrears directly to the claimant. At the end of quarter 2 outstanding current tenant rent arrears stood at £241,604.79. This is an increase of £43,154.79 (22%) since last year when Universal Credit was rolled out for all new claims. Of the £241,604.19 rent arrears £72,653.69 (43%) is related to Universal Credit claimants.

The Council is pro-active in assisting claimants in arrears and can request payment to be made direct to the Council, as landlord. Of the 122 tenants who currently receive Universal Credit, 104 are having their rent paid by this method.

Tenant Activity	July	August	September
No of Tenants Claiming Universal Credit	112	122	134
No of Claimants > than one month in arrears	55	19	53
No of Claimants > than two months in arrears	16	18	32

7.3 Mixed Age Couples

Prior to 15 May 2019 mixed age couples (where one person is pension age and the other is working age) could choose whether to claim Universal Credit or to claim Pension Credit / Housing Benefit. From 15 May 2019 they do not have the choice and must claim Universal Credit. Concerns have been raised nationally that this will make these claimants worse off. It will not affect single claimants of pension age or couples where both are pension age.

Mixed age couples who currently receive Pension Credit / Housing Benefit will not be affected until they move to Universal Credit through a change in their circumstances or through "managed migration". Couples who become mixed age will move to Universal Credit. Claimants will be contacted by the DWP if they are affected.

7.4 Moving Existing Claimants to Universal Credit (Managed Migration)

The managed migration of existing working age "legacy" benefit claimants (including housing benefit) is scheduled to take place between 2020 and 2023 but there are no firm dates when this would affect Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. A pilot started in Harrogate in July 2019 and the results of the pilot will inform the process and timetable for managed migration nationally. This will be a massive task and is likely to have significant impact particularly on rent collection.

7.5 Advice and Support for Residents

Advice agencies have found that there has been an increase in demand particularly for helping to claim Universal Credit and debt problems caused, or made worse by, the delay in payments. Staff at OWBC are trained to provide help and advice for residents on Universal Credit and other benefits. Our Financial Inclusion Officer is helping to maximise income for our residents and the Council by ensuring all benefits and discounts are claimed and residents are provided with further support where needed (such as Debt advice). At OWBC we have a Service Level Agreement with Citizens Advice and Helping Hands to provide advice and support for residents. This includes surgeries at our Customer Service Centre. Advice and support is also provided by other Voluntary organisations such as Age UK. Residents can also access help on line or via their job centre. In the last financial year there has been a 19% increase nationally in the use of foodbanks. The Trussell trust has called for an end to the 5 week wait for Universal Credit payments.

7.6 Making a Claim for Universal Credit

Making a claim is "digital by default" and this has caused problems for some claimants as the process can prove complicated. There can also be confusion as to whether UC or HB should be claimed which has been made worse by recent changes. On 01 April 2019 a new service called "Help to Claim" was introduced by the DWP. The service is funded by the Government and provided by Citizens Advice. It aims to provide a consistent approach nationally to help claimants make a claim and receive payments for Universal Credit. Referrals to the service will be made by Job Centres, Local Authorities, and other organisations or by self-referral. Help is provided on-line, by phone or face to face. The service is not compulsory and claimants can still seek advice from other organisations or claim on-line themselves. As at 30 September 2019 45 Oadby and Wigston claimants had used this service.

Universal Credit does not include Council tax Support or Free School meals so these have to be claimed separately. There are concerns that this will impact on take-up but we are promoting these benefits and so far there has been no significant impact.

Delays to payments are a major criticism of Universal Credit. To help address this DWP have made advance payments more widely available although these do have to be paid back each month. On 01 November 2019 DWP issued a press release for a £10million fund to help vulnerable people claim Universal Credit from April 2020. This new fund may be to supplement the "help to claim" service but no further detail is available as yet.

7.7 Homelessness and Universal Credit

The number of homelessness in OWBC and nationally has increased over the last few years.

The reasons for homelessness are complex and concerns both locally and nationally are that Universal Credit will impact. However, it should be noted that if someone is on Universal Credit the root cause of homelessness may be something different such as relationship breakdown etc. Our Housing Options team are monitoring the causes of homelessness in Oadby and Wigston.

5.1. Exception Reporting

- 5.1.1. In order to highlight potential areas for improvement, this section details the targets that have been given a "Red" or "Amber" Status for the Revenues and Benefits.

Reference	Measure/Activity	Target	Corporate Objective	Sub-Objective	Service	September 2019 Commentary	September Forecast
PES 25	Council tax Collection rate	98.5%	Providing Excellent Services	Improving how we work	Finance and Resources	Missed YTD target (57.31% collected against 58.50% target). Work continuing to improve.	Amber
PES 27	Reduce Former years arrears for Council Tax	Below 3% of annual debit	Providing Excellent Services	Improving how we work	Finance and Resources	Performance worse than last year (when YTD target was missed) so unlikely to achieve annual target this year but action is being taken to improve.	red

5. Community and Wellbeing Services

5.1 Leisure Contract

This period Quarter 2 saw over 242,279 visits at Parklands Leisure Centre, Wigston Pool and Fitness Centre and the Brocks Hill Centre. This is compared to 232,012 for the same period last year. This sees a 4.4% increase overall. In particular, it is pleasing to note that Wigston's participation grew by 5,913; Parklands by 3,453 and Brocks Hill by 424 additional visits in the same period as last year.

Everyone Active hosted 267 different sessions in quarter 2. In addition, there were 20 schools and organisations that visited Brocks Hill Centre for Educational Activities in the Park. The Leicestershire NHS Breast Screening Van currently remains at the Parklands site for the remainder of the year.

Everyone Active reported healthy attendance for target groups such as falls prevention of 559, Diabetes course of 121, GP referrals and Heartsmart 3,708 and Disability swim of 421.

5.2 Sports and Physical Activity Commissioning

The Sport and Physical Activity Team has grown with two new members of staff starting new roles. Firstly, we welcome Jacob Humphries back to the Council after he previously completed our graduate programme in 2017; he is now a Sport and Physical Activity Assistant. This is in addition to Charlotte Cooper who has started an 18 month graduate programme.

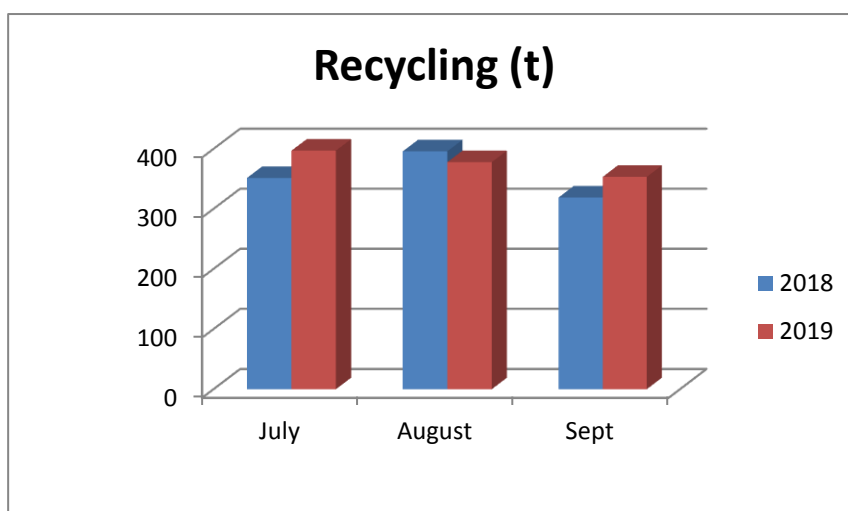
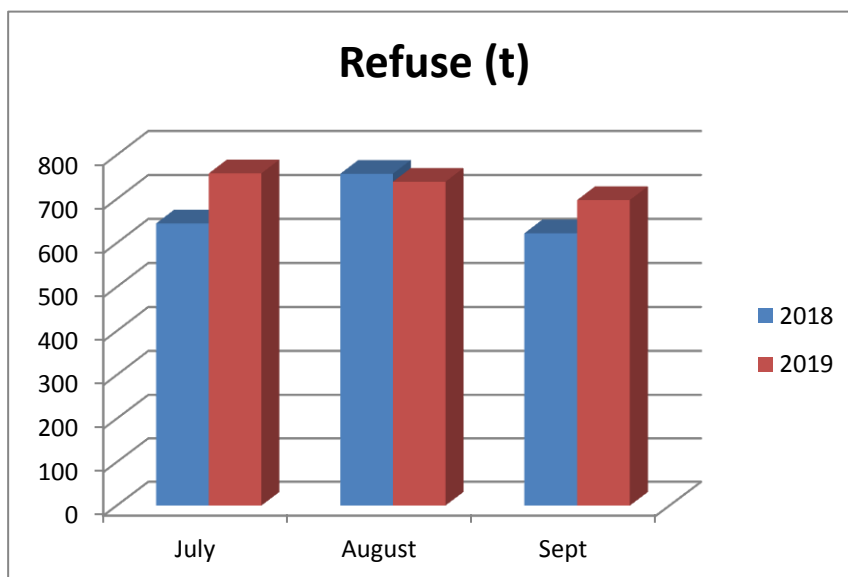
The main focus of our physical activity programmes has been to develop new youth provision in the borough, with a particular focus on diversionary activities for ASB. We are currently consulting with young people in order to shape future programmes. Our secondary focus is on developing physical activity opportunities for our residents who live in areas of deprivation and we are currently undertaking a consultation process via local primary schools to engage with this target audience.

Plans are also well underway for our upcoming 10th annual Oadby and Wigston Awards Evening, which will be held at Parklands Leisure Centre on the 20th November. 10 award categories will be announced on the night by Leicester Tigers Player, Tommy Reffell.

5.3 Community Services

The Council's Citizens' Panel currently has 119 members. The Community Engagement Officer, the Community and Wellbeing Manager and the Marketing and Customer Insight Manager are working closely together to continue to increase the number of sign ups. We are utilising a variety of methods such as presentations at schools, community groups and through campaigns on social media to achieve this. Our aim is to reach 250 members by the end of March 2020.

5.4 Environmental Sustainability



The above two charts represent the amount of refuse and recycling collected for 2018 and 2019. Refuse shows a slightly increase on services on the previous quarter 1 and prior to the same period in 2018. Recycling indicates has again seen a positive in July and September.

Officers have attended all three Residents Forums; Oadby, Wigston & South Wigston to raise public awareness of recycling. The residents were advised of the additional recyclables which can now be collected. The new recyclables include plastic film, bubble wrap and books. With the forthcoming holiday period advice was given in respect of Christmas cards, wrapping paper and other items that can and cannot be recycled. The Forums were well attended and lots of questions were raised by residents.

5.5 Exception Reporting – Community and Wellbeing

In order to highlight potential areas for improvement, this section details the targets that have been given a “Red” or “Amber” status for the Community and Wellbeing Services.

Reference	Measure/Activity	Target	Corporate Objective	Sub-Objective	Service	September 2019 Commentary	September Forecast
GBE 18	Plan and deliver the Council's annual 'Supersonic Boom' youth festival.	15% increase in number of people in attendance (taking into account conditions).	Growing the Borough Economically	Attracting people and business to the Borough	Community & Wellbeing	Event cancelled due to bad weather.	Red

6. Customer Services and Transformation

- 6.1. The project to roll out a new telephony system across the Leicestershire ICT Partnership has been completed to plan. As part of this, a new feature is that our Customer Service Centre now records all calls for training and monitoring purposes.
- 6.2. There has been a steady decline in footfall at the Customer Services Centre, particularly on Saturdays, now averaging less than 20 callers per morning. The Customer Services Centre is currently undertaking a Saturday trial closure from 2 November 2019 and will run until the end of December 2019 when a further review will take place. There has been no adverse feedback from customers on the closure. We have increased alternative methods of payment available both on line and at high street outlets which should support residents through this trial closure.
- 6.3. Customer Service Excellence accreditation is progressing well. It is designed to act as a driver of continuous improvement, as a skills and development tool and gives an independent validation of achievement.
- 6.4. Initially three teams will be put forward for accreditation. It is anticipated that these will be completed by Q4 and then a further roll out of other teams will take place based on the gap analysis and action plan.
 - Customer Services
 - Revenues and Benefits
 - Planning
- 6.5. The software review of the licensing section is continuing its progression to full implementation in January 2020. Where applicable, applications are now accessible online for efficiencies to the customer and a new streamlined way of working for staff. Training has taken place for staff for the new system and final configuration of this is being completed.
- 6.6. Work is currently underway to provide information relating to licensable activity on the public access pages of our website. Although the main aspect of this is to offer information

to residents, the functionality will also reduce the time spent on replying to Freedom of Information requests from the licensing section.

6.7. The second phase of 'Pay Another Way' project is continuing to run alongside the implementation of the new Income Management System. A new Direct Debit online sign up form is to be rolled out in Quarter 4 to assist in increased sign ups of this payment method, plus chip and pin devices will be installed at the Customer Service Centre to improve payment methods face to face. A communication action plan will be carried out in Quarter 4 in relation to the removal of the payment machine situated in the Customer Service Centre. The removal of the machine will then be undertaken.

6.8. The full completion of this project will be in conjunction with the project timeline of the new Income Management Software.

6.9. Steria and System Support have tested and rolled out the XenApp desktop software across the Council. This has improved performance, shorter log in times and minimised downtime for users.

6.10. **Exception Reporting – Customer Service and Transformation**

6.10.1. In order to highlight potential areas for improvement, this section details the targets that have been given a "Red" or "Amber" Status for Customer Service and Transformation. There are currently no red or amber status items.

6.11. **Exception Reporting – Rest of the Council**

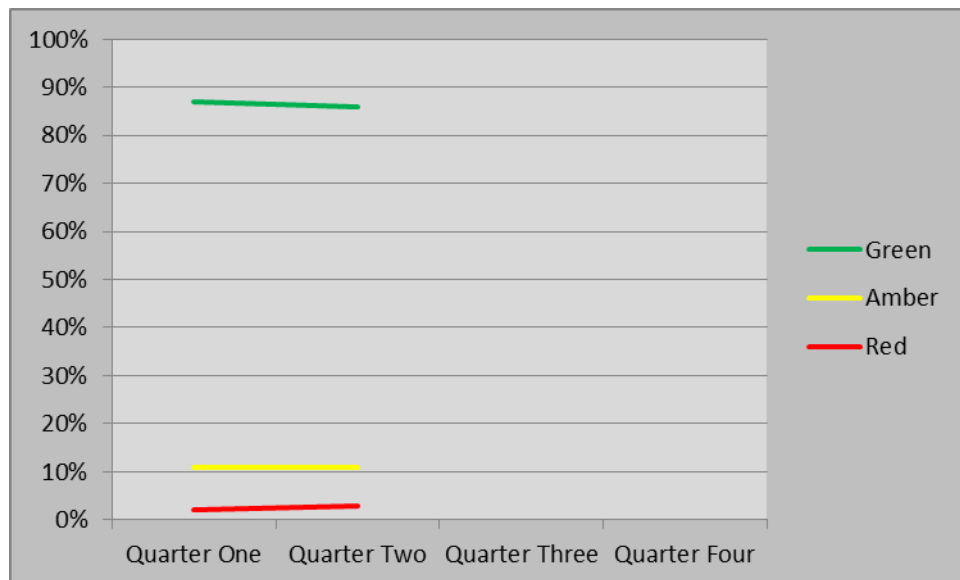
6.11.1. In order to highlight potential areas for improvement, this section details the targets that have been given a "Red" or "Amber" Status for the rest of the Council.

Reference	Measure/Activity	Target	Corporate Objective	Sub-Objective	Service	September 2019 Commentary	September Forecast
BPE 20	To enable us to understand our environmental issues, we will ensure installation and activation of Air Quality Monitoring Station in Blaby Road South Wigston	Monitoring to begin by Q3	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities	Delivering High Quality and Healthy Lifestyles in Communities	Law and Democracy	Still awaiting Sec 50 application from County	Amber
BPE 33	Ensure 100% registration for all miscellaneous licence (e.g. Hairdressers, Barbers, electrolysis, Etc.) to improve safety standards.	Mar-20	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities	Making our Communities feel safe, be safe and supported	Law and Democracy	Survey complete and premises requiring licensing identified and work being undertaken to ensure compliance	Amber
PES 23	Live streaming of Council meetings	Q3	Providing Excellent Services	Improving how we work	Law and Democracy	Meeting 31 October to review systems and products	Amber

(Continued overleaf)

7. Direction of Travel

- 7.1. In this, the first year of reporting in this method, it is important to see the direction of travel over the year and that a consistent level of forecasting was achieved across the year with regards to RAG status', with only a handful of Amber's turning into red at the end of the year. This indicates Officers are confident of identifying potential issues, and have not been overly or unduly optimistic with their forecasts, taking a prudent approach.





Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 26 November 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Oadby and Wigston Housing Strategy (2019-2024)**

Report Author(s): **Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment)**

Purpose of Report:	This report seeks to advise members of the council's overall Strategic position on Housing and to inform members of the outcome of the public consultation for the Housing Strategy 2019-2024.
Report Summary:	<p>The report outlines the Council's Housing Strategy which identifies the current and future housing issues in the Borough, and sets out the Council's priorities for dealing with them.</p> <p>The Strategy supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and provides the strategic framework for the delivery of the Council's four housing priorities.</p> <p>The Strategy was initially presented at the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on 24 September 2019 where it was agreed that the Housing Strategy would be available to stakeholders for consultation, and this report provides the feedback from that public consultation which closed on 14 November 2019.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That the content of the report be noted and the Housing Strategy (2019-2024) (as set out at Appendix 1 of this report) be approved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Leah Montia (Housing Manager) (0116) 257 2726 leah.montia@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1)</p> <p>Growing the Borough Economically (CO2)</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services (CO3)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision)</p> <p>Accountability (V1)</p> <p>Innovation (V4)</p> <p>Customer Focus (V5)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.

Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Effective Utilisation of Assets / Buildings (CR5) Regulatory Governance (CR6) Economy / Regeneration (CR9)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy (2006-2011) • Report entitled 'Housing Strategy 2019-2024' to Licensing and Regulatory Committee on Tuesday, 24 September 2019 (Hyperlinked to Mod.Gov on the Council's Website)
Appendices:	1. Oadby and Wigston Housing Strategy (2019-2024)

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council's Housing Strategy was produced in 2006 and expired in 2011. The Strategy set out the Council's objectives, priorities and plans for the future, in terms of housing within the Borough. In broad terms, the Strategy provided a summary of the key housing issues and challenges that existed locally and identified how they would be addressed.
- 1.2 The Housing Strategy was required by the Government to be 'fit for purpose', the criteria for which was laid down by the Department of Communities & Local Government.
- 1.3 The Council is no longer required to produce a Housing Strategy that encompasses all areas of housing due to changes in legislation, however there is a requirement for additional documents to be provided which the Council have continued to undertake, such as the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 1.4 The Housing Strategy 2019-2024 is an overarching Strategy designed to signpost the Council's overall strategic direction on Housing in the Borough both public and private.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy identifies the current and future housing issues in the Borough and sets out the Council's priorities for dealing with them. The Strategy supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan in relation to housing, in particular the proposed Selective Licensing Scheme in South Wigston. The Strategy provides the framework for the delivery

of the Council's four housing priorities:

- **Priority One:** Increase the Supply of Housing
- **Priority Two:** Manage the Demand for Housing
- **Priority Three:** Provide High Quality Local Authority Landlord Services
- **Priority Four:** Create Great Places to Live

3. The Wider Context

- 3.1 The demand for housing has resulted in house prices and private sector rents increasing beyond the reach of many households. Since 2017 the Government confirmed plans for the generation of new affordable homes with funding of £9 billion.
- 3.2 At a local level the Council faces increased homelessness. This includes the visible sign of homelessness, such as people sleeping on the street which is fortunately rare in the Borough but still a serious issue to tackle and prevent. The most common form of homelessness in the Borough comes from landlords serving notices to end private tenancies and a lack of affordable housing which leads people to reside in temporary and unsuitable housing.

4. Private Sector

- 4.1 The last private sector stock condition survey was carried out in 2010 of 809 dwellings using a stratified sampling technique and identified that at the time the Borough contained a total dwelling stock of 27,600. Of this total 7109 dwellings were estimated to not meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- 4.2 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) are a part of the Borough's housing stock and are relied on to meet housing need.
- 4.3 There are currently 125 empty properties in the Borough. Of these, 28 have been empty for two years or more. Properties empty for this length of time is a waste of potential housing and can attract anti-social behaviour which can blight communities. This is being address through the Council's Corporate Plan objectives.

5. Regeneration

- 5.1 Regeneration is addressed with the strategy, but the Council recognises the difficulties involved and will work with a range of resources and bodies on defining the regeneration needs.

6. Health and Wellbeing

- 6.1 The Council's Health and Wellbeing Board continues to promote the Council's commitment to ensuring the community are at the heart of the Council's wish to improve health and wellbeing in the Borough. It is recognised that housing is a major factor in addressing some of the inequalities that can be found in the Borough and measures in the Strategy will be used to reduce those health and inequalities.

7. Delivery and Monitoring

- 7.1 The Housing Strategy sets out the strategic direction for housing in the Borough and what the Council wants to achieve, focussing in particular on the major changes required to address housing needs. It will be underpinned by policies and delivery plans to measure progress.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The Council has received only one comment on the Housing Strategy as a result of the public consultation. This comment related to planning policy issues associated with housing rather than the Housing Strategy itself and a separate response has been provided to the resident by the Planning Policy Team. Consequently, no changes have been made to the Housing Strategy as a result of the public consultation.



Oadby & Wigston
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing Strategy 2019 - 2024

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Forward by Leader of the Council

A decent, secure and affordable home is central to all residents of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston being able to live full, prosperous and happy lives; it is vital to wellbeing, employment, children's education and managing household debt.

Whilst recognising the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Government's definition of affordable housing, this strategy alongside the Council's Local Plan sets out the Council's commitment to delivering affordable homes.

The Local Plan sets out the policy requirements for additional affordable housing. Affordable housing will be delivered through new social housing provision and by working collaboratively with partners who share our commitment to providing secure, affordable homes.

This strategy recognises the need for a broad approach for housing and planning services to deliver affordable housing to meet the needs of priority groups and those wanting to live in the Borough.

Oadby and Wigston Housing

The strategy reaffirms the Council's long term commitment to being a high quality landlord with a growing stock of homes, whilst recognising the need to modernise the service to become more customer focused.

The strategy commits the Council to increasing choice through the continued use of Choice Based Lettings. We see choice and control for tenants and leaseholders as central to a modern and responsive Council owned and managed housing provider.

The Council will work with the private rented sector to improve the quality and where possible the quantity of affordable private rented homes.

Regeneration

The Council's Corporate Plan commits the authority to supporting regeneration in a range of settings.

Homelessness

Tackling homelessness is one of our top priorities. Homelessness is faced by a number of families and rough sleepers. The former can only be addressed through the delivery of secure, affordable housing and working with service delivery partners across the Borough.

Cllr John Boyce

Executive Summary

The Housing Strategy identifies a number of key current and future housing issues within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston and sets out the Council's priorities for dealing with them. The strategy supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and provides the strategic framework for the delivery of our four housing priorities:

Priority One: Increase the supply of housing

- The Council are committed to delivering 148 new homes per annum by 2031 as set out in the adopted Local Plan.
- Providing appropriate housing for the whole community, this will require affordable housing on all new residential developments of 11 dwellings or more to meet identified local need.
- All residential development must contribute towards delivering a mix of dwelling types, tenures and sizes that meet the identified needs (and / or demand) of the communities within the Borough. All new residential development proposals must demonstrate how they contribute to achieving the identified needs as set out within the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment.
- Securing the required infrastructure in all new residential developments within the Borough area, including the provision of new homes in our agreed directions for growth.
- Encourage housing that specifically caters for the aging population that do not require supported living.
- Develop a 5 year forward programme for providing high quality new Council homes that the community needs, by utilising new Modular Homes technologies

Priority Two: Manage the demand for housing

- Focussing on prevention and support
- Refreshing our Temporary Accommodation Strategy
- Being clear about how and when we will use temporary accommodation
- Being clear about who can apply for Council housing
- Managing the list of people who apply for housing in a clear and transparent way
- Enabling applicants to exercise choice over where they live through choice based lettings

Priority Three: Provide high quality local authority landlord services

- Being clear about how we use our income to invest in homes and provide services
- Having a clear Rent Policy
- Being community focused and responsive to local needs
- Putting our tenants at the heart of everything we do
- Ensuring we maintain our stock to the highest standards
- Complying with the Homes England Regulatory Standards
- Being transparent about levels of customer satisfaction
- Ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all people who live on and visit Council estates
- Ensuring that tenants have the opportunity to live independently in their own home

Priority Four: Create great places to live

- Commissioning a private sector stock profiling exercise
- Implementing a Selective Licensing Scheme
- Ensuring full compliance of mandatory licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation
- Working with landlords to improve conditions in the private sector
- Refreshing our Empty Homes Strategy
- Encouraging institutional investment in market rented housing

Introduction

This strategy identifies the key housing challenges facing Oadby and Wigston and sets out the Council's priorities for tackling them. Our vision for housing is as follows:

To provide high quality housing in sustainable locations that meets local community. All housing will be 'fit for purpose', promote health living conditions, be affordable and support the creation of safe, clean and attractive places in which to live, work and visit.

The Corporate Plan

This sets out the overall priorities and programme of work for the period 2019-24. Housing, homelessness and regeneration are key priorities, with an ambition that "every person can live in a good home, to buy or rent at a price people can afford in a great environment."

1 The Wider Context for the Housing Strategy

1.1 National Context

The UK has historically struggled to deliver the number of new homes required. This has resulted in house prices and private sector rents increasing beyond the reach of most households.

In February 2017 the Government published a housing White Paper, "Fixing our Broken Housing Market" which included a commitment to Council house new build. This was followed in the Budget (November 2017) with the announcement of an additional £880m for local authority house building between 2019 and 2022¹.

1.2 Local Context

Homelessness and Housing waiting list

The Council faces two distinct challenges in relation to homelessness and the housing waiting list in the Borough. The first is the increasing number of households on the waiting list due to a lack of secure, affordable housing in the Borough. The total number of general needs social and affordable vacancies in the Borough has reduced over the past three years from 147 in 2016/17 to 53 in 2017/18 and just 40 in 2018/19. This means that those households on the waiting list are either waiting in temporary accommodation for longer or remaining in settled but unsuitable accommodation for long periods.

The second challenge is the increase demand for temporary accommodation. Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (which came in to effect 1 April 2018) there has been an increase in the time the Council is required to accommodate certain households who present as homeless. There are currently 22 households living in temporary accommodation (since the Act came into effect, the number of households living in temporary accommodation has been consistently around 20). The Council is committed to providing temporary accommodation to a high standard, and preferably within the Borough.

Private Sector

A private sector stock condition survey carried out in 2010 of 809 dwelling using a stratified sampling technique identified the following;

- Total dwelling stock of 27600,
- 7,109 dwellings were estimated to not meet the Decent Homes Standard, some 25.75%.
- 20.9% of all dwellings (5,768) are assessed as exhibiting Category 1 HHSRS hazards. The most commonly occurring hazard is that of Excess Cold.
- There is a total estimated cost implication of £21,077,481 to rectify non-decency; an average of £2,964.90 per failing property.
- 18.0% of dwellings are assessed as having a SAP rating lower than 35 which by default precipitates a Category 1 HHSRS hazard; 58.8% of these properties were constructed before 1944. The average SAP rating for the whole of the private sector within Oadby & Wigston is 41.
- 919 (4.8%) households have a monthly income lower than £500;
- 3,350 (16.2%) have a monthly income lower than £750.
- Households spending more than 10% of income on fuel bills are considered to be in fuel poverty: the level of fuel poverty across Oadby & Wigston based on those properties that provided the required information has been assessed at 3.0%. As this percentage is only based on households that provided income level, this information is less statistically reliable than the other data contained within this report.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are an important part of the Borough's housing stock and many people rely on them to meet their housing needs. However, HMOs can lead to potential problems such as increased risk of fire, car parking and the impact on surrounding areas.

There are currently an estimated 170 empty private sector homes in Oadby and Wigston. Of these, 34 have been empty for two years or more. Properties left empty for this length of time can attract anti-social behaviour, often blight the neighbourhood and represent a waste of potential housing.

Decent Homes (Council)²

The English Housing Survey 2016/17 published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government puts the average level of non-decent homes in the social housing sector at 13%. The level of non decent homes in Oadby and Wigston represents a significant investment need in order to secure the long term future of the stock and ensure our tenants have good quality housing. Work is currently ongoing to ensure that the Housing Revenue Account is sustainable and can viably deliver local priorities.

Regeneration

The Council is committed to supporting the delivery of new housing on regeneration sites across the Borough as evidenced in the Corporate Plan 2019-24. The Council and its partners will continue to investigate opportunities to bring forward development on sites identified in the Local Plan or at emerging regeneration sites at the earliest opportunity subject to legal, planning and financial issues. Where major development is proposed Communities will be consulted on the scheme to ensure the proposed development meets their needs.

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>

Our adopted Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Oadby and Wigston in partnership with Leicester County Council continues to place our community at the heart of our wish to improve health and wellbeing, and to reduce health inequalities. The importance of income, employment, education, housing quality and crime play a role in the physical and mental health of our residents. We need specialist and supported housing for a variety of client groups (such as older people, people with physical and learning disabilities and people with mental health problems) Our strategy is to keep people within the Borough rather than placing people out of the area. Good quality housing provision is vital to achieve this.

2 Our Priorities

2.1 Priority One: Increase the supply of housing

We will do this by:

- **Securing additional inward investment in the provision of new homes** by working more closely with registered providers and Homes England to enable the provision and variety of homes to meet different needs.
- **Ensuring the provision of new affordable homes to meet local need** including the delivery of more new Council homes that are affordable for residents.
- **Encouraging small and medium enterprises to build** by working with local communities to identify small and medium sites for development
- **Providing additional Council homes for rent by 2022** by expanding the Council's own new build and acquisition programme, and working with Government, Homes England and registered providers

2.2 Priority Two: Manage the demand for housing

We will help and support people to prevent them becoming homeless and enable them to secure and maintain good quality permanent accommodation. In doing so, we will ensure that people have fair and equal access to affordable housing where appropriate, but recognise that the needs of some will be met by the private sector.

We will do this by:

- **Focussing on prevention and support** by producing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy aligned to the Homelessness Reduction Act. This will set out how we aim to help people address their housing needs to avoid homelessness, which can include enabling them to remain in their current property or obtain alternative accommodation elsewhere, including in the private sector.
- **Being clear about how and when we will use temporary accommodation** by developing a Temporary Accommodation Protocol that establishes a clear commitment to placing in-borough wherever possible and clear criteria showing how we will determine whether and in what circumstances, placement outside the borough is justified.

- **Being clear about who can apply for Council housing** by continuing to implement the Council's allocations policy which sets out the criteria for applying for social housing in the Borough, how people can apply and how applicants will be prioritised.
- **Managing the list of people who apply for housing in a clear and transparent way** by ensuring the reviews and voids procedures are closely monitored and times reduced for reletting.
- **Giving applicants choice over where they live** by continuing to use a 'choice based lettings' system that will provide all relevant information about the properties available, including address, number of bedrooms, layout, weekly rent, service charges, and local amenities, which will allow applicants to bid for the property of their choice (subject to eligibility criteria)
- **Develop closer working with housing partners in the Borough** to promote a consistent approach to providing housing support for local residents, coordinate our approach to estate management and enhance local accountability.
- **Ensuring affordable housing is affordable** by publishing an Affordability Statement that provides clear guidance to developers and registered providers on the levels of rent the Council supports in order to ensure that homes are affordable for local people

2.3 Priority Three: Provide high quality local authority landlord services

The Council is committed to being a high performing landlord and recognises that the housing service needs to be modernised. In doing this, we will lead the way in providing the highest quality housing services and ensuring that our tenants are at the heart of everything we do.

We will achieve this by:

- **Being clear about how we use our income to invest in homes and provide services**
- **Having a clear Rent Policy** that sets out the Council's approach to setting rents
- **Being more community focused and responsive to local needs** by developing and implementing a customer focussed, neighbourhood based approach to tenancy and estate management
- **Putting our tenants at the heart of everything we do** by reviewing how and when we engage with our tenants.
- **Ensuring we maintain our stock to standards** by maintaining a programme of planned works and ensuring repairs are carried out on time and to a high standard.
- **Complying with the Homes England Regulatory Standards** by developing the Council's Local Offer, improving ways to engage and shape the service and publishing an annual report to tenants
- **Ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all people who live on and visit Council estates** by undertaking regular and frequent estate and block inspections, ensuring that all properties and common parts are maintained to the appropriate standards (whether required by statute, regulation or local agreement).

- **Ensuring that tenants have the opportunity to live independently in their own home** by working with partner agencies including Adult Social Care.
- **Regenerating our priority estates** by developing and delivering affordable and viable solutions that meet local need,

2.4 Priority Four: Create great places to live

The Council support the creation of safe, clean and attractive places in which to live, work and visit. Housing will meet the physical and mental health needs of all residents, with an emphasis on meeting the needs of older and more vulnerable people (e.g. for people with disabilities and mental health problems) that will help them to achieve and/or maintain their independence within Oadby and Wigston.

We will achieve this by:

- **Commissioning a private sector stock condition profiling exercise** to identify and prioritise action for the areas in the worst condition
- **Ensuring full compliance of mandatory licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation** to ensure that HMOs are of the highest quality
- **Implementing a Selective Licensing Scheme** in South Wigston ward.
- **Working with landlords to improve conditions in the private sector** continuing to provide information and advice to landlords and tenants, facilitate a bi-annual landlords forum,
- **Developing an Empty Homes Strategy** to bring as many empty homes back into use as possible, by all means possible through the use of statutory powers, including Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Enforced Sale and Compulsory Purchase

3 Delivery and Monitoring

The Housing Strategy sets out the strategic direction for housing in Oadby and Wigston and what we want to achieve, focusing in particular on the major changes required. It will be underpinned by policies and delivery plans to measure progress. A number of specific initiatives described in the strategy have been completed, are in development or planned.

Leadership on housing in Oadby and Wigston extends beyond the Council. The strategic priorities set out within the strategy cannot be achieved without the collective commitment of the Council and its key partners and stakeholders. This partnership approach should apply to all housing in the Borough, which means that everyone involved in building and managing homes, and supporting the people who live in them have an important role to play.

4 We will:

Involve residents and partners in developing detailed proposals to deliver the strategic objectives.

Be inclusive and transparent in developing our policies and delivery plans and place on the Council's website a comprehensive collection that underpin the Strategy, such as our Allocations Policy, refreshed Homelessness Strategy and other policies required by Government and Publish details of our progress against the strategic priorities and the Council's Corporate Plan.



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 26 November 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024)**

Report Author(s): **Leah Montia (Housing Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Council's strategic position on Homelessness and Rough Sleeping.
Report Summary:	<p>The report outlines the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy which sets out the Council's plan for dealing with homelessness and tackling the task of reducing rough sleeping in the Borough.</p> <p>Following on from the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (implemented in April 2018) the Government requires all local authorities to have an up to date Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy available online by winter 2019.</p> <p>The Strategy supports the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy 2019-2024.</p> <p>The report seeks approval for the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy to go out for consultation with the aim of the final document being adopted and published in January 2020.</p>
Recommendation(s):	That the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy (2019-2024) (as set out at Appendix 1 to this report) be approved for public consultation.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Leah Montia (Housing Manager) (0116) 257 2781 leah.montia@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1)</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services (CO3)</p> <p>Click to select corporate objective.</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision)</p> <p>Respect (V2)</p> <p>Customer Focus (V5)</p>
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.

Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Regulatory Governance (CR6) Reputation Damage (CR4)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	Homelessness Strategy 2016
Appendices:	1. Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024)

1. Background and the Wider Context for the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

- 1.1 The Council's Homelessness Strategy was produced in 2016 and whilst it was not due to expire until 2021 there is a requirement to produce an up to date Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 1.2 In 2019 the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) wrote to all local authorities to notify them of the requirement to have an up to date Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy submitted to MHCLG and available on line by winter 2019.
- 1.3 The Council's current Homelessness Strategy was published before the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 came in to force in April 2018 and is therefore not strictly up to date, and needs to be reviewed to take in to account the considerable changes in legislation and policy.
- 1.4 In April 2018 the HRA came in to force and transformed the delivery of homelessness services and imposed further duties on local authorities to prevent homelessness. At Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (OWBC) the Housing Options team deliver the homelessness services and adapted well to these changes as the Council had always worked with residents to try and prevent homelessness. Officers continue to take a holistic view when dealing with homelessness and work with residents to achieve the best outcome.
- 1.5 Despite the service responding well to the new legislation homelessness is on the increase in the Borough and across the country, and homelessness remains high on the national agenda and affects a high number of residents in different capacities.
- 1.6 During the 2018-2019 financial year Oadby & Wigston Borough Council recorded the

following statistics:

- 347 households experiencing housing difficulties approached the Council for assistance;
- The Council started a relief duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 for 235 households seeking housing assistance;
- The Council prevented 8 households from becoming homeless from their existing home;
- The Council worked with 35 households so that alternative accommodation could be found for them before they became homeless from their existing home;
- The Council accepted a full homeless duty to 35 households who would have been provided with temporary accommodation, pending rehousing, if needed; and
- The Council provided outreach support to 3 rough sleepers.

- 1.7 In the Borough, the main reason for homelessness is the landlord issuing a notice to end an assured shorthold tenancy, closely followed by family or friends no longer willing to be able to accommodate, and the breakdown in a relationship (this includes both violent and non-violent relationship breakdowns). In identifying the Council's priorities officers have had due regard to the main causes of homelessness in the Borough and what can be done to support residents facing those situations. Consideration has also been given to those less frequent causes of homelessness to ensure the wide range of causes and homeless related issues are captured.

2. Introduction to the Strategy

- 2.1 Rough sleeping is often the most visible and concerning form of homelessness but the definition of homelessness and the experience of those facing homelessness extends much wider than this. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how the Council will, over the coming five years, work to prevent all types of homelessness and support those who face homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

3. The Council's Priorities

- 3.1 The Council's priorities to prevent all types of homelessness and support those who face homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness are:

➤ Priority One: Homeless Prevention

- Tackling the causes of homelessness and continue to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act; and
- Preventing homelessness by access to affordable and sustainable housing options.

➤ Priority Two: Providing Services to respond to homeless and vulnerable people

- Preventing and responding to rough sleeping; and
- Supporting children, families, young people and vulnerable adults.

➤ Priority Three: Reduce the use of accommodation outside of the Borough

- Implementing our Temporary Accommodation Strategy; and
- Work with the private sector to secure suitable temporary accommodation.

➤ Priority Four: Increase the supply of affordable housing in the Borough

- Implementing the Local Plan and Housing Strategy; and

- Ensuring the provision of new affordable homes.

4. Delivery and Monitoring

4.1 The Strategy sets out the strategic direction and aims for preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough focusing in particular on the major changes required. It will be underpinned by policies and delivery plans to measure progress.

4.2 The Council will know if the Strategy is effective if:

- Increased number of homelessness preventions and reduced cases of repeat homelessness are reported;
- An increased proportion of personal housing plans which achieve a positive outcome;
- Improved satisfaction with the Housing Options Service;
- Funds secured to deliver rough sleeping initiatives will be maximised;
- The number of rough sleepers in the Borough of Oadby & Wigston will be reduced over the lifetime of this strategy;
- Increasing the number of homes within the Borough for temporary accommodation;
- there is a reduction in the number of out of Borough placements for temporary accommodation;
- there is a reduction in number of households living in temporary accommodation; and
- Increase the amount of affordable housing in the Borough.

4.3 The strategic priorities set out within the strategy cannot be achieved without the collective commitment of the Council and its key partners and stakeholders. This partnership approach should apply to all housing in the Borough, which means that everyone involved in building and managing homes, and supporting the people who live in them have an important role to play.

4.4 To achieve the aims set out in the Strategy the Council will:

- Involve residents and partners in developing detailed proposals to deliver the strategic objectives;
- Be inclusive and transparent in developing policies and delivery plans;
- Publish details of progress against the strategic priorities and the Council's Corporate Plan; and
- Report progress against the strategic priorities to Committee.

5. Consultation

5.1 The Strategy will be consulted on over a 4 week period and will be publicised widely including on the Council's website and with key partner agencies.

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019-2024)



Policy Version Number:
Committee Approval:
GMB:
EIA:

Policy Author:
TU Approval:
Unison:
Date of Policy Review:

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1.0 Foreword by Councillor

Homelessness and rough sleeping have increased across the Country, and these problems blight the lives of those directly affected and the wider community. This strategy is the Council's response to these pressures and focusses on prevention, as well as increasing access to accommodation and supporting residents to prevent homelessness. Tackling homelessness is one of our top priorities which we believe can be addressed through the delivery of secure, affordable housing and working with service delivery partners across the Borough.

This strategy is to be read in conjunction with the Council's Housing Strategy. We recognise that a decent, secure and affordable home is central to all residents of the Borough of Oadby & Wigston being able to live full, prosperous and happy lives; it is vital to wellbeing, employment, children's education and managing household debt.

We recognise the need for an increased supply of housing which should be delivered through new council housing and by working collaboratively with partners who share our commitment to providing secure, affordable homes. There is also the need for a broad approach for housing and planning services to deliver affordable housing to meet the needs of priority groups and those wanting to live in the Borough.

The Council has introduced a Temporary Housing Strategy and will seek to reduce the use of B&Bs and the placing of homeless households out of the Borough. This will be achieved by acquiring Council run temporary accommodation in the Borough and working with the private sector.

Rough Sleepers are often the face of homelessness to the general public. A coherent response of outreach work, and support is in place to help the rough sleeper community and we will continue to work with partner agencies with the aim of turning around as many lives as possible.

2.0 Executive Summary

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy identifies the main issues surrounding homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough of Oadby & Wigston and sets out the Council's priorities for dealing with them. This strategy supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy supporting the strategic framework for the delivery of our four housing priorities:

1. Increase the supply of housing
2. Manage the demand for housing
3. Provide high quality local authority landlord services
4. Create great places to live

It is our commitment to deliver the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy which considers options to prevent homelessness and meet demand, and to reduce the number of households placed in temporary accommodation outside of the Borough. To achieve this we are committed to developing Council owned and managed temporary accommodation within the Borough.

In developing this Strategy we have given consideration to ensure the most vulnerable groups can be assisted.

We are committed to working with local landlords, both private landlords and Registered Providers to prevent homelessness and to provide more affordable homes in the Borough.

3.0 Introduction

Whilst rough sleepers are often the most visible and concerning form of homelessness the definition of homelessness and experience of those facing homelessness extends much wider than this.

Homelessness can include anyone who does not have access to suitable accommodation or a permanent home and may be someone staying with friends, “sofa surfing” with family, or in temporary accommodation provided by the Council.

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how we will, over the coming five years, prevent homelessness including rough sleeping and support those who face homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. Our Priorities to achieve this are:

Priority One: Homeless Prevention

- Tackling the causes of homelessness and continue to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act
- Preventing homelessness by access to affordable and sustainable housing options

Priority Two: Providing Services to respond to homeless and vulnerable people

- Preventing and responding to rough sleeping
- Supporting children, families, young people and vulnerable adults

Priority Three: Reduce the use of accommodation outside of the Borough

- Implementing our Temporary Accommodation Strategy
- Work with the private sector to secure suitable temporary accommodation

Priority Four: Increase the supply of affordable housing in the Borough

- Implementing the Local Plan and Housing Strategy
- Ensuring the provision of new affordable homes

4.0 Challenges and wider context

In the Borough of Oadby & Wigston, as nationally, the three main reasons why people become homeless are:

- The landlord issued a notice to end an Assured Shorthold Tenancy
- Family or friends were no longer willing or able to accommodate the family, couple or single person
- There was a violent or non-violent breakdown in a relationship

During the 2018-2019 financial year Oadby & Wigston Borough Council recorded the following statistics:

- 347 households experiencing housing difficulties approached the Council for assistance.
- The Council started a relief duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 for 235 households seeking housing assistance.
- The Council prevented 8 households from becoming homeless from their existing home.
- The Council worked with 35 households so that alternative accommodation could be found for them before they became homeless from their existing home.
- The Council accepted a full homeless duty to 35 households who would have been provided with temporary accommodation, pending rehousing, if needed.
- The Council provided outreach support to 3 rough sleepers

Whilst rough sleeping is the most visible and damaging manifestation of homelessness, it is not the only form. Homelessness also happens to families with children, couples and single people. A household could be at risk of becoming homeless, be living in temporary homeless accommodation arranged by the council, be sofa surfing between family and friends or be sleeping rough.

Since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (which came in to effect 1 April 2018) the need for temporary accommodation in the Borough has risen as has the time which the Council is required to accommodate certain households for (as defined within the legislation). In addition to this the total number of general needs social and affordable vacancies (those not for older persons) in the Borough has reduced over the past three years from 147 in 2016/17 to 53 in 2017/18 and just 40 in 2018/19. This means those families and persons owed the 'main homelessness duty' are spending longer in temporary accommodation.

5.0 Priority One - Prevention

- Preventing and responding to rough sleeping
- Supporting children, families, young people and vulnerable adults

The Council will continue to ensure that residents can access all the services they need to help them resolve their housing problems from one point of contact. This will include assistance to prevent homelessness through giving comprehensive advice and guidance to private sector tenants, registered social landlord tenants and leaseholders. We will continue to try and resolve landlord disputes, disrepair issues and rent/mortgage problems.

The Council will continue to deliver rent deposits for homeless households when homelessness prevention has failed.

We will continue to broker the relationship between tenants and landlords (both private and Registered Social Providers) by intervening early and preventing homelessness caused by rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.

We will continue to consider the accommodation needs of eligible care leavers as part of their individual needs assessment and Pathway Plan.

We will continue to work with and support local voluntary organisations.

6.0 Priority Two – Response of Services

- Preventing and responding to rough sleeping
- Supporting children, families, young people and vulnerable adults

In the next five years we aim to prevent people from having to rough sleep in the Borough. We will support new rough sleepers and assist people to exit the street safely and work with former rough sleepers to maintain their independence and accommodation.

We will provide services and interventions by working in partnership with substance misuse services, adult social care, integrated commissioning, primary health care and mental health services, community safety services, and the third sector. We will participate in multi-agency forums within the Leicestershire region and beyond.

We will provide a response to the Governments Rough Sleeping Strategy and work closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to make most effective use of new funding streams to end rough sleeping.

7.0 Priority Three – Reduce out of Borough Placements

- Implementing our Temporary Accommodation Strategy
- Work with the private sector to secure suitable temporary accommodation

There are occasions which will necessitate placement out of Borough, where there is insufficient accommodation available within the Borough. Whilst this is sometimes necessary we recognise that this practice can have a negative impact on family life, schooling and the overall wellbeing of those households who are homeless and we are committed to reducing the need for out of Borough placements for households who are homeless.

Our Temporary Accommodation Strategy sets out our aim to increase the provision of temporary accommodation within the Borough by developing and acquiring new properties to be managed by the Council. This will also include working closely with private owners to access suitable and cost effective accommodation within the Borough.

8.0 Priority Four – Affordable Homes

- Implementing the Local Plan and Housing Strategy
- Ensuring the provision of new affordable homes

Our Housing Strategy sets out how we will achieve this by securing additional inward investment in the provision of new homes by working more closely with registered providers and Homes England to enable the provision and variety of homes to meet different needs.

We will ensure the provision of new affordable homes to meet local need by prioritising planning obligations to deliver affordable housing over other obligations when negotiating planning applications, and expanding the Council's new build programme to deliver more new council homes that are affordable for residents.

We will develop a model to compulsorily purchase suitable buildings and sites and work with development partners to deliver them.

We will encourage small and medium enterprises to build by working with local communities to identify small and medium sites for development

9.0 Delivery and Monitoring

The Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out the strategic direction for preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough of Oadby & Wigston and what we want to achieve, focusing in particular on the major changes required. It will be underpinned by policies and delivery plans to measure progress.

We will know if our actions are working if:

- Increased number of homelessness preventions and reduced cases of repeat homelessness are reported
- An increased proportion of personal housing plans which achieve a positive outcome
- Improved satisfaction with the Housing Options Service
- Funds secured to deliver rough sleeping initiatives will be maximised
- The number of rough sleepers in the Borough of Oadby & Wigston will be reduced over the lifetime of this strategy
- Increasing the number of homes within the Borough for temporary accommodation
- Reduce the number of out of Borough placements for temporary accommodation
- Reduce the number of households living in temporary accommodation
- Increase the number of affordable housing in the Borough

The strategic priorities set out within the strategy cannot be achieved without the collective commitment of the Council and its key partners and stakeholders. This partnership approach should apply to all housing in the Borough, which means that everyone involved in building and managing homes, and supporting the people who live in them have an important role to play.

We will:

- Involve residents and partners in developing detailed proposals to deliver the strategic objectives.
- Be inclusive and transparent in developing our policies and delivery plans.
- Publish details of our progress against the strategic priorities and the Council's Corporate Plan.
- Report progress against the strategic priorities to Committee.

Agenda Item 10



Service Delivery Committee	Tuesday, 26 November 2019	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **Housing Service Improvement Plan (November 2019)**

Report Author(s): **Leah Montia (Housing Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the proposed Housing Services Improvement Plan to address the Council's duties as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.
Report Summary:	<p>The report provides a summary of the current service provisions and sets out the improvements recommended for the Council over 2020/21, to ensure compliance with the four standards as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Home Standard 2. Tenancy Standard 3. Neighbourhood and Community Standard; and 4. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
Recommendation(s):	That the Committee considers the Housing Services Improvement Plan as set out in this report.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Stephen Hinds (Deputy Chief Executive) (0116) 257 2681 stephen.hinds@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 adrian.thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Leah Montia (Housing Manager) (0116) 257 2781 leah.montia@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
Vision and Values:	Accountability (V1) Customer Focus (V5) Innovation (V4)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report. The plan intends to ensure the Council meets its legal and regulatory obligations.
Financial:	Although there are no implications directly arising from this report. Any future spending plans drawn up from this will need to be costed and budgeted for at the appropriate time.
Corporate Risk Management:	Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6)

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the Housing Service Improvement Plan which highlights the areas in need of improvement for the Council to be compliant with the Regulatory Standard in respect of its functions as a social landlord. The improvements are compatible with the Council's corporate objectives:
- **Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities**
"Be proud of your borough as a place to live"
 - **Providing Excellent Services**
"Delivering those services needed to the highest standard whilst providing value for money"
- 1.2 Oadby and Wigston Borough Council has a housing stock of properties which comprises of flats, bungalows and houses. The Council's Housing Team manages the housing stock which is made up of predominantly tenanted, both general needs and specialist over 50s, and a lesser amount of leasehold properties.
- 1.3 As a provider of social housing the Council is required to adhere to the Consumer Standards as set by the Regulator of Social Housing. The role of the Regulator of Social Housing is to set the consumer standards and intervene where failure to meet the standards has caused, or could have caused, serious harm to tenants. The four standards are:
- **Home Standard** – Which relates primarily to the standard, repairs and quality of accommodation.
 - **Tenancy Standard** – How the property is allocated and managed.
 - **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – This relates to the communal areas and "estates", which also covers ASB management.
 - **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard** – Concerns providing tenants with choice and ensuring they are involved with an influence how and what services are provided.

- 1.4 The approach in this report is intended to ensure the Council meets its legal and regulatory obligations, whilst providing the best service for tenants and leaseholders. The approach aims to enable management to report on key areas to monitor performance and to allow for further transparency, accountability, and a stronger housing team whilst providing excellent services to tenants and leaseholders.

2. The Home Standard

Table 1 – Home Standard

Standard	Required Outcome	Action required
1.1	Quality of Accommodation	
1.1.1	Ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a comprehensive stock condition survey of council housing and implement an effective Asset Management Database and Performance System (Orchard) in 2020; • Develop and implement a new Housing Asset Management Strategy for 2020 – 25 aligned to the Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan (including review of HRA land and garage sites); • Revise the HRA Business Plan to support the new Asset Management Strategy; • Implement a new five year HRA planned investment programme.
1.1.2	Meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard.	
1.1.3	In agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section six of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance.	
1.1.4	Agree with the regulator a period of non-compliance with the Decent Homes Standard, where this is reasonable. Providers shall ensure their tenants are aware of the reasons for any period of non-compliance, their plan to achieve compliance and then report on progress delivering this plan.	

Standard	Required Outcome	Action required
1.2	Repairs and Maintenance	
2.1	Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete programme of re-procurement of repairs and voids services and all supporting elements during 2019-20.

2.2	Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete review of statutory position and appropriate risk assessments during 2019-20; • Implement a new five year HRA planned investment programme;
2.3	Ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a new Housing Asset Management Strategy for 2020 – 25 aligned to the Housing Strategy and HRA Business Plan (including review of HRA land and garage sites); • Implement a new five year HRA planned investment programme;
2.4	Co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-procurement of adaptations services completed in 2019-20; • Continue to develop partnership working with Lightbulb.

3. The Tenancy Standard

- 3.1 The Tenancy Standard is concerned with the allocation and management of the Council's housing stock.
- 3.2 Officers have identified the following key areas in need of improvements, and in parts 6 to 10 of this report provides further details of proposed improvements.

Table 2 – Tenancy Standard

Standard	Required Outcome	Action required
2.1.2	Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should be focused on the needs of their tenants and will offer choices to them	Tenancy audits to be carried out by the Community Housing Officers(CHOs) to understand the scale of under occupation within Council housing stock. From this Management can review the Council's current offer to determine whether this is adequate and if necessary put forward plan to address both issues. The procedure for tenancy audits is detailed below at paragraph 6.
2.1.5	Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this they shall take in to account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties	Management to review the end to end process of voids and lettings to create further office focus and accountability at all levels. It is envisaged that there will be capacity in existing roles to assist with management of temporary housing.

2.2.1	Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud..."	A review of policies relating to tenancy management.
2.2.6	Registered providers shall make sure that their home continues to be occupied by the tenant they let the home to in accordance with the requirements of the relevant tenant agreement, for the duration of the tenancy...	Tenancy audits to be carried out by CHOs to understand who is residing in Council's properties, and to take any necessary action in relation to tenancy fraud. It is envisaged that this information can also be used to gain further insight in to Council tenants and leaseholders, which can be use to inform future policy and services.
2.2.7	Registered providers shall develop and provide services that will support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.	A review of policies relating to tenancy management. Tenancy audits will also provide necessary information to officers about what support is needed and services can be reviewed accordingly.

4. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard

- 4.1 The Neighbourhood and Community Standard is concerned with how the Council manages its neighbourhoods and estates, which includes the management of antisocial behaviour (ASB).
- 4.2 Officers have identified the following keys areas in need of improvement, and in parts 6 to 10 of this report provides further details of proposed improvements.

Table 3 – Neighbourhood and Community Standard

Standard	Required Outcome	Action required
2.1	Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintain and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes...The policy shall include any communal area associated with the registered provider's homes.	Review of estate inspection policy and process. Officers to consult with tenants and leaseholders on the policy.
2.3.2	In their work to prevent and address ASB, registered providers shall demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB 	Management to review ASB procedure for officers and to put in place robust case management protocol.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies • strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families • appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available • tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not • provision of support to victims and witnesses 	
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5. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

- 5.1 The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standards is concerned with how the Council communicates and engages with its tenants, and involves them to ensure that residents have opportunities to influence and delivery of services.
- 5.2 Officers have identified the following keys areas in need of improvement, and in parts 6 to 10 of this report provides further details of service improvements.

Table 4 – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

Standard	Required Outcome	Action required
1.2.1	<p>Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formulation of their landlord's housing-related policies and strategic priorities • the making of decisions about how housing-related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards • the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved 	Develop Tenants Involvement Strategy, and link in with existing modes of engagement for Borough residents i.e. Citizens Panel

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the management of their homes (where applicable) • management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made, and • agreeing local offers for service delivery. 	
1.3.1 (b)	Registered providers shall demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.	Tenancy Audits will enable officers to gain further insight into residents. As will the use of forums such as Citizens Panel where residents can specify in they are a tenant or leaseholder along with any needs they may have.
2.1.2	Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint. Providers shall inform tenants how they use complaints to improve their services. Registered providers shall publish information about complaints each year, including their number and nature, and the outcome of the complaints	It is recognised that there is a clear complaints process in place. However, Officers have identified that what is lacking is a way for the Council to share information on how complaints are used to improve services.
2.2.2	Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.	Develop Tenants Involvement Strategy, and link in with existing modes of engagement for Borough residents i.e. Citizens Panel
2.2.4	Registered providers shall consult with tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.	Develop Tenants Involvement Strategy, and link in with existing modes of engagement for Borough residents i.e. Citizens Panel. It is also proposed that an annual survey could be used to gain feedback on customer satisfaction, and could be amended as needed to gain feedback on different areas of services.
2.3.1	Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate	Develop Tenants Involvement Strategy, and link in with existing modes of engagement for Borough

	with tenants	residents i.e. Citizens Panel
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6. Tenancy Audits

- 6.1 A tenancy audit is a process where by the Council Officers would attend a tenant's home to ascertain who is residing in the property. Firstly, the aim is to check that the person residing in the property is the named tenant, and the following information can also be gathered:
- Occupancy, including children, partners, etc;
 - Photo ID or proof of address of tenant, and household members;
 - Right to "rent status" of tenants; and
 - Housing needs of the tenant and household members.
- 6.2 This information is necessary for the effective management of the Council's housing stock. The information in 6.1 can assist in fraud investigations, ASB cases, ensuring services and support offered to tenants is relevant, influencing local lettings policies, influencing any incentive programmes e.g. downsizing. The information gathered in a tenancy audit can also be referred to when Officers receive a right to buy applicant or a succession request following the death of the tenant.
- 6.3 Currently, the Council only has the information gathered at the time of sign up and relies on tenants to keep the Council informed in the changes in their household. Officers note that residents rarely keep the Council updated, unless there is a specific reason i.e. the change affects a housing benefit entitlement or they wish to move to a house more suitable to their needs.
- 6.4 The aim is for Officers to carry out tenancy audits on 20% of the Council's housing stock each year. This equates to around 10 visits per officer per month, based on a team of two community housing officers. The Officers would attempt a visit on more than one occasion as there would be many occasions where tenants are not in on the first visit.
- 6.5 These visits could be targeted, i.e. if there are reports of tenancy fraud, abandonment or on larger houses to identify what number of households are eligible to downsize to free up family homes.
- 6.6 Management would be able to report on the number of tenancy audits within a given period, and the outcomes of the audits. This information can be used to monitor team performance and influence services and policy.

7. Estate Inspection (EI) Policy and Procedure

- 7.1 The current practice is for CHOs to carry out a six monthly estate inspection on all our housing stock. These are attended by Members and occasionally police, residents and surveyors. The information gathered from these is collated differently depending on the officer, and is not in a format in which managers can review or monitor. The Council's current procedure for estate inspections is not reflective of the Council's current requirements and there is an opportunity to review the way the Council carries out estate inspections, manages the housing stock and reports on performance.
- 7.2 It is crucial that regular inspections are carried out on the communal areas of the Council's housing stock to:
- Ensure compliance with health and safety laws and regulations;
 - Effectively maintain the buildings and communal areas, ensuring repairs are dealt with promptly;

- Ensure that communal areas are being cleaned inline with Service Level Agreement (SLA) and to have evidence to demonstrate good practice or challenge any performance issues;
- Ensure that grounds maintenance is being carried out inline with SLA and to have evidence good practice or challenge any performance issues;
- Engage with residents, to gain their insight in relation to the delivery of services or any issues on the estate e.g. ASB;
- Have a regular presence on the Council's estates; and
- Monitor performance of the team and the services provided.

- 7.3 The reviewed system of EI would require a change of policy and procedure. To improve our inspection regime officers would recommend that an average block of two to three stories high would be inspected every other month, a higher risk block (such as Chartwell House and the sheltered schemes) would be inspected once a month and low risk blocks would be inspected quarterly. The procedure would provide Officers with guidance on the criteria and how to apply it.
- 7.4 The Council has a number of properties which are not flats contained within a block, and for these a six monthly or quarterly inspection may be sufficient as the aim is to check on the general area and be visible.
- 7.5 Once the frequency of the inspection had been set, Officers would be obliged to publish the date of the inspection. This would enable residents, partner agencies and Members to attend. There would also be targets for resident involvement on estate inspections, which could be a resident attending the whole inspection or if that is not possible Officers actively seeking out tenants to make themselves known and gain any feedback on the estates. This is to try and increase tenant and leasehold involvement in the services provided, to gain valuable feedback, and to improve the relationships and confidence in Officers from tenants and leaseholders.
- 7.6 It is anticipated that this will be an increased burden on Officer time, but it is necessary to ensure compliance and adds value to the service provided. It is anticipated that by being out on the estates the CHOs will be able to pick up on issues then and there. To assist this there will be a review of the patches so that they are geographically allocated e.g. CHO 1 will manage Wigston (majority of Council stock) and CHO 2 will manage South Wigston and Oadby.

8. Review Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) Procedure and Systems

- 8.1 The current ASB policy is dated 2016 and should be reviewed in consultation with tenants and leaseholders. In addition to this the procedure for Officers to manage cases will be reviewed alongside the policy review.
- 8.2 There is currently no internal case management system to enable housing officers to effectively manage all levels of ASB in line with the Council's procedure. The Housing Team use Orchard, which is a housing management database and case management system, however the Council does not have use of the Orchard case management system. The housing team have use of the Police Sentinel Log, however this is an external reporting system to improve partnership working with the Police and relevant agencies. This system is not a case management system, and is not linked to the Council's internal procedure or housing database.
- 8.3 The introduction of a module within the housing management database, which is internal and linked to the Council's ASB procedure would allow for effective case management, monitoring of case progression and performance by managers, and reporting to senior management and Members. The proposal is for this to be explored by Officers with

Orchard to assess the costs and implementation requirements.

- 8.4 The review of the ways of working on ASB cases of Council housing stock will enable the Council to focus on the views of tenants and leaseholders living in the Borough, and shape the service accordingly. Management will also ensure that the Council effectively manages cases to ensure compliance with regulatory standards and to improve confidence from and relationships with partner agencies.

9. Review Housing Team Structure

- 9.1 The housing team was restructured in 2019 and resulted in the appointment of a new Housing Manager post. Since being in post for the last 3 months the Housing Manager has been able to review how the team is working, and to consider changes to ensure that there is sufficient resource to provide the necessary services.

10. Develop Tenants Involvement Strategy

- 10.1 Tenant involvement encourages reflection on what the purpose of "social housing" is and what services are being delivered. Furthermore, this will help the Council to work towards more efficient and modern services with the service user as a collaborator. By working with tenants, the Council can continue to provide good quality affordable homes, particularly to those in need and ensure the economic growth and prosperity of the Borough. Furthermore, this will enable the Council to provide excellent housing services where Council tenants feel listened to, empowered to influence decisions and have the opportunity to challenge the Council.
- 10.2 The aim of the strategy will be to ensure compliance with the regulatory standards by providing tenants and leaseholders with meaningful opportunities to influence the delivery of services.
- 10.3 Officers intend to work with existing methods of engagement, for example utilising the Citizens Panel to target Council tenants, and to work with other Council departments and partner agencies to develop new and innovative ways to engage and involve tenants and leaseholders.

11. Reporting and Performance

- 11.1 The proposed ways of working will create new opportunities for management to report to Members on performance, which will enable further scrutiny and discussion around delivery of housing services.
- 11.2 Whilst Housing Services are starting to implement the plan immediately the improvements contained within this report will be achieved by the end of the financial year 2020/21. Officers will develop an action plan for Officers to implement changes within this timeframe which management will monitor to ensure improvements are made within target. Updates on the progress of the service improvement plan will be provided quarterly at Service Delivery Committee.