



Service Delivery Committee

Operational Updates – Quarter One (2023/2024)

BUILT ENVIRONMENT UPDATE

Planning

Over the past 12-18 months the Planning Department has seen significant change. During the early parts of 2022 the Planning Department went through a restructure to ensure that the limited resource available within the department was focused in the right areas. As a result of the restructure last year, the significant planning application backlog is no longer apparent, agency staff back-filling vacant posts are no longer needed within Planning Control and Planning Enforcement (both teams are all permanent members of staff now), customer satisfaction has improved vastly, the use of extensions of time have significantly decreased, and staff morale is high. Further, the number of complaints received relating to Planning Control has decreased vastly also.

Customer satisfaction in relation to planning applications and decision making has been steadily improving since March 2022. Initial surveys conducted illustrated overall customer satisfaction within the low 60 percents, however, this has now risen to high 80 percents / low 90 percents in the most recent customer satisfaction surveys. Maintaining this high standard of customer satisfaction is important for the Council to meet the Council's agreed service standards.

During the first quarter period, the number of extensions of time required for planning application decisions has continued to decline. The most recent dataset for June 2023, illustrates that only 23% of all planning applications decided by the Council required an extension of time agreement. The Council is committed in continuing the downward trend in the need for extensions of time for planning application decisions, however there will always be a certain level of extension of time agreements needed, as the Council seeks to work with applicants on revising proposals to make them appropriate rather than refuse them if there is a way forward.

In addition, during Quarter One, all of the statutory Government targets have been exceeded as well as local Key Performance Indicators, with 100% of all major planning applications determined in time against the Government target of 70%, and 99% of all non-major planning applications determined in time against the Government target of 70%.

Economic Regeneration

The team consists of 3.9 FTE members of staff. The post of Economic Regeneration Manager is being recruited to in the coming months. In the interim Jamie To, our National Management Trainee, is covering the role.

Officers are preparing the new Economic Regeneration Strategy which is due to be ready for Committee approval in Quarter 3. To inform the Strategy, a business survey has been launched to understand their challenges and priorities and it will be presented as draft to the Council's Business Meeting on Thursday 14 September.



The Team is heavily focused on the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Year Two projects are underway with the key projects being; a town centre app (due to be launched in Quarter 3), a new business support service provided alongside the other districts in Leicestershire, and a Volunteer Action Project being developed with an external partner.

Officers will continue to update members on the UKSPF roll out at the Place Shaping Working Group and relevant committees.

Housing

Housing Capital Programme

The team are currently working on upgrading the electrical installation to the communal areas at:

- Boulter Crescent (29 Blocks)
- Kenilworth Drive (3 Blocks)
- Welford Road and Newton Lane (3 blocks)

This is as a result of an electrical inspection which found that the existing installation was unsatisfactory and required an upgrade to the power cables going into the communal areas.

To achieve a satisfactory and safe installation we are coordinating a work programme that involves Western Power, the Council's electrical contractor, the tenant's electricity supplier and tenants.

To ensure that disruption to tenants is kept to a minimum, the works are being coordinated and programmed to a rigid timescale. We have also ensured that there is an on-site presence with the contractor employing a tenant liaison officer for this purpose.

A boiler replacement scheme is in operation with approximately 50 boilers being replaced in the next 9 months.

Void contract

The void property contract was awarded to local contractor UK Gas Services in January 2023. UK Gas Services are based in Groby, Leicester. They employ 88 direct employees of which 84% (74) live in the Leicestershire area, and of which 7 live in the Borough.

The procurement of this contractor is fully compliant with UK Procurement Regulations and contractors are assessed on their experience, financial stability, health & safety, equality & diversity and working practices, as follows:

Evidence of Experience

- Statement of Experience
- Resource, Capacity and Competence
- Accreditations, Memberships and Training



Working Practices

- Contract Management
- Customer Care and Tenant Liaison
- Management of Risk and Health and Safety
- Working in Voids

Case Study and Scenario

- Case Study
- Scenario

Social Value and Added Value Initiatives

- Social Value and Added Value Initiatives
- Environment and Sustainability

Contractors were asked to price for the following:

- Prices to carry out the different elements of the appropriate works for various property types and contract values
- Schedule of rates for specific and ad hoc contracts
- Prices for the relevant materials including kitchens and bathrooms
- Separate labour rates for both normal hours and 'out of hours' rates for:
 - Electricians
 - Heating Engineers
 - Roofing Works
 - Plumbers
 - Bricklayers
 - Joiners
 - Labourers

Housing Options and Homelessness

The Housing Options Team carried out 49 housing advice appointments during Q1. Housing advice appointments are requested due to a household having been served with a notice to leave their current accommodation, or asked to leave by a person's family or friends, or due to a person being homeless.

Despite a spike in the numbers approaching the team for advice in January and May, the average number of monthly appointments in the first quarter is 16, which is slightly below the monthly average of 17 appointments for the last 12 months, as illustrated in table 1 below.

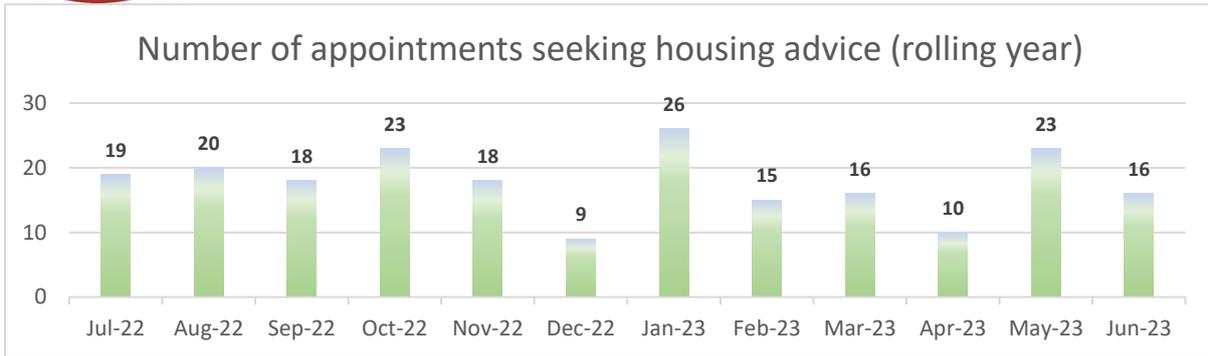


Table 1

Temporary Accommodation

The definition of a main homeless duty is where a household's period of relief duty has come to an end, is in priority need, and where the Council have a duty to source suitable alternative accommodation.

An interim duty to accommodate requires the Council to make accommodation available to the household because there is reason to believe that the household may be homeless, be eligible for assistance, and have a priority need.

The number of households in these two categories whom we have accepted a duty to, and who are being accommodated on an interim basis at the end of Q1 is 37 (17 main homeless duty and 20 an interim duty to accommodate).

It should be noted that there are other households that have been accepted as homeless but are not being accommodated by the Council in temporary accommodation. For example, they may be households under notice to leave their home or who are 'sofa surfing' and have declined the offer of temporary accommodation by the Council. At the end of Q1 there were 27 households that fell into this category.

Table 2 provides a summary of what type of temporary accommodation is being used by the Council and the number of households in each category of temporary accommodation.



Table 2



The Council will only offer B&B accommodation to households with children as a last resort. If families with children are placed in B&B accommodation we aim to find more suitable accommodation within 42 days, in line with homelessness guidance.

At Q1 there were two households with children in B&B accommodation. One household was waiting for a placement in the Council's hostel to be made ready for occupation. The second household was waiting for a private lease property to come back from works before being occupied. As can be seen, we were actively managing these cases to ensure that the households stay in B&B accommodation was for as short a time as possible.

Table 3 provides an illustration of the household composition in temporary accommodation.

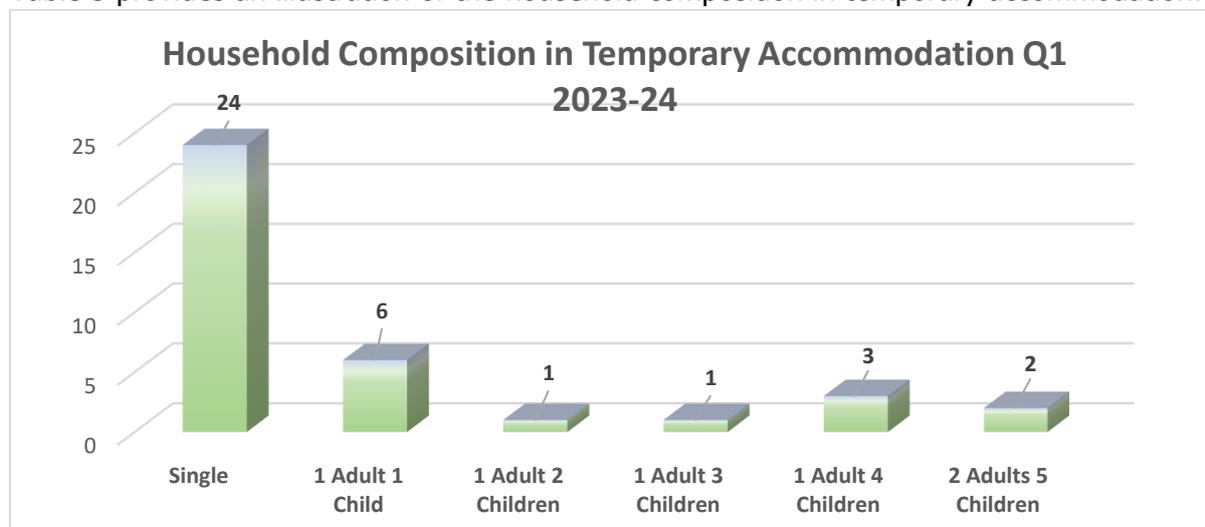


Table 3

Previously we have not measured the average length of stay in temporary accommodation. In Q1 the average stay in temporary accommodation was 185 days. Measuring the average time spent in temporary accommodation will help to better understand the demand for different types of temporary accommodation and to quantify what our stock profile should be so that we can meet demand.

Lightbulb

At the end of Q1 the number of grants processed was 11. The value of the grants being:

- 2 grants at 0-£5K
- 3 grants at £5k - £15K
- 6 grants at £15K - £30K

Further performance data can be found at Appendix 4

Council Property Adaptations

During Q1 the Council's major adaptation scheme received three requests for major adaptations of which:

- 2 are in process
- 1 is waiting on additional information



In addition a further:

- 7 requests from 2022-23 have been carried over into 2023-24 and are in progress
- 3 adaptations from 2022-23 have been completed
- An additional 3 requests have been put on hold due to:
 - 1 change to family circumstance
 - 1 falls outside policy
 - 1 major works required

FINANCE UPDATE

Revenues and Benefits

Benefits

The Benefits team is responsible for the administration of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Discretionary Payments. Demand on the Discretionary Housing Payment and Discretionary Council Tax Support schemes, which supports customers experiencing significant financial hardship, continues to grow. The Finance Inclusion Officer plays a vital role in ensuring the right people are supported through the cost-of-living crisis.

Processing of change of circumstances documents by the team remains the fastest in Leicestershire. Accuracy of new claims is a priority for the team and has been monitored from June (100%) and will continue to be monitored and reported on in Q2. The team continues to tackle fraud and error through the Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative by completing case reviews as required by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Revenues

The Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) teams are responsible for administering and collecting £36.5m of Council Tax and £12.2m of National Non-Domestic Rates. Revenue is collected on behalf of Leicestershire County Council, the Leicestershire Police Service, the Combined Fire and Rescue Service, Central Government, and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. The teams have a duty to ensure the correct billing of over 24,000 households and 1,400 non-domestic properties within the borough.

Revenues Calls

Quarter 1	Apr	May	June
Number of calls	673	603	565
Number of calls answered	599	558	522
Percentage answered	89%	92.53%	92.38%
Number of abandoned calls	74	45	43
Average wait time before abandonment	03:39	03:12	04:26



Performance is measured through a comprehensive series of indicators. Collection rates and arrears levels are also reported as part of the Council's Key Performance Indicators.

Collection Rates

Oadby and Wigston's collection rates for 2022/2023 saw an improvement of 1.15% for Council Tax collection and 1.85% for NNDR on the previous year. Nationally, collection rates only increased by 0.2% for Council Tax and 1.3% for NNDR. Collections rates for the year were below target at 96.86% (97.5%) for Council Tax and 96.24% (98.5%) for NNDR.

For Q1, Council Tax collection rates are 0.51% below target and NNDR collection rates are 3.43% above target. The improvement in NNDR collection rates is due to the team being fully resourced and visits of businesses recommencing.

Percentage of Debit Collected	April	May	June
(Cumulative)	%	%	%
Target Rate	10.94%	20.28%	29.39%
Actual Collection Rate	10.83%	19.81%	28.88%
Actual Collection Rate 2022/2023	10.49%	19.66%	28.94%
Target Rate	11.93%	19.31%	29.33%
Actual Collection Rate	10.46%	21.95%	32.76%
Actual Collection Rate 2022/23	11%	18.31%	26.63%

Property Statistics

Direct debit take-up continues to rise monthly, this reduces the work required to collect payments.

	April	May	June
No of Council Tax properties	24,069	24,093	24,104
No of Council Tax Direct Debits	18,699	18,707	18,735
No of Single Person Discounts	7,611	7,615	7,609
No of Businesses	1,422	1,422	1,422

IT Team

Throughout Q1 the IT team has been ensuring service provision has maintained a high level while planning for the transition to Brocks Hill Offices and covering the election. This involved configuring and testing all of the equipment needed to effectively process election papers in conjunction with the Democratic Services team.



The IT service also minimised the network at Bushloe House and removed as much physical equipment as possible to be able to reconfigure to use at Brocks Hill. Bushloe House was shrunk to 50% IT capacity in readiness for the move and the team also designed and configured the new server room to ensure the Council was ready to move to the new Council offices.

During May and June there was a 'freeze' on all upgrades and change requests from service areas to ensure a successful election and in readiness for the network/server migration scheduled for June and July.

See key information of service delivery below:

Number of contacts	Type	Jan	Feb	Mar
	Email	138	139	160
	Phone	8	10	10
	Walk-ins	5	3	8

Standard	Target	Jan	Feb	Mar
Response time for urgent issue	Within 1 day	Less than 1 day	Less than 1 day	Less than 1 day
Response time for routine issue	3 working days	0.8 days	0.7 days	0.7 days
Turn-around time for new starters set up	5 working days	All within 5 days	All within 5 days	All within 5 days
Overall system uptime	99.9%	100%	100%	100%
Monitoring of system/software issues to drive improvements	Monthly Monitoring completed	Yes	Yes	Yes

Major changes completed by IT team	Apr	May	Jun
	Commenced decommissioning of Bushloe House	Quarter of Bushloe House decommissioned (top floor)	Half of Bushloe House network decommissioned (top floor and half of middle floor)
	Readying systems for election – testing and configuring equipment to process postal votes and count.	Supported election	Commenced office clearance to reuse equipment at Brocks Hill
	Planning new server room	Commenced configuring new server	Server moves commenced.
	Oracle Patching For DMS	Created link to Brocks Hill in readiness for	



		server migration to new offices	
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CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

Customer Service Improvement

The Customer Service Improvement team has made significant progress in training a dedicated group of staff members to update, write, and modify Learning Pool (e-Learning) courses that are directly applicable to their respective service areas. This will greatly enhance the resource as an effective tool for learning and development purposes. In Quarter One the team introduced a Health and Safety Refresher course aimed at enhancing staff's ability to identify and mitigate workplace risks. Additionally, an Equality and Diversity course is currently being developed so it can be rolled out to staff in the near future.

The team has completed the biannual complaints report within this quarter, carefully examining the complaints to uncover any patterns or trends. This report highlights our commitment to being open and transparent and ensures that we address all aspects of complaints handling openly and honestly.

Work has continued measuring customer satisfaction levels throughout all service areas. We proactively seek and implement customer feedback, utilising their comments and suggestions whenever feasible to uphold our commitment to delivering excellent services. This quarter, we have successfully completed 575 surveys across 14 service areas, achieving some excellent scores, especially in planning, customer services, and ASB, among others.

Communications and Marketing

Our email subscription service

Our email subscription service continues to grow.

Measure	Q1 Totals	Comparison to previous quarter	Percentage of possible subscribers (based on 42,000 adults registered to vote)
Total subscriptions	8,383	+23.5%	19.9%

Please note that whilst there are 42,000 registered voters in the borough, it is unlikely that every adult in each household will sign up to our email subscription service. It is more realistic to aim toward one adult in each property signing up. There are currently 24,038 household properties in the borough.

Measure	Q1 Totals	Comparison to previous quarter
Average subscriptions per subscriber	2.0	-0.0
Engagement rate	80.1%	-4%



Open rate	55.2%	-1.2%
Bulletins sent (in quarter)	45	-13
Emails delivered (in quarter)	83,496	+44%

Subscribers by topic (email subscription service)

Topic	Number of subscribers	Comparison to previous quarter
Citizen's Panel	109	No change
Community & Voluntary Sector	1,971	+12.8%
Community Safety, Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour	424	+87.6%
Consultations & Surveys	2,148	+12.3%
Council News & Information	4,634	+20.9%
Health, Wellbeing, Sport & Leisure	3,624	+8%
News for Businesses	852	+7.8%
News for Council Tenants*	543	+16.7%
Private Sector Housing News	574	No change
Recycling, Refuse & Bin Collections	4192	+19.1%
Sports Clubs	13	No change
What's On & Events	2283	+14.1%

* There are 1,203 council properties in the borough

Press releases

The following links are to press releases sent by the authority during this time period.

- [Summer events revealed for University of Leicester's Oadby oasis](#)
- [New council leader pledges to create a greener, cleaner and fairer borough](#)
- [Our Coronation Shop Front Competition winners!](#)
- [Face to face appointment hub offer to be introduced to Oadby & Wigston town centres](#)
- [Large fire off Saffron Road in South Wigston](#)
- [Adding a splash of colour to South Wigston](#) (in collaboration with Network Rail)

Social media

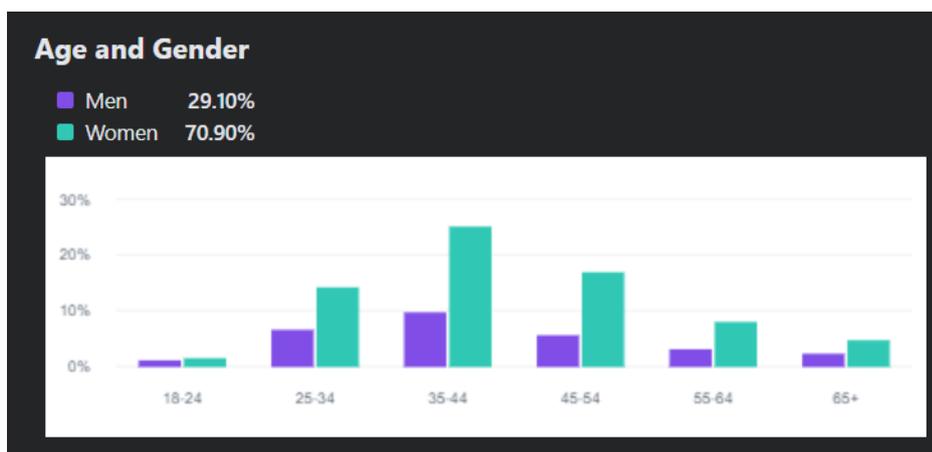
Measure	Facebook	Comparison to previous quarter
Number of Followers	4,094	+130
Number of posts	140	+16.6%
Post reach*	61,936	+42.1%



Measure	Facebook	Comparison to previous quarter
Engagement – reactions, comments, likes and shares	19,433	+744.9%
Measure	Twitter	Comparison to previous quarter
Number of Followers	2,666	+50
Number of posts	114	+10.6%
Post impressions*	73,100	+99.1%
Engagement – reactions, comments, likes and shares	831	+52.1%

*Facebook and Twitter use different terminology to track similar figures. In using 'Reach', Facebook are telling us the number of **unique people** that saw at least one of our posts. In using 'Impressions', Twitter is telling us the number of times our tweets were seen overall.

Member request – Members recently asked to see the gender and age break down of our Facebook page. The below graph demonstrates this.



HR Team update

Following the successful recruitment of a new HR Manager at the end of February 2023 the HR team have been working on a number of projects/areas of work.

People Strategy

Our People Strategy sets out our ambitions and strategic direction for transforming our workforce and is aligned with our new vision and corporate strategies to ensure a consistent and integrated approach.

The People Strategy recognises the critical role that a motivated, skilled, and capable workforce plays in every aspect of service delivery and continuous improvement.

It is built around 4 key strategies over the next 3 years.

- Employer of Choice
- Developing our People
- Engaging our People



Rewarding and recognising performance

These are underpinned by two themes for supporting our people; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the wellbeing of our employees.

The People Strategy was sent out for consultation with all employees and was also sent to Trade Unions. Officers will present this to the Policy, Finance and Development Committee in September.

Occupational Health Provider

After a joint tender exercise with Leicestershire County Council and other local District/Borough Council we have appointed a new Occupational Health provider from 1 May 2023. It will also give our employees access to regularly updated health & wellbeing information.

This will offer a better service alongside better value for money.

HR Management Information

Headcount, Leavers & Staff Turnover

Quarterly Comparison Current Year 2023/24 Actual Headcount as at end of Q1 (30.6.23)			Quarterly Comparison Q1 2022/23 Actual Headcount as at end of Q1 (30.6.22)	
Headcount	Full Number	FTE	Full Number	FTE
Number of Permanent/Fixed Term Staff	186	178.02	176	168.18
Number of Temporary Staff (Agency Workers)	6	6*	14	14
Total	192	184.02	190	182.18

*The temporary staff as at 30.6.23 are in the Housing, Planning, Revenue & Benefits and IT department. The Council are using agency staff, but minimally. This is due to market shortages relating to specific skills.

Leavers (Permanent/Fixed Term Employees) Yearly comparison		
Teams	2022/23	2021/22
Clean & Green	0	1
Communications & Marketing	0	1
Community & Wellbeing*	5	4
Corporate Assets	1	1



Customer Services	3	2
Economic Regeneration	2	1
Finance	1	3
Health & Safety	0	1
Housing	2	2
HR	1	2
IT, Projects & Procurement	3	0
Legal & Democratic Services	2	2
Planning Policy & Development	2	4
Regulatory Services	0	1
Revenue & Benefits	2	5
Waste Services	5	2

*In Community & Wellbeing typically the majority of these positions are grant funded and this is awarded on a 12 month contract.

As you will see from the table below staff turnover has decreased. We are now in line with the sector average.

Staff Turnover - Yearly comparison		
	2022/23	2021/22
Average Head Count for the period	178	171
Number of Leavers	29	32
Staff Turnover	16.29%	18.71%

LAW AND DEMOCRACY UPDATE

Regulatory Services

Environmental Health

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) advised that all Local Authorities are no longer required to follow their post covid recovery plan. Last year we received positive reviews and progress achieving all the measures set. We continue to programme inspections of the high-risk food inspections for the year and during Q1, 29 inspections took place. At the same time, during Q1, we caught up with some of the backlog of lower-risk premises and this will continue throughout the year with nearly 170 required.

The Food Safety Plan for 2023/24 was presented to members of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on 22 June 2023 and this sets out our approach around interventions, provision of advice, the handling of food complaints, food poisoning outbreaks and how we promote key messages to our businesses. We will also reintroduce a food sampling programme borough-wide during Q2.

Compliance rates are overall still good with 90% achieving satisfactory or higher. Focus, as always, is on the poorer performers and any new businesses that have been triaged.



In 2023/24, Q2, Q3 and Q4 we will undertake a duty of care campaign to support our smaller businesses and ensure they can comply with the waste requirements.

A project will also commence in Q2 to look at gas safety within catering businesses.

Day-to-day work was busy and wide ranging with a number of welfare burials to process, fly tips to investigate and service requests to investigate. The Midland Mainline electrification project continues and we have received information now on work proposed to the bridges along the line situated within the borough.

The Council will take part in two countywide campaigns during 2023/24 with the aim to raise awareness of fly tipping and litter, including the impact and cost.

An Apprentice Regulatory Compliance Officer based in the Environmental Health team was successfully recruited and will start work in Q2.

The Blaby Road air quality project run jointly with Public Health, Leicestershire County Council, GPs, CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) the South Leicestershire School Sport Partnership and the Respiratory Working Group has been finalised. This will deliver a number of interventions across the school year and involve the collection of more real time particulate data. The team are now taking part in the Children and Young People Respiratory Working Group led by the NHS. The additional measurement device will be installed in Q2. This work stream will now be recognised as a key part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) revisions and update.

The annual status report on air quality is due in June 2023 and this will be submitted to Defra for approval. This will provide a review and assessment of air quality within our borough.

Private Sector Housing

The team dealt with 80 housing related cases including empty homes, houses in multiple occupation, filthy and verminous properties, tenancy issues and housing disrepair.

Further details regarding houses in multiple occupation will be available in Q2.

Energy Grants Projects

The Local Authority Delivery (LAD) programme and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) (for off gas properties) delivery highlights are below. These programmes are designed to fund energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall insulation, loft insulation, solar panels and external wall insulation for households who are on low income.

Project	Funding Awarded	Narrative	Suitable Properties	Number of properties	Number of measures	Status
LAD2	£305,200	£100,000 underspend due to rising cost of material	Private with mains gas	21	26	Closed



		post pandemic				
LAD3	£528,000	Due to successful delivery £327,000 funding secured from consortium underspend	As LAD2	45	77	Ongoing until Sept 2023
Better care fund	£150,000	Funding from Lightbulb to spend along with LAD3	Used with both on and off gas properties	18	20	Until funding exhausted/closure of LAD3 and HUG1
HUG1	£55,000	£6,500 underspend	Private without gas (owned or rented)	4	5	Closure in progress
HUG2	£335,000	Awaiting approval of submitted project plan	As HUG1	TBC	TBC	Awaiting approval
Social Housing decarbonisation fund	£579,500	Awaiting formal award confirmation	Council owned stock	128 forecast	TBC	Awaiting approval

The Grant Funding Co-Ordinator and the Private Sector Housing team continue to search for further funding opportunities for the authority.

Selective Licensing update

Q4	Licenses issued	Income
Number of rented properties - 822	Pending – 112	£601,864
Number of applications received - 822	Issued – 685	
Number of Exemptions – 3 Number of empty properties – 12	Withdrawn – 32	



Enforcement activity continues with 39 notices of intent served. Of these 18 are now being progressed where we are either investigating or considering further enforcement action.

Empty Homes

The last annual submission by the Council stated there were 132 empty homes within the borough. The private sector housing team have managed to engage with owners of 70 such homes and this number has reduced overall to approximately 63.

Alternatives such as leasing the property to the Council are discussed with empty property home owners to create additional housing for minimal cost to the Council and bringing the home back into use.

Licensing

Work to improve our systems commenced in Q1 and along with other changes planned during 2023/24 will ensure we can offer a service which ensures all businesses are licenced and regulated appropriately.

A review of all our premises licenses is ongoing to ensure they all up to date and appropriate payments are being made. This will be followed by a review of all our hairdressers and barbers.

DBS checks for existing drivers and operators are now delivered on our behalf and during Q2 this will extend to new drivers and operators. A new style of competency test for drivers (using smartphones) has been introduced which means we can handle up to 40 applicants per month and the processing time has been reduced by four hours.

A taxi driver has been refused a licence due to a criminal conviction and has appealed to the magistrates court. A further driver appealed against removal of licence due to poor behaviour and the appeal was successfully defended.

Q1 licenses processed

New and renewal vehicles	166
New and renewal drivers	70
Street collections	3
House to house	9
Animal welfare	5
Licensing Act	42

Enforcement work

20 investigations carried out which have led to points being placed on a drivers taxi combined licence. 8 PACE interviews completed.

Community Lottery

The Comms & Marketing Team has been engaging a number of methods and channels to recruit good causes to our community lottery, and then also to sell tickets to the public.

This campaign has been running since early June 2023 and ramping up in pace, and includes the following engagement and communication;

- A digital good cause launch event attended by around 15 representatives of local good causes



- Multiple emails direct to our contact list of good causes, including community groups, sports club, voluntary organisations and charities
- Personalised emails from Comms Manager to key community group/voluntary organisation targets
- Social media posts on Facebook and Twitter targeting both good causes and ticket buyers
- A press release which features on the council's website, and received coverage from the Leicester Mercury – including on the Mercury's own Facebook page
- Multiple GovDelivery emails to subscribers targeting both community groups (for good cause recruitment) and the wider public (for tickets sales)
- Visuals on our new town centre screens
- Information on the council's website, including a prominent banner appearing across all webpages
- Bulletin information and emails to staff and members to encourage message sharing and promotion of the lottery (and purchasing tickets)
- Targeted sports club contact through Mary Abbott in our customer services team.
- 'Get to know your dashboard' digital event for good causes.

Currently there are 13 good causes signed up and the first lottery draw took place on 5 August 2023 when 470 tickets were sold raising £14,695 per year for good causes. This is in line with predictions for our area.

Corporate Assets

Corporate Assets (CA) has had multiple demands on its resources in period Q1.

CA received 397 enquiries through the DASH system. Numerous further enquiries came directly to the CA team through calls and other communications through regular channels. In addition the routine FOIs, complaints, requests and members enquiries were also received. DASH (and other enquiries) are currently flagging up many land ownership searches and concerns. A member of the team has now been trained to undertake land register searches on behalf of CA.

There was significant input from the team into the office move to Brocks Hill, from both the property management, building compliance and Health and Safety implications and handover and coordination of the grounds and other related works to support the move, as well as supporting and ensuring security in the closing down of Bushloe House and transferring utilities and other aspects.

Property-related general and one-off maintenance was ongoing as usual.

In addition the operational, management and support teams have supported the borough's entry to both the regional East Midlands in Bloom and the national Britain in Bloom competition on behalf of OWBC inputs.

The Clean & Green operational team was running below optimal staffing levels with two vacancies which have now been recruited to, and the two new Grounds and Clean team members have completed their inductions and joined the teams in their substantive



roles. This will minimise the need for the cleansing roles to be covered by Green team members, along with capacity to provide an adequate level of maintenance on the grounds element of the service.

The Sweeper Operator role was vacant throughout the period due to long-term sickness. The role eventually became vacant due to the incumbent's retirement and permission has been obtained to recruit to the post. As a result of the long-term sickness, the sweeper was off the road for much of the time since July 2022 having only operated for approximately six weeks during that period. The new Clean team member of staff has been trained to operate the sweeper when operational pressures permit.

A significant input of resource from the Clean & Green team was required to underpin the borough's entries into the 'In Bloom' competitions and during the two separate judging periods. Further additional resource was also required due to LCC not undertaking their commitment to highway works such as the highway/pavement weed spraying.

The Clean & Green team supervisor has unexpectedly been away from the role for much of June.

The Cemetery Officer completed their induction and subsequently took over the lead on the cemeteries and the allotment service. The allotment invoicing and other paperwork was reviewed in the period to bring it up to date following the departure of the previous employee in December.

The Cemeteries service Sexton took his retirement at the end of April with the role recruited to by the in-post Cemetery Assistant. The Cemetery Assistant role was advertised and successfully recruited to – with the team running on one core member of staff (Sexton) for around six weeks prior to the new Cemetery Assistant starting in the role. Support was given from within the Clean & Green team during this period.

Cemetery maintenance has been under increased scrutiny this year, particularly on the grounds maintenance grass cutting side where the frequency has invariably been the same as previous years, but the growth rate of the grass itself has increased due to the warm wet weather and not slowed as would be usual in the early to mid-summer months.

Parking has absorbed additional work for the ongoing implementation of the staff permit arrangements for Brocks Hill.

The weather has impacted many operations this year, and the constant ideal growing conditions has meant no slowdown in the rate of the grass and shrub growth – this being particularly evident where the Clean & Green team juggle the demand on the resource with parks and public and housing land maintenance together with the ongoing demands to deliver for the 'In Bloom' preparations and also the Brocks Hill office grounds.

All operational staff have completed a comprehensive, bespoke range of mandatory competence training to ensure service compliance in the operational areas they work in.

Community and Wellbeing Leisure Services



Q1 has seen the continued trend in reduced numbers on mainline activities such as swimming and fitness sessions and in member numbers, with the main issues raised by Everyone Active continuing to be car parking charges and membership rates compared to the GYM Group in Oadby who opened last year and offer a budget gym experience along with free parking.

Everyone Active continue to deliver on a wide range of facilities and activities and continue to develop this with the Active Communities Manager appointed late last year who is starting to deliver more community offerings providing for more activities, and one that is tailored to delivering on the Councils health and wellbeing strategies and initiatives.

Review:

An average of 54,080 per month attended the leisure centres during the quarter, where, compared to the previous year the average attendance was over 58,300 customers per month. This trend has continued from the previous quarter where it was reported that there was a downward turn of over 11,000 users like-for-like on the previous year.

Membership Numbers:

Fitness and Health Membership numbers have dropped by over 300 through the year like-

Description	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Total	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Total	Variance
Swimming	27,390	30,387	29,740	87,517	24,062	30,227	30,563	84,852	-2,665
Gym/Fitness Classes	23,094	28,089	26,775	77,958	20,420	22,801	20,845	64,066	-13,892
Sports/Activities	2,602	3,691	3,205	9,498	5,044	4,248	4,031	13,323	3,825
Activity Total	53,086	62,167	59,720	174,973	49,526	57,276	55,439	162,241	-12,732
Spectators	12,004	12,146	12,018	36,168	12,417	12,877	12,362	37,656	1,488
Grand Total	65,362	74,469	71,894	211,141	61,943	70,153	67,801	199,897	-11,244

Membership	Apr	May	Jun	Total	Apr	May	Jun	Total	Variance
Gym	4,717	4,717	4,702	4,712	4,392	4,355	4,386	4,378	-334
Swim Lessons	2,699	2,851	2,876	2,809	2,756	2,779	2,967	2,834	25
Total	7,416	7,568	7,578	7,521	7,148	7,134	7,353	7,212	-309

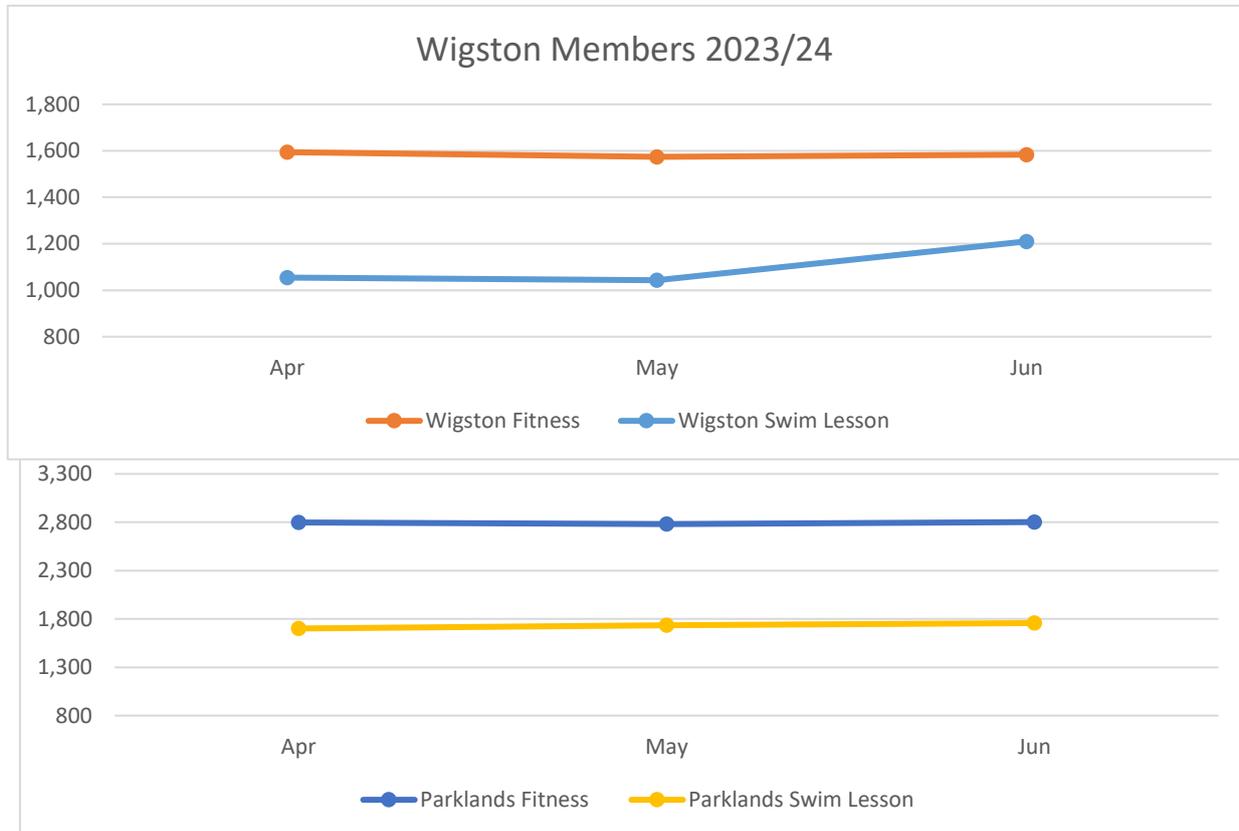
for-like on June 2022, however this is across the contract and Parklands has lost over 450 members against a growth of 150 at Wigston. This being attributed to the refurbishment programme and the lower price point there.

Everyone Active has noted an increase in swimming lesson provision at the centres as they continue the follow up post-Covid, where a generation of children were not afforded the opportunity to learn to swim and parents attempt to catch up with delivering on this life skill.



Membership numbers are dropping, particularly at Parklands, despite maintaining the price point throughout the year which is a contrast to the other Everyone Active contracts in Leicestershire which have all showed continued growth post COVID-19.

Wigston: Total Members:



Community Wellbeing:

The leisure centres have been very busy with increases across the board in all health and wellbeing categories, hitting targeted groups from young people to ageing adults and people with health inequality issues.

Targeted Groups	2021-22	2022-23	Increase	% Increase
Exercise Referral	3,370	3,990	620	18%
Children and Young People	22,202	34,311	12,109	55%
Community	450	1,453	1,003	223%
Older Adults	3,812	5,507	1,695	44%
Reducing Health Inequalities	0	0	0	0%
Total	29,834	45,261	15,427	52%

This is on top of the below activities they deliver for free in the local community.



- Free weekly children's soft play sessions for the Memphies Charity Group.
- Free Family Activity Sessions in partnership with Children's and Family Well Being Service and OWBC
- Free coffee for VASL Carers
- Free memberships for care leavers (2 participants referred)
- Free memberships for PARS
- Free memberships for Ukrainian refugees, with over 50 free memberships distributed
- Free Memberships for Parkinson's sufferers and their carers, with over 40 free memberships provided for
- Free swimming sessions for disabled swimmers (just over 800 over the quarter and shy of 2000 for the year).

Everyone Active has provided over £15,000 of free activities including the above and it is pleasing they are able to offer these activities/memberships at small to no cost across to the community as they identify the value that this brings to increase health and wellbeing benefits.

General:

Everyone Active continued to be pleased with the centres delivering a vital community role in engaging with many thousands of people throughout the year but note as in previous reports that from history that they could be a lot busier.

We then couple the declining usage with increased costs to operate, particularly utility costs which have risen some 50% in the last year and increased employee costs with the minimum wage increasing by over 9%.

However as noted previously a significant investment into the Wigston gym refurbishment programme, which included a full decoration and complete equipment replacement, in November 2022 at a cost of over ¼ £Million has been able to halt the trend of decline and encourage users to continue their membership in a number of cases.

Health and Wellbeing

Q1 saw the new venture with Blaby District Council leading on sports, physical activity, health and wellbeing in our borough.

Partners at Blaby have used Q1 to build relationships with health colleagues across the Primary Care Network, including GP leads, social prescribing teams, VCS groups as well as Oadby and Wigston Council teams including Selective Licencing, Community Safety, Communications, Planning and Environmental Health. Introductions have also begun with partners in the Integrated Care Board and Leicestershire County Council Public Health to determine the needs and priorities across the Borough.

Initial conversations have taken place with key partners regarding the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan for Oadby & Wigston, with the first meeting having taken place at the end of June. Further meetings for Q2 have been scheduled along with a health consultation



towards the end of the year. These future meeting will provide the opportunity for health priorities to be discussed with a wide range of professionals.

The future meetings and health consultation will then lead to the Health & Wellbeing Plan Draft being projected to be ready for end of March 2024. A health inequalities profile pack was compiled, highlighting areas of concern across the borough. This data set will be used to inform the Health & Wellbeing Plan alongside the consultation event.

A Neighbourhood Mental Health Lead was introduced into post who is assembling a Mental Health Network for professionals working across the borough moving into the next quarter to drive priorities for residents with mental health needs.

Onboarding the Oadby & Wigston Sport & Physical Activity Commissioning into Blaby District Council's Active Blaby team has been very successful. There have been no resident queries regarding any changes to services or how to access the service. All plans have been fully integrated with the Active Oadby & Wigston social media channels being retained, but access to services and staff are being made through the Active Blaby website.

Work has been undertaken to make aware and integrate the physical activity service with local partners, such as the Primary Care Network, Integrated Neighbourhood team, Leisure providers and local community groups and services. Once the service is ready to receive an uplift in demand, a promotional campaign of the new service will take place. Work has been going on behind the scenes to link the existing systems together.

The team have received **142** referrals to programmes from residents and all programmes have continued, such as walking sports (hockey, netball and football), walks programmes, Exercise Referral, Steady Steps and Steady Steps Plus amongst others.

Seated Exercise at the Freer Centre has been split into two groups due to the increase in demand and the new Rounders programme on Blaby Road Park has been a huge success with **32** residents on the register (**52** altogether), although attendance has been restricted by the inclement weather. The team have been working with the Children and Family Wellbeing Service to plan and promote four family events during the school summer holidays in Q2 at the Peace Memorial Park.

More data on the service will become available from next quarter as we receive data from participants at both the beginning and the end of programmes to assess the impact.

Youth Engagement

Youth Engagement continues to be a difficult workstream which remains in line with the County and National Pictures. Positive changes are occurring within this remit however as schools, individual young people, and some community groups are beginning to tentatively enquire about available funding and opportunities within the borough. This has included a small cohort of young people enquiring about the borough's Youth Council prior to May's elections.

In multiple instances the contact regarding youth engagement in the borough has directly resulted from the work of the Council's Youth Engagement Activator in South Wigston High School. The Youth Engagement Activator has continued work in the school, engaging with students identified who would benefit from support and provision. Boxing classes have continued throughout Q1 where participating students have shown signs of improved



confidence levels, behaviour and attendance. This work will continue into Q2 until the end of the school academic year.

Leicestershire County Council's IMPACT Team have hosted football sessions for young people on Blaby Road Park on Thursday evenings each week to offer positive diversionary activities. Feedback thus far is that attendance has been positive with the young people enjoying the activity. The IMPACT workers will also be promoting basketball sessions by Leicester Riders to those in attendance which is to be commissioned by the Council on Blaby Road Park. This hopes to continue the positive engagement into Q2 and the school summer holidays diverting young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Additional elements to the Draft Youth Engagement Strategy are also being looked into before it is submitted to Committee. These are in reference to the Serious Violence Duty the Community Safety Partnership has a statutory responsibility to deliver against, and its interaction with County-level datasets concerning young people as perpetrators or victims of serious violence.

Community Safety

For 2023-24 the OPCC has made an increased budget of £32,554.58 available for the Community Safety Partnership. As stated in the 2022-23 Q4 update this budget will remain with the OPCC with the Partnership required to submit 'bids' to them for funding for proposed projects. Elements of this funding have already been earmarked for projects concerning speeding vehicles, personal and property safety, mental health work as a component of youth diversionary activities, and a series of planned community events involving multiple partner agencies. Bids for these projects are currently being developed with partners for submission to the OPCC.

At the completion of data analysis for the 2022-23 Community Safety Survey a total of **161 responses** were accepted into the final dataset.

A large number of responses received were required to be rejected due to being 'spam' or otherwise fraudulent responses associated with the prize draw element of the survey.

As a summary of the survey's findings at this stage;

- The feeling of a sense of community in the borough has decreased overall, and there is a perceived increase in the level of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The number of residents concerned about crime, anti-social behaviour, or community safety in the borough has increased, and residents overall feel less safe when in the borough.
- Dissatisfaction with how crime and anti-social behaviour is handled in the borough has increased.
- The top three crime, anti-social behaviour, and community safety concerns in the borough are;
 - Littering and Fly-Tipping
 - Motor Vehicle and Traffic Concerns



- Burglaries and Distraction Thefts

Anti-Social Behaviour

The ASB Officer has logged and investigated **21** reports of ASB in Q1, please see chart below for monthly breakdown:

Q1		
Number of ASB logged/investigated by ASB Officer: 21		
Number of incidents per month		
April 23	May 23	June 23
5	6	10

Of these 21 ASB reports, issues remained that of a wide range. Most common reports included 'Noisy neighbours', 'Shouting and swearing', 'Taking drugs' and 'Games in inappropriate/restricted area'. Reports also included 'Hooliganism', 'Presence of dealers and users' and 'Verbal abuse'.

Investigations into each report lead to:

- **5** perpetrators being identified
- **1** perpetrator after investigations took place received no further action due to vulnerabilities and further work was completed with Social Services
- **4** perpetrators received words of advice

The ASB Officer has also been working in partnership with Leicestershire Police who have been leading on a case which involved ASB in Wigston town centre caused by young individuals of school age. Staff members working in shops including Sainsbury's and McDonalds have been verbally abused, hoax emergency calls have been made to police and the young people have been causing a general nuisance.

During the investigation, **13** young males and females have been identified. Most of the young individuals were not known to the police or council and have been given the relevant advice in company with parents or guardians.

1 young person due to repeated issues has signed an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) which lists conditions for the young person to abide to. This as well as accepting a referral to receive support from a Youth Worker from the Children and Family Wellbeing Service. There have been regular reviews taking place while the young person has been on the ABC that will continue into Q2.

As well as the above, a referral has been made to the IMPACT Team to engage with young people present in Wigston town centre. Updates are being shared at a Joint Action Group (JAG) level monthly for this case as well as others.

The Council's Housing Department continue to log ASB on the Sentinel system, please see chart below for monthly breakdown:

Q1		
Number of ASB logged on Sentinel by Housing Department : 1		
Number of report logged per month		
April 23	May 23	July 23



0	1	0
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The Council therefore in Q1 have recorded and investigated **22** reports of ASB, please see chart below for number per area breakdown:

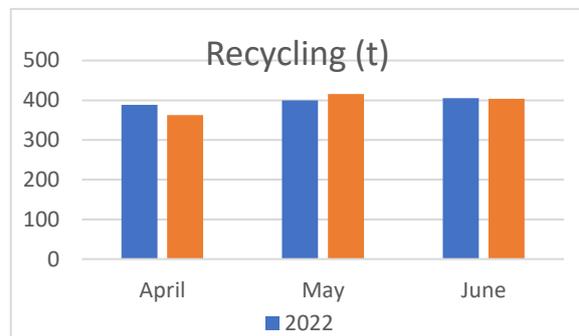
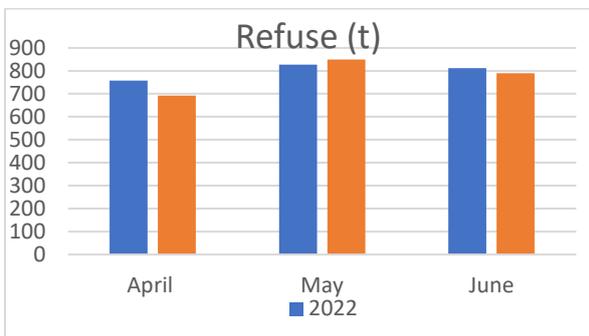
Q1 Total number of ASB reports: 22		
Oadby	South Wigston	Wigston
13	6	3

Refuse and Recycling

In Q1 2023 there has been an overall reduction of 63.3 tonnes in the refuse collected, this is a 2.64% reduction compared to Q1 2022.

For the recycling tonnages, there has also been a reduction of 10.36 tonnes in Q1 2023 compared to Q1 2022. This translates to a 0.87% reduction of recycling collected between these periods.

For the green waste collected there was an increase of 183.12 tonnes in Q1 2023 compared to the Q1 2022, which equates to a 20.48% increase.



The chart below shows the breakdown of tonnage of the total waste collected per month

Waste Type	April	May	June
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	Weight (t)	%	Weight (t)	%	Weight (t)	%
Green Waste	243.42	18.04%	463.20	25.74%	370.84	23.02%
Recycling	363	26.91%	415.80	23.11%	403.62	25.05%
Refuse	692.98	51.36%	849.90	47.24%	790.06	49.04%