

To Members of the Scrutiny of the Administration's Budget Proposals

Cllr. Geoff Welsh (Chairman)
Cllr. Roy Denney (Vice Chairman – Scrutiny Commissioner)
Cllr. Sam Maxwell (Vice Chairman – Scrutiny Commissioner)

Cllr. Shabbir Aslam
Cllr. Shane Blackwell
Cllr. Lee Breckon
Cllr. Nick Brown
Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore
Cllr. Nick Chapman
Cllr. David Clements
Cllr. Adrian Clifford
Cllr. Stuart Coar
Cllr. Alex DeWinter

Cllr. David Findlay
Cllr. Janet Forey
Cllr. David Freer
Cllr. Deanne Freer
Cllr. Chris Frost
Cllr. Paul Hartshorn
Cllr. Iain Hewson
Cllr. Mark Jackson
Cllr. Trevor Matthews
Cllr. Christine Merrill

Cllr. Phil Moitt
Cllr. Mat Mortel
Cllr. Antony Moseley
Cllr. Michael O'Hare
Cllr. Louise Richardson
Cllr. Tracey Shepherd
Cllr. Mike Shirley
Cllr. Kirsteen Thomson
Cllr. Bev Welsh
Cllr. Jane Wolfe

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **SCRUTINY OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S BUDGET PROPOSALS** will be held in the via Zoom on **WEDNESDAY, 12 JANUARY 2022 at 5.30 p.m.** Please find attached a number of supplemental items that are required for the meeting and are in addition to the agenda and report pack that has already been circulated.

Yours faithfully



Louisa Horton
Monitoring Officer



SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

2. Budget Context Setting and Overview (Pages 3 - 10)

To consider the report of the Strategic Director (Section 151 Officer) (enclosed).

3. 2022-2023 Draft Portfolio Budget Proposals (to follow) (Pages 11 - 108)

a) To consider the proposed 2022-23 budget and spending plans for each Portfolio area.

b) Prepare lines of questioning for a written response from Portfolio Holders in advance of the next Scrutiny Budget meeting on Wednesday 19 January 2022.

SCHEDULE OF EXTERNAL FUNDING**Budget 2021/22**

Portfolio	Description	2021/22	Notes
<u>Health & Wellbeing, Community Engagement & Business Support</u>			
Leicestershire County Council	Hospital Housing Enabler Service	£110,000)	
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	Hospital Housing Enabler Service	£82,000)	- Confirmed funding.
NHS Leicester City CCG	Hospital Housing Enabler Service	£164,000)	
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	Mental Health Rehabilitation Programme	£43,122	Covering the period 1st August 2021 to 31st March 2022.
Leicestershire County Council	Lightbulb DFG Admin contribution	£21,400	To compensate for the cost of an additional administrative post.
Leicestershire County Council	Contributions towards Lightbulb Central Hub	£113,795)	
District Councils	Contributions towards Lightbulb Central Hub	£114,883)	_ Based on budgeted establishment and subject to year end review.
Leicestershire County Council	Lightbulb Locality Contributions	£276,435)	
District Councils	Lightbulb Locality Contributions	£271,979)	
Leicestershire County Council	Housing Occupational Therapist project	£67,000	Top sliced funding from DFG allocations agreed by Better Care Fund.
Leicestershire County Council	LCC Occupational Therapist project	£64,200	Top sliced funding from DFG allocations agreed by Better Care Fund.
Leicestershire County Council	Assisted Technology & Dementia Pilot	£331,500	Top sliced funding from DFG allocations agreed by Better Care Fund.
Leicestershire County Council	LRS Commissioning	£73,074	Confirmed funding.
Leicestershire County Council	Graduate Programme	£9,578	Confirmed funding.
Sport England	Graduate Programme	£11,800	Confirmed funding.
Other Leicestershire District Councils	Building Control Partnership	£490,840	Likely to be higher due to addition of Rutland.
DEFRA	Air Quality funding	£139,300	£55,000 for Active Travel.
Leicestershire County Council	Active Families Year 4	£4,589)	_ Funding for Positive Activity Referral Scheme.
Leicestershire County Council	Youth Engagement Activator	£10,000)	
Department for Works & Pensions	Kickstart Scheme	£51,083	Funded up to 30th September 2021.
<u>Housing, Community & Environmental Services</u>			
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	Children's Support	£26,700	HBBC currently pay for 0.61 FTE.
EMH Housing	Floating Support Contribution	£20,000	£5,000 per quarter - confirmed up to 31st December 2021.
Department for Health & Social Care	Contain funding	£106,292	For projects in support of stopping the spread of COVID-19
Leicestershire County Council	Contain funding	£239,000	For projects in support of stopping the spread of COVID-19
MHCLG	Homelessness funding	£137,378	Including £5,000 for Rough Sleeping Initiative.
MHCLG	Support for victims of Domestic Abuse	£33,291	Funding joint Housing post with HBBC.
Department for Health & Social Care	COVID-19 Self Isolation funding	£334,156	Funding for £500 grants as part of Test and Trace initiative.
BEIS	Various Business Grant streams	£5,980,080	Only Additional Restrictions Grant scheme remains live.
BEIS	New Burdens Funding	£166,800	To recognise additional responsibilities in relation to Business Grants.
BEIS (via Nottingham City Council)	Local Authority Delivery Scheme (LAD2)	£132,435	For energy efficiency measures in poorly insulated properties.
<u>Leader</u>			
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	Contribution towards EIR costs	£22,314	
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	Contribution towards EIR costs	£8,347	Recovery of statutory costs associated with the provision of personal search responses which are not permitted to be charged to customers.
<u>Neighbourhood Services & Assets</u>			

Various Developers S106 Commuted Maintenance contributions £20,114 To offset the annual cost of maintaining transferred open spaces.

Planning Delivery & Enforcement & Corporate Transformation

Tritex Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited Planning Performance Agreement £26,225 Hinckley National Rail Freight Hub
Drummond Estate S106 Monitoring Contribution £53,152 Lubbethorpe development - used to offset salary costs.

£9,756,862

SCHEDULE OF EXTERNAL FUNDING

Current Position 2022/23

Portfolio	Description	2022/23	Notes
<u>Health & Wellbeing, Community Engagement & Business Support</u>			
Leicestershire County Council	Hospital Housing Enabler Service	£114,000)	
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	Hospital Housing Enabler Service	£84,000)	- From Business Plan.
NHS Leicester City CCG	Hospital Housing Enabler Service	£169,000)	
Leicestershire County Council	Lightbulb DFG Admin contribution	£22,100	To compensate for the cost of an additional administrative post.
Leicestershire County Council	Contributions towards Lightbulb Central Hub	£115,335)	
District Councils	Contributions towards Lightbulb Central Hub	£116,437)	Based on budgeted establishment and subject to year end review.
Leicestershire County Council	Lightbulb Locality Contributions	£272,874)	
District Councils	Lightbulb Locality Contributions	£285,759)	
Leicestershire County Council	Housing Occupational Therapist project	£43,365	Top sliced funding from DFG allocations agreed by Better Care Fund.
Leicestershire County Council	Assisted Technology & Dementia Pilot	£32,515	Top sliced funding from DFG allocations agreed by Better Care Fund.
Leicestershire County Council	LRS Commissioning	£0	Funding not yet confirmed.
Leicestershire County Council	Graduate Programme	£16,422	Confirmed funding.
Other Leicestershire District Councils	Building Control Partnership	£99,313	Based on business case for delegation model.
Leicestershire County Council	Active Families Year 4	£0	Funding not yet confirmed.
Leicestershire County Council	Youth Engagement Activator	£0	Funding not yet confirmed.
<u>Housing, Community & Environmental Services</u>			
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	Children's Support	£27,600	HBBC currently pay for 0.61 FTE.
EMH Housing	Floating Support Contribution	£0	Not included in budget but no indication that funding won't continue.
Leicestershire County Council	Contain funding	£16,700	For projects in support of stopping the spread of COVID-19
MHCLG	Homelessness funding	£132,378	Confirmed funding for 2022/23.

MHCLG Department for Health & Social Care	Support for victims of Domestic Abuse COVID-19 Self Isolation funding	£4,583 New Burdens funding recently confirmed. £334,156 Funding for £500 grants as part of Test and Trace initiative.
<u>Leader</u>		
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	Contribution towards EIR costs Contribution towards EIR costs	£22,314 Recovery of statutory costs associated with the provision of personal £8,347 search responses which are not permitted to be charged to customers.
<u>Neighbourhood Services & Assets</u>		
Various Developers	S106 Commuted Maintenance contributions	£20,114 To offset the annual cost of maintaining transferred open spaces.
<u>Planning Delivery & Enforcement & Corporate Transformation</u>		
Tritex Symmetry (Hinckley) Limited	Planning Performance Agreement	£26,000 Hinckley National Rail Freight Hub
		<u>£1,963,312</u>

This page is intentionally left blank

ICT Briefing Note – 2022/23 Budget Scrutiny

Background

In December 2010 Blaby DC delegated responsibility for the ICT service to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) who outsourced the delivery to Steria. In 2016 the contract was retendered and after a difficult process was awarded to Sopra Steria for a period of 5 years. The contract with Sopra Steria ceased to exist from 31 December 2021 and the service was brought back in house for HBBC to manage directly.

Melton, Oadby & Wigston and Blaby DC had delegated their ICT service to HBBC and a partnership called Leicestershire Information Communication Technology Partnership (LICTP) was formed (not a legal Partnership). Oadby & Wigston have since decided and have now left the partnership.

In December 2020 Melton took a report to their cabinet setting out options and finances to gain approval to continue with the delegation but with HBBC delivering the service directly. In January 2021 HBBC took a report through their governance processes requesting the service be brought back in house detailing costs and options for the inhouse service. The Monitoring Officer at the time advised it was not necessary to take a report through Council outlining the insourcing arrangement and financial implications due to delegations and budget processes already in place.

The insourced delivery model was supported by an options appraisal exercise which identified this as the best way forward for member Councils of the current partnership. The rationale for this model is that it is affordable, is straightforward to understand, will bring back more control to the partners, will enable partners to build better resilience than through any go it alone option and will allow a much greater degree of innovation and focus on the digital strategy. In addition, a review undertaken by SOCITM (Society for Innovation, Technology and Modernisation) in 2018 highlighted the lack of market interest should the partnership wish to consider continuing to outsource the service.

Current position

The contract with Sopra Steria came back in house to HBBC on the 1st January 2022 which means that HBBC now have the direct responsibility for providing our ICT service. Blaby sits on the partnerships Executive Board through the Strategic Director and on the Strategic Board through the Interim Communications and ICT Manager. The insourcing has been completed with software purchased, staff TUPE'd and the new ICT service arrangements now underway.

Financial Position

Due to the insourcing the basis of the financial arrangement has been revisited and the contract costs for Blaby from 2022/23 will increase to £505,000 a year (which includes web services). This is due to an agreement made at the Executive Board to apportion the costs based on the active directory/active users. It appears that Blaby have been paying less per active user than the other authorities for a number of years.

Although the new contract results in an increase of around £92,000 in 2022/23, compared with the 2021/22 Approved Budget, savings have been found within the separate Supplies and Services ICT budget which means that there will be no increase in the overall ICT budget costs for 2022/23. These costs have been included within the proposed budgets for scrutiny as they are normally agreed as part of the normal budget setting process every year.

The increased pro-rata costs for the remainder of 2021/22 (Jan-Mar) can also be accommodated within the 2021/22 ICT budgets.

For information the contract with HBBC states that to leave the delegated service a period of 12 months' notice is required to leave on 31st March in the following year. It is also worth noting that in the SOCITM report it stated that the new total cost for all 3 partner authorities of £1,371,000 is well below the lower quartile benchmark cost for 3 District Councils of around £4m.

The benefits of in-sourcing

A larger technical team, 3 Additional technical staff over current levels • 2 Business Systems Analysts (BSA's), Project Manager Hybrids • Dedicated Systems Engineer to work alongside the BSA's • Direct Team management with a flatter management structure • Our own Service Desk Management System tailored to partners needs • Our own SLA tailored to partners needs in the operating context • Our own Service designed for our needs and not a 3rd parties Outsourced Citrix Management • Outsourced network management • Journey to Windows 10 • Journey to Android • Technology roadmap • Our own Software Asset Management system • Overtime to ensure Out Of Hours work can continue

What can Blaby expect

The initial focus for HBBC and the ICT Partnership Manager has been the insourcing of the ICT service and setting up the new operating framework for the partnership (which included the off-boarding of OWBC). There is a lot of 'putting the house in order' work to be completed initially including Active-Active Data Centres, replacement LAN infrastructure and replacement WAN with Dynamic routing that will then allow the focus to be on the 'value added' ICT elements. Blaby can expect;

- A better skilled team, a larger team and more responsive
- A service centre that will aim for 1st time fix but staff upskilling required first
- Business system analysts that will use data to inform system developments
- A Cloud 1st approach but noting the trend is a hybrid for resilience and security
- A move to Office 365 and sharepoint/one drive rather than file share
- A consolidation of contracts for efficiencies and support
- The industry statistic is 40% of officer time is spent searching for information, the Partnership will look to reduce this by 10%

- LICTP will look to harmonise where possible and by default but will deliver Blaby DC specific solutions when required

Transforming Services (work has already taken place on the following)

Modern Workplace – future operating model is MS Teams, voice, video and chat. To follow - Office365 implementation in 2022, SharePoint and workflows to streamline business processes, promote ease of finding information and enabling staff to create solutions to their own business challenges in a flexible agile way

Productivity and Service – Data Centre replacement, LAN infrastructure projects taking place in early 2022. To follow - WAN replacement, Dynamic Routing, saleable Private Cloud capability

People and Development – training budget in place for development of staff and service offering, as well as on digital upskilling staff. To follow - Supporting councils with minimising Digital poverty, developing staff and community ICT skills

Security and Compliance – PSN compliance, Cyber Essentials, Artificial Intelligent Threat monitoring. To follow - PCI-DSS compliance, SOC (Security Operations Centre)

Digital Citizen Journey –Webchat and Chatbot development, Attend Anywhere (Lightbulb). To follow - build people and premises centric processes based on data and analytics, looking at linking complex needs across services and service areas.

Macro ICT – To follow - Smart bins, digital wayfaring, Autonomous vehicles, 5G, Fibre and connectivity infrastructure, supporting creative sectors outside of cities, creating Smart Towns by digitally connecting infrastructure (Edge technologies as they're described) also engaging a digital solutions architect to help partners navigate the future of technologies, such as IoT, smart buildings, autonomous service delivery by triggering engagement of service areas on data analytics, making sure we expend energies on those technologies that are most likely to be relevant to district and borough councils over the next decade.

Next Steps to be completed before 31 March 2022

- re-visit the benchmarking of ICT costs
- review the Active Users data to ensure validity
- ensure the draft SLA's reflect Blabys aspirations and separate out ICT infrastructure from Web Services and potentially Digital Services
- clarify web services delivery
- further review the supplies and services budget covering equipment, licences and various other items
- roadmap for transformation to be developed

Other items to note

Capital expenditure of £288,000 was approved at Council in November to purchase equipment to move all staff to Agile Working predominantly through the deployment of laptops. Equipment has now been ordered and will be rolled out early in 2022.

I suspect the budgets set by this Council over the next few years could prove to be the most crucial in its history.

A further one-year funding settlement still provides no clarity for the future, making it difficult to plan effectively, against the continued backdrop of uncertainty over our funding streams. That the Council is in a position to support this year's budget is a testimony not just to the decisions made by this Council but the way in which all officers have embraced the implementation of those decisions in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible. Again, I will continue to use all channels available to me to ensure that Central Government are aware of our needs and expectations with, as mentioned earlier, the issues facing us of a one-year settlement and the potential implications of the Environment Act being uppermost in that agenda.

Our residents and businesses must always be at the heart of what we do, and we will focus not just on those statutory services we must deliver, but also those other services, which truly add the greatest value.

Clearly the Council's trajectory has been set by the new Blaby District Plan which articulates those areas of greatest focus with need to meet our net carbon zero target by 2030 being paramount. In this respect the Blaby District Plan provides the roadmap, but it must continue to be a living document which fully reflects and prioritises the key issues at any point in time.

As a Council we need to return to setting an MTFs that reflects the priorities set within the Blaby District Plan and this will entail not shying away from the difficult decisions that this will inevitably be the result. As an example, the current 5-year capital programme is probably unsustainable unless we can either increase income and/or cut costs and all avenues will be explored continuously over the coming years.

Whilst we clearly face challenges on many fronts, I remain both optimistic and confident that we can meet these, if nothing else, our response to the pandemic has shown what this Council is capable of achieving and is something we all should be proud of. I continue to believe that few Councils are as effective and harmonious as Blaby and I am committed to making sure this does not change.

Within my own portfolio responsibilities, the notes attached to the budget below are self-explanatory.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Terry Richardson

Senior Officers: Chief Executive, Strategic Director (S151), Strategic Director, Democratic Services & Governance Manager, Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager.

Portfolio Total

	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
Leader - Total	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£1,138,811	£1,139,211	£1,159,407	£20,596 1.81%	£20,196 1.77%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£571,725	£672,092	£587,069	£15,344 2.68%	-£85,023 -12.65%
3. Direct Income	-£302,300	-£310,800	-£305,800	-£3,500 1.16%	£5,000 -1.61%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£1,408,236	£1,500,503	£1,440,676	£32,440 2.30%	-£59,827 -3.99%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	22.12	22.12	22.12	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Leader's portfolio includes establishment and running costs in respect of the Chief Executive, Directors, Health and Safety, Elections, Democratic Services and Governance, and Emergency Planning/Business Continuity.

The base budget for 2022/23 allows for a 2% pay award effective from 1st April 2022, although it should be noted that the 2021/22 pay award has yet to be agreed. This was also estimated at 2%. Contractual increments are incorporated where applicable and the 1.5% social care levy, announced by Government in September 2021, has been added to the employer's national insurance contribution rate. There is no increase in headcount built into the 2022/23 establishment budget.

The increase in other gross direct expenditure between approved and revised stage for 2021/22 is due to the carry forward of unspent budget provision from the previous financial year. This is a one-off increase that does not continue into 2022/23. The increase between 2021/22 Approved and the 2022/23 base budget is mainly in respect of the reinstatement of a £30,000 contribution to our Elections Reserve. The reserve is maintained in order to smooth the impact of District elections so that the cost does not fall in one financial year. The budget also allows for an increase in Blaby's contribution towards the Local Resilience Partnership, including a one-off provision to allow for the Council's business continuity plans and documents to be refreshed and updated. These are offset by a number of minor budget savings.

Land Charges fees represent the largest contributor to direct income, and this accounts for £247,000 of the total in the table above. Income has held up well, even through the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, and is expected to perform to a similar level in the next financial year. A further £31,000 is receivable from Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council as their contribution towards the Land Charges service provided to them by Blaby. There is a future risk of loss of income as a result of the proposed migration of part of the local land charges function to HM Land Registry but this is not expected to take effect until after 2022/23.

Overall, net direct expenditure is forecast to increase by £32,440 in 2022/23, compared with the approved budget for 2021/22. This represents a 2.3% increase which is largely due to the estimated pay award referred to above.

Chief Executive, Directors and Health & Safety

Chief Executive, Directors and Health & Safety	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£548,157	£548,157	£561,057	£12,900 2.35%	£12,900 2.35%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£17,477	£61,624	£15,817	-£1,660 -9.50%	-£45,807 -74.33%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£565,634	£609,781	£576,874	£11,240 1.99%	-£32,907 -5.40%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	6.43	6.43	6.43	0.00	0.00

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Revised estimate includes a non-reoccurring carry forward from 2020/21 to 2021/22 for provision of Brexit costs.
3. Not applicable
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change to headcount

Electoral Registration

Electoral Registration	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£91,806	£91,806	£87,207	-£4,599 -5.01%	-£4,599 -5.01%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£57,700	£104,090	£77,600	£19,900 34.49%	-£26,490 -25.45%
3. Direct Income	-£1,800	-£1,800	-£1,800	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£147,706	£194,096	£163,007	£15,301 10.36%	-£31,089 -16.02%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	2.67	2.67	2.67	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The revised estimate includes budget for the Local Election and a non re occurring carry forward from 2020/21 relating to the IER Grant funding.
3. Income for sale of register of electors.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change in headcount.

Democratic Services, Governance, Information Management and Legal Services

Democratic Services, Governance, Information Management & Legal Services	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£498,848	£499,248	£511,143	£12,295 2.46%	£11,895 2.38%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£462,700	£472,530	£454,900	-£7,800 -1.69%	-£17,630 -3.73%
3. Direct Income	-£300,500	-£309,000	-£304,000	-£3,500 1.16%	£5,000 -1.62%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£661,048	£662,778	£662,043	£995 0.15%	-£735 -0.11%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	13.02	13.02	13.02	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The revised budget includes unspent Transparency Grant funds carried forward from 2020/21.
3. Increase in the revised income budget is due to the provision of advice and assistance in relation to Freedom of Information requests and Information Governance support.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change in FTE.

Emergency Planning & Business Continuity

Emergency Planning & Business Continuity	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1.Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
2.Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£33,848	£33,848	£38,752	£4,904 14.49%	£4,904 14.49%
3.Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4.Net Direct Expenditure	£33,848	£33,848	£38,752	£4,904 14.49%	£4,904 14.49%
5.Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Reasons for Variances

1. No establishment costs associated with this service.
2. Proposed budget includes increase in contribution for Business Continuity Resilience Partnership.
3. Not applicable.
4. Net impact.
5. Not applicable.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

Generally the increase in expenditure is due to the estimated pay award, contractual increments where applicable and an increase in employers national insurance and pension contributions. There are areas of reduced expenditure due to the nature of expenditure being one off expenditure relating to specific election expenditure for example.

Portfolio Priorities

- To Lead the Council through a period of Recovery
- To oversee the delivery the Blaby District Plan
- To ensure the Council has robust arrangements in place for responding to emergencies and can fulfil its statutory obligations
- To ensure the Council has robust Health and Safety advisory capacity and arrangements in place for fulfilling its statutory obligations.
- To work with the LGA on the Peer Review in March 2021 and implement an action plan based on their recommendations.

Services

Chief Executive & Directors

Includes costs for the Chief Executive and Directors' budgets and in addition the costs for the PA team and Health and Safety Officer budgets.

Electoral Services

Includes costs for electoral registration and elections (national election/referenda, County and parish election expenses are recoverable).

Democratic Services, Governance, Information Management & Legal

Includes costs for the Democratic Services and Information Management budgets.

Emergency Planning

Includes the costs associated with the provision for Emergency Planning within the Authority, which is delivered across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Leader, Directors & SLT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the second year of delivery of the current Blaby District Plan, which will look to support the recovery of the District as we continue to deliver the priorities. <p><u>Electoral Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood plan referendum • Electoral Review • Community Governance Review <p><u>Emergency Planning/Business Continuity arrangements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued learning from dealing with COVID situation. • Flood Plan annex to be updated. • Ongoing TCG and SCG training for all Local Authorities being developed and undertaken • Resilient Telecoms and Power outage annex to be developed • Additional 10 days allocated from the LRF to ensure Business Continuity Plans are refreshed and an assurance package to ensure documents, underpinning arrangements are in place and staff attend training and relevant exercises. • To ensure Huncote Leisure Centre is appropriately referenced within all plans. <p><u>Corporate Health & Safety</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The safety of our staff will continue to be a key focus with a review of our organisational Blueprint and all Health & Safety policies with particular reference to staff working in a more agile manner and consideration of mental health and the support available to staff.
<p>Income generation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Legal Service Team continues to offer services for other authorities and continually looks for opportunities to attract additional income. Land Charges income may be impacted in future by the transfer to HM Land Charges, however it is felt that the budget included is realistic and achievable.
<p>Capital plans for the portfolio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No capital plans specific to this portfolio

Key Performance Indicators

None for this portfolio

Customers

The Council will continue with its focus on delivering services that our customers need. This is going to be particularly important through a period of recovery where the Council will need to tailor the support to residents and business customers to enable them to recover from the detrimental impact of Covid-19.

Risks

A full risk register is maintained in relation to the teams within this portfolio, and is regularly reviewed to ensure its accuracy. However, significant potential risks include the following issues:

- **Recovery Following the Pandemic** – It is vital that as our District continues to recover from the impact of the pandemic, that our Council is prepared to support our residents and local economy. There is reputational risk to the Council if we are not in a position to assist our locality and along with partners we will develop strategies to support both residents and business to recover.
- **Emergency Planning** – reputational risk with partners and customers if appropriate response not available or given. Lessons learnt from both flooding incidents and the pandemic situation has helped us to review our plans and add to them to support our residents specifically in relation to recovery following an incident.
- **Health and Safety** - financial, legal, moral, reputational risk - negligence. Control measures managed through advisory service and internal policies, procedures and departmental audits.
- **Carbon Zero Target** – the Council is committed to meeting its net zero ambition by 2030 but the potential future financial gap represents a risk to that aim.

FINANCE, EFFICIENCY & ASSETS PORTFOLIO
Cllr Maggie Wright

Once again, we have been given a single year Settlement with long-promised changes to Business Rate Retention and Levelling Up expected to follow in 2023/24. It is therefore difficult to forecast how to plan our aspirations, our expectations and use our actual money wisely whilst still having such financial uncertainty. Added to this is the fact we remain in the middle of a world pandemic and recovery will continue long into the future. We have updated our MTFS this year as planned, but the single year settlement means that it contains a number of high level assumptions in terms of our future funding envelope. Unfortunately, that solid financial platform I spoke about achieving last year has not been possible.

The financial outlook for all local authorities continues to be uncertain. Councils have to present a balanced budget and account for extra growth in services. We are no exception and this year I am expecting there to be gaps between expenditure and income.

We have recently had a Financial Health Check through the LGA which was positive and made some recommendations which will be investigated to help improve our budgeting process, and strengthen our financial resilience monitoring. We need to build our Commercial Strategy and look closely at our fees and charges in order to identify any potential new or additional income streams. As part of this we will be working with our leisure contractor to review performance and the management fee.

We have an ambitious 5-year capital programme but are exposed to increasing interest rates and inflation. We have to look closely at affordability and our priorities of delivery, as well as investigating external funding opportunities.

Our 3 main income streams, Business Rates, New Homes Bonus and Council Tax are even more complicated and fragile than in previous years. We have a heavy reliance on business rate growth which may be seriously impacted when rebasing is brought in. At present there is a significant backlog at the Valuation Office which is leading to delays in recognising new growth in the rating list. This in turn means that we are still unclear as to the full extent of the growth brought about by Fosse Park West and Food Central. As ever, appeals are difficult to predict and all of this means that business rates income is ever moving.

New Homes Bonus has been extended for a further year giving us £1.021M including legacy payments, but there are no indications of alternative funding for future years. The Lower Tier Services Grant has been extended by a further year giving us £0.912m and a new Services Grant announced for 2022/23 of £0.154m is welcomed. However, whether any of these income streams will continue beyond 2022/23 is a massive unknown.

Council Tax represents our largest percentage funding source and it will be costly to us if it stalls or loses potential increases. This will of course be looked at during the Budget Scrutiny process and an online Residents Survey will be completed shortly.

Financial Services will continue to monitor and audit all financial information and continue to report to Cabinet and Full Council on a frequent basis. A very challenging future for Local Government Finances.

The Portfolio Priorities as listed are therefore even more important to ensure our budget stays on track throughout the challenging years ahead, and our staff which are our biggest asset are safe and managed effectively through a more flexible, agile way of working. I am looking forward to the relaunch of the Inphase Performance System and enhancing Performance Management across the Council. A Blaby District Plan Dashboard will ensure we can see at a glance if priorities are being achieved.

Continuous Improvement has been the focus of the Performance Team by providing support and advice for the Council. The use of the Uniform database system has been expanded to include new services such as Economic and Community Development, Work and Skills and the Community Hub. A priority for the coming year will be to support services, develop the system and to provide project management for the IT element of the Leicestershire Building Control Partnership. The InPhase contract for Performance Management has been renewed and I look forward to a full refresh of the system, and the review of Performance Framework for the Council, which will see improved reporting and collaboration. The Equalities agenda is becoming increasingly high up the agenda nationally and I am pleased to see the increased focus and awareness that this is being given. This work will continue to be a priority with a programme of training, to increase understanding of our duties and reinforce the Equality and Human Rights Policy and Objectives. I am looking forward to seeing the results of the Residents Survey for 2022 and how we can use the feedback from our community to improve services in the future, truly putting the customer at the heart of what we do. The team continue to support projects and programme management within the Council, ensuring that these are centred around the delivery of the corporate priorities in the Blaby District Plan 2021-24.

The HR Team will continue to support staff through the development of our hybrid way of working, adapting policies and supporting development of our staff to work and manage in an environment of home and office working. We have, this year, seen further impacts on the mental health and wellbeing of staff and members and we will renew our focus trying to offer support and wellbeing initiatives through various mechanisms. The payroll and HR system is due to be upgraded in the next year and we anticipate this will help automate some of our HR processes which are currently administratively intensive.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Maggie Wright

Senior Officers: Strategic Director (S151), Strategic Director, Strategic HR Manager and Strategic Finance Manager

Portfolio Total

Finance, People and Performance - Total	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£1,318,023	£1,323,249	£1,313,607	-£4,416 -0.34%	-£9,642 -0.73%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£1,290,792	£1,264,854	£1,306,453	£15,661 1.21%	£41,599 3.29%
3. Direct Income	-£399,300	-£267,000	-£312,000	£87,300 -21.86%	-£45,000 16.85%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£2,209,515	£2,321,103	£2,308,060	£98,545 4.46%	-£13,043 -0.56%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	28.16	29.19	29.19	1.03 3.66%	0.00 0.00%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio incorporates the establishment costs relating to the Finance, Income & Collection, HR and Performance teams. The establishment budget for 2022/23 allows for a 2% estimated pay award, contractual increments where appropriate, and employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The social care levy of 1.25%, announced by Government in September 2021, forms part of the increase in national insurance contributions payable.

The establishment budget for this portfolio also includes central provisions for statutory sick pay, maternity pay, the apprenticeship levy, and a vacancy savings provision. The vacancy savings provision recognises that the Council is unlikely to be fully staffed throughout the financial year. For a number of years, including 2021/22, the provision was set at a very conservative £80,000. This was increased to £100,000 for 2022/23 when the establishment budget was presented to Cabinet in November 2021. However, the average underspend over the last five full financial years is £294,000. Whilst it is considered imprudent to increase the vacancy savings provision to that level, Cabinet have informally agreed that a more reasonable level of provision would be £200,000, and this has been included in the 2022/23 budget accordingly. This leads to an overall net reduction in the establishment costs shown within this portfolio.

In terms of other gross direct expenditure, the most significant movement is that external interest payable is expected to be around £45,000 lower than originally budgeted in 2021/22, with next year being around £25,000 lower. This is partially due to slippage in the planned Capital Programme but also because we have undertaken no external borrowing since 2020/21. This is a conscious decision due to the ongoing trend of investment rates being significantly lower than borrowing rates. The Council is effectively borrowing internally to save on interest costs but also reducing the counterparty risk associated with investment. Although this would point to a budget reduction, it is offset by other contractual increases such as bank charges, software maintenance, external audit fees, and Welland Procurement costs.

The main factor affecting direct income is the reduction in the Bank of England base rate which, until December has been as low as 0.1% since the start of the pandemic. As a result our investment income has seen a considerable fall, expected to be as much as £130,000 down in 2021/22. Members may recall that the Council included an income loss provision in the 2021/22 approved budget, and this, along with COVID-19 emergency funding from the Government, has helped to mitigate the reduction in income in 2021/22. As the base rate is expected to continue to rise again in the new year, the impact on 2022/23 is likely to be less marked but income is nevertheless forecast to be around £85,000 lower than the original budgeted level for 2021/22.

Financial Services

Financial Services	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£523,601	£523,601	£547,775	£24,174 4.62%	£24,174 4.62%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£964,219	£913,094	£959,227	-£4,992 -0.52%	£46,133 5.05%
3. Direct Income	-£230,000	-£100,000	-£145,000	£85,000 -36.96%	-£45,000 45.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£1,257,820	£1,336,695	£1,362,002	£104,182 8.28%	£25,307 1.89%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	10.58	11.50	11.50	0.92 8.70%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The loan interest payable estimates have been reviewed based upon the draft 5 year Capital Programme and a reduction to the budget has been made. All expenditure budgets has been reviewed and reductions made where possible based on the current and expected expenditure.
3. Investment interest rates have continued to remain low following the impact of Covid-19. The income budget has been reduced in line with the actual and expected income.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Finance review approved in January 2021.

Income & Collections Team

Income and Collections	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£212,301	£212,301	£225,738	£13,437 6.33%	£13,437 6.33%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£20,863	£20,760	£21,625	£762 3.65%	£865 4.17%
3. Direct Income	-£168,300	-£166,000	-£166,000	£2,300 -1.37%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£64,864	£67,061	£81,363	£16,499 25.44%	£14,302 21.33%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	6.00	6.00	6.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Budget revised in line with expenditure to date, and expected expenditure.
3. The budget relates to income for the recovery of summons and liability costs.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

Audit & Fraud

Audit & Fraud	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£116,584	£108,069	£127,811	£11,227 9.63%	£19,742 18.27%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£116,584	£108,069	£127,811	£11,227 9.63%	£19,742 18.27%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Reasons for Variances

1. No establishment costs are applicable to this service.
2. Revised budget reduced in line with actual expenditure.
3. Not applicable.
4. See note 2 above.
5. Not applicable.

Performance

Performance	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£251,416	£251,416	£261,723	£10,307 4.10%	£10,307 4.10%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£36,070	£42,320	£29,070	-£7,000 -19.41%	-£13,250 -31.31%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£287,486	£293,736	£290,793	£3,307 1.15%	-£2,943 -1.00%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.42	5.42	5.42	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Increase in the revised budget relates to the carry forward of unspent budget from 2020/21 for Equalities/ Unconscious Bias training, and budget to support the re launch of the InPhase system, both were delayed during 2020/21 due to COVID-19.
3. Not applicable.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

Human Resources

Human Resources	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£330,705	£335,931	£278,371	-£52,334 -15.82%	-£57,560 -17.13%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£153,056	£180,612	£168,720	£15,664 10.23%	-£11,892 -6.58%
3. Direct Income	-£1,000	-£1,000	-£1,000	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£482,761	£515,543	£446,091	-£36,670 -7.60%	-£69,452 -13.47%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	6.16	6.27	6.27	0.11 1.79%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. Includes Vacancy Savings Provision which has been increased from £80,000 to £200,000.
2. The revised budget has been increased to allow for additional spend on recruitment and advertising to vacant senior posts, consultants fees expected to be required and Staff Welfare to support disabled employees in the workplace.
3. The income is for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and clearances for other organisations.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. 1 part time post added, and 1 post reduced hours.

Portfolio Priorities

- To lead the Council through the financial challenges in 2022/23 and beyond, with a potential budget gap of £5.5m in 2023/24.
- Understand costs and deliver a responsive, cost effective and high quality financial service.
- Instilling principles of good, sustainable procurement.
- Continue a culture of transparency with emphasis on financial control, audit, and having due regard for the prevention of fraud and management of risk.
- To maximise income collection and recovery of outstanding debt.
- To ensure that effective performance and fair practices are in place across the Council, including the development of a new performance framework.
- To ensure that staff are safe and managed effectively.
- To lead the Council in its implementation and delivery of the People Strategy.

Services

Financial Services

The Finance team is responsible for the provision and monitoring of financial information to maintain control of the Council's finances. The team also prepares the annual accounts, and looks after various other functions including treasury management, taxation, insurance, payroll, procurement, and payment of supplier invoices.

Income & Collection

The Income & Collection team is responsible for maximising income generation in respect of council tax, business rates, and overpayment of housing benefits, in terms of the collection of unpaid debt. The Council Tax Income and Debt Manager also ensures that all guidance in relation to fraud and risk management are up to date and procedures are in place to prevent fraud and manage risk.

Audit

Internal Audit Services is provided by North West Leicestershire as part of a shared service arrangement which includes Blaby and Charnwood.

Performance

This includes staffing and operational costs for the Performance and Systems team, including licences costs for corporate systems such as InPhase and Idox. The Performance and Systems team also help other services succeed by ensuring that our systems work effectively, projects are managed successfully, providing advice on measuring, monitoring and improvement of processes and performance, raising awareness of equality and diversity, and engaging with our customers.

Human Resources

The HR Team is responsible for the provision of transactional services, operational advice and strategic development for the Council's staff. HR ensures that services are appropriately resourced with skilled people and that staff are safe, managed effectively and have high levels of satisfaction in their work.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Financial Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Although the Chancellor's November budget alluded to a three year settlement commencing in 2022/23, ultimately the provisional settlement announced on 16th December 2021 is for a single year only. The Government's stated intention is to review and consult upon changes to the Business Rates Retention scheme and the implementation of Fair Funding during the course of 2022/23. The expectation is that these changes will come into effect in 2023/24 and that there will be a significant reduction in the Council's funding envelope due to the likelihood of a reset of the business rates baseline. The 2022/23 settlement includes an additional year of New Homes Bonus, albeit at a much reduced level, an extension to the Lower Tier Services Grant introduced in 2021/22, and a new Services Grant. Given the likelihood of a significant financial gap for 2023/24 onwards, further work will need to be undertaken next financial year to review opportunities to generate new and additional income, as well as to consider the potential to make further savings.• The second phase of the implementation of the upgraded Financial Management System has been successfully completed. This includes a new budget planning and monitoring module which will provide a more interactive experience for users, and better links to the MTFS.• The procurement of the joint HR/Payroll System is in progress, utilising a framework approach. Resource pressures in both the Finance and HR teams mean that implementation is likely to be delayed until 2022/23.• The Finance team is leading on the procurement of a new cash and cheque collection contract (including car parking machines), as part of a consortium with three other local authorities. The contract award is expected to be in place early in 2022/23.• The Income & Collections team is working with external agencies, including bailiffs and legal experts, to implement additional debt recovery measures in line with the Corporate Debt Policy. <p><u>Audit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Internal Audit Shared Service will continue to comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The annual audit plan and individual audit programmes will be developed using a risk based approach. This will ensure that our resources are focused on the areas of highest risk across the council so that our assurance work adds value. The Internal Audit Shared Service had an external inspection in early December 2020 (the PSIAS require this every 5 years). The assessor's opinion was that internal audit at Blaby, Charnwood and North West Leicestershire Councils conforms to the PSIAS. The assessor identified no areas of non-compliance with the standards that would affect the
---	--

	<p>overall scope or operation of the internal audit activity and the team takes a flexible, structured and focussed approach to their audit assignments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The audit plan will include planned and ad-hoc advisory work, in addition to the continued support for assurance on the COVID-19 business grants, to ensure that the Internal Audit team can provide relevant support for both changes that are occurring due to external forces and new developments across the Council, and try to ensure that appropriate controls are built into new systems and ways of working. • The shared service continues well, providing further business continuity and sharing knowledge across the authorities. <p><u>Performance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to undertake a review of the Performance Framework for the Council • Deliver an integrated IT system as part of the LBCP delegated service project • Deliver training to all staff and members on Equality and Diversity • Review the consultation software to assess options available to ensure that surveys and engagement are effective. • Support the Council in delivering the actions identified by the Peer Review. • Review services in collaboration with staff to make improvements to service delivery <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and support managers and staff in the new Blaby “Way We Work” (agile/hybrid working model) whilst continuing to respond to Covid • Further development of partnership working with staff, managers and Trade Unions on the People Strategy to ensure engagement with the development and progress of the Council. • Formally launch the structured learning programme for Blaby District Council with particular focus on skills for line managers, core skills development for all staff and opportunities for aspiring staff to support talent management and succession planning. • Implementation of a structured and effective health and wellbeing offer to improve the health of employees including mental wellbeing. • Development of HR Services including finalising the review of the join HR/Payroll system
Income generation	<p>Income from the Council’s central treasury function is included in this portfolio. Returns for 2021/22 have been significantly reduced as investment rates have fallen in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. There is likely to be a continuing impact in 2022/23 although some upturn is expected if the Monetary Policy Committee increase the base rate.</p>

Capital plans for the portfolio	The Finance team monitors and maintains oversight of the overall Capital Programme. None of the services within this portfolio have a significant call upon capital resources in 2022/23, although the cash receipting system will require an upgrade at a cost of around £20,000.
---------------------------------	--

Key Performance Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR – FINANCE	2021/22 Apr - Nov	2020/21 Full Year	2019/20 Full Year	2018/19 Full Year
Invoices Paid within 10 days	85.53%	87.99%	91.03%	91.44%

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2020/21 RESULTS	2021/22 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
% total working days lost to sickness absence	4.07%	2.78%	To end of October 2021
The % of staff from ethnic minorities	9.73%	10.4%	
The % of staff who are disabled	5.9%	5.49%	

Customers

The Finance team's external customers include suppliers who invoice the Council for goods and services, and companies and individuals who owe the Council money. Otherwise, the team's customers are largely internal, i.e. colleagues from other service areas, and Members.

The Income and Collection team has a variety of customers, mainly residents of the district and business rate payers who have incurred debts by not paying Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates or Housing Benefit overpayments. These range from customers that owe small to very large amounts of money to the Council. Some customers have other debts too, so the team work at collecting payments from them in a manageable way and signpost them to other agencies that can assist them. Often customers will have vulnerability issues that need addressing in other ways so key skills must be used when dealing with the debt collection.

Maintaining awareness of Equalities and Human Rights across the Council by staff and members to ensure fair access to services by customers remains a focus. Training, information articles and advice are provided by the Performance and Systems team supported by HR.

Risks

Corporate and service risks are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are up to date, still valid, and accurately rated. Significant risks attached to this portfolio include the following issues:

- **Overall Financial Risk** – The financial risks facing the Council are not necessarily specific to this portfolio but the Finance team's input into financial issues across all aspects of the Council's services will continue. Officers work closely with the various services to monitor budgets but also to provide sound financial input into all decisions that have financial implications.
- **Local Government Funding** – the Government has stated its intention to undertake two major reviews of the Business Rates Retention Scheme, and the wider Fairer Funding mechanism. The results of both of these reviews pose a significant risk to the Council's future financial position. New Homes Bonus is being phased out, and as yet it is unclear as to whether it will be replaced with a different funding stream.
- **Business Rates Appeals** – the Council still faces a risk in terms of businesses registering appeals against their rateable value. Where these are successful the Council loses 40% of any reduction in rates payable, and the extent to which these appeals are submitted and upheld is outside of the Council's control.
- **Debt** – in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic recovery action was suspended. Recovery action resumed mid-way through 2020/21 although court hearings are still being held remotely. The Government introduced legislation to permit deficits in respect of council tax and business rates to be spread over three years, commencing with 2021/22, in order that the impact of uncollectable debt is not felt in just one financial year. There remains a risk that recovery rates could deteriorate, in particular now that the furlough scheme has ended.
- **Audit** – insufficient resources to complete the audit plan due to unplanned corporate investigations or long term staff absences. As the service is provided through a shared service arrangement there is a risk that any party may want to withdraw from the arrangement which would impact all three partners.
- **Human Resources** - The non-delivery of the People Strategy may have an impact on staff absence, morale and overall performance.
- **Performance** - lack of progress in reviewing the performance framework may impact on rate of service improvement
- **Project / Programme Management** – if projects are not monitored and managed adequately this may result in delays and overspend
- **Equalities** – If legislation is not complied with then there may be challenge from customers, businesses and regulatory bodies. If equalities awareness and good practice are not continued then this may result in inappropriate and unfair treatment of staff and/or customers.
- **Idox Database and associated systems** – if the system is not maintained and working effectively, a number of statutory services and duties may not be able to be delivered.

<div>Appendix I</div> <div>HEALTH, WELLBEING, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & BUSINESS SUPPORT PORTFOLIO</div> <div>Councillor Sharon Coe</div>
--

Thank you for inviting me to present my Portfolio Budget to you for the third year in a row. The areas covered in my portfolio are both wide ranging and complex, with three of the main partnerships; Lightbulb, Building Control and Tourism sitting in this group.

We have had some real success this year including the launch of our Digital Tourism offer, our Tourism Wall and the Fosse Foxes trail. We have continued to provide ongoing support to our businesses to assist their recovery, as well as running a range of support to help our residents into work including a logistics jobsfair. In terms of partnerships we have secured agreement to move to a delegated Building Control Service from April 2022. In Lightbulb we have gained agreement from partners to sign up to a further two years taking us to 2024. We are developing the lightbulb offer further by running pilots to provide support re hoarding (SafeSpaces) and providing assisted technology to help people remain independent in their own homes. The plan is that going forward these both become part of business as usual. The Hospital Housing Enablement Team secured additional external funding to offer a Mental Health Rehab Service. We have developed an 'Active Blaby' system and website which will launch in 2022 to help get our residents to be more active and we've supported hundreds of our more vulnerable residents through our Exercise Referral and Falls Prevention (Steady Steps) programmes.

Alongside the above we have worked closely to support the delivery of a new prison in Glen Parva including running a Meet the Buyer event. We have refurbished the Ice House at Bouskell Park, completed a week long archaeological dig, ran an open day and are now offering tours. The Leicestershire Building Control Partnership has been nominated for the best building control service at the LABC awards and we have secured external funding to re-establish the Armed Forces Coffee Mornings. Our young people have continued to take forward projects through our Youth Council and students in our schools have had access to curriculum support activities in construction, tourism and retail. We have worked with Businesses, Communities, voluntary groups and young people to start to map what is happening across the district in terms of the green agenda and supporting Net Zero 2050.

On top of all of that this group have led on several projects such as the delivery of the Welcome Back Fund Action Plan, the LLEP projects including Walk & Ride and Blaby Town Centre Public Realm. Development of the "Go Jauntly" platform/app to provide residents with a digital access to walks, and development of a heritage project trail and tourism map. Through the Contain funding we have delivered mental health support to adults and young people, developed a health website and a health campaign. A Place To Grow secured the Green Flag award for its 10th year in a row and we used the venue to deliver our green prescription offer, we are about to deliver a blue one in partnership with the Canal & River Trust.

I am immensely proud of my portfolio and the officers that work within it as they have delivered great services with a professional and friendly attitude to both our residents and businesses over a very challenging year.

The priorities for my portfolio are:-

- To ensure that Enderby Leisure Centre returns to pre-COVID usage levels and we consider Huncote Leisure Centre in light of the consultant's reports regarding the ongoing management of the land fill gas.
- Ensuring that BDC can benefit from Tourism, including delivering the tourism growth plan
- To expand our offer of support to employers and business through a specialised sector approach
- To work with key partners to deliver our Work and Skills Plan
- To continue to work with our health partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.
- To deliver an implementation plan that moves the Building Control Service from a shared service to a delegated service.
- To extend the Lightbulb offer to include support through Assisted Technology and Safe Spaces project
- To work towards delivering the Net Zero 2050 element of the Green Action Plan
- To deliver the LLEP projects - Walk & Ride and Blaby Town Centre Public Realm
- Launch Active Blaby & continue to support our vulnerable residents to be active.

The risks and challenges to my Portfolio are:-

- Performance of the Leisure Contract.
- External funding of a number of posts within the Health & Leisure Services Team.
- Commitment from partners including health, local tourism businesses, developers and contractors in terms of delivery of our work & skills offer.
- High levels of unemployment and the impact on our businesses following the pandemic.
- Ensuring the legal agreement for the new delegated Building Control Service and the extension of the Lightbulb agreement to 2024 both protect Blaby.
- Staff retention and recruitment specifically for Building Control & Lightbulb.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Sharon Coe

**Senior Officer: Business, Partnerships & Health Improvement
Group Manager**

Portfolio Total

Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support - Total	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£2,546,957	£2,895,005	£2,772,964	£226,007 8.87%	-£122,041 -4.22%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£463,620	£2,064,849	£482,370	£18,750 4.04%	-£1,582,479 -76.64%
3. Direct Income	-£2,680,232	-£4,026,249	-£2,904,989	-£224,757 8.39%	£1,121,260 -27.85%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£330,345	£933,605	£350,345	£20,000 6.05%	-£583,260 -62.47%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	62.02	71.85	68.37	6.35 10.24%	-3.48 -4.84%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio incorporates the establishment costs for Health & Leisure Services, Lightbulb, the Housing Enablement Team, Building Control, and Community Development, Work & Skills. The 2022/23 establishment budget allows for an estimated 2% pay award, contractual increments where necessary, and employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The recently announced social care levy of 1.25% is included within national insurance estimates.

Many of the posts within Health & Leisure Services are externally funded and as such they are not included within the budget until that funding has been confirmed. This is the reason why the revised estimate is significantly higher than both the 2021/22 approved budget and the proposed budget for 2022/23, since the external funding was only secured after the budget was approved last February. Beyond the pay increases referred to above, the main reasons for the increase in establishment between 2021/22 and 2022/23 are the extension of the Social Prescribing service until 31st March 2022/23, and the move towards the delegation of Building Control to Blaby by our partners in the current shared service. The former leads to an increase in salary costs of around £45,000 although this is largely funded by external contributions from the Primary Care Networks. The increase in the Building Control establishment is due to officers from our partners being transferred to Blaby (under TUPE) as part of the delegation of the function. In turn Blaby will receive 100% of the income due across the partnership plus a deficit contribution from partners, which will provide an overall positive financial benefit to Blaby.

Other direct expenditure in the 2021/22 revised estimate is inflated by a number of factors. These include external funding (mainly for Health & Leisure Services) which is unconfirmed for 2022/23, one-off Contain funding received from Government and the County Council (much of which must be spent by 31st March 2022), unspent budget provision carried forward from 2020/21 (non-recurring), and the agreed financial support for our leisure operator (funded from the National Leisure Recovery Fund).

In terms of income for this portfolio, the same principles apply to 2021/22 revised as described above, i.e., since the original budget was approved in February 2021, we have secured additional external funding in respect of Health & Leisure Services, Contain, and Social Prescribing. Except for the latter, these income streams have not been recognised in the 2022/23 budget due to the uncertainty of external funding.

The key income streams for this portfolio are Building Control and the leisure centre management fee. Under the delegated model for Building Control, due to take effect from 1st April 2022, Blaby will keep all of the income generated, no matter which district it relates to. Current fees and charges have been increased by 3.5% and are, nevertheless, considered to remain competitive. In overall terms, the new Building Control delegation arrangements has reduced our costs by £43,000. Negotiations over

a return to the management fee for our leisure centres are ongoing. The budget presented to Scrutiny assumes that the fee receivable will be in line with the original contract. However, there is a risk attached to that assumption given the business interruption caused by COVID-19 and the consequent ability of the contractor to return the business to pre-pandemic levels. It is expected that a clearer picture will be available by the time the budget is set in February.

Leisure Centres

Enderby Leisure Centre	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£0	£120,774	£0	£0	-£120,774 -100.00%
3. Direct Income	-£684,013	-£791,551	-£670,061	£13,952 -2.04%	£121,490 -15.35%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	-£684,013	-£670,777	-£670,061	£13,952 -2.04%	£716 -0.11%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	£0

Reasons for Variances

1. Not applicable.
2. Revised estimate expenditure relates to financial support agreed at Council due to the impact of Covid-19 on the Leisure Centre.
3. Revised budget includes Grant funded carried forward from 2020/21. Up to October 2021, the contract had performed much better than forecast. (75K deficit forecasted position vs £155k surplus actual position. Note of caution this is prior to Huncote being closed.)
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Not applicable.

COVID-19 Contain Funding

COVID-19 Contain Funding	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£16,700	£16,700	£16,700
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£0	£471,510	£0	£0	-£471,510 -100.00%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£345,300	-£16,700	-£16,700	£328,600 -95.16%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£0	£126,210	£0	£0	-£126,210 -100.00%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	1.54	1.54	1.54

Reasons for Variances

1. 2 Fixed term posts to be funded by the Contain Grant.
2. Revised budget includes Grant funded carried forward from 2020/21 to fund Covid related emergencies.
3. Revised budget includes additional funding received.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. As per point 1.

Health, Leisure & Tourism

Health & Leisure	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£292,353	£500,821	£375,034	£82,681 28.28%	-£125,787 -25.12%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£107,049	£398,898	£97,347	-£9,702 -9.06%	-£301,551 -75.60%
3. Direct Income	-£52,248	-£323,252	-£107,314	-£55,066 105.39%	£215,938 -66.80%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£347,154	£576,467	£365,067	£17,913 5.16%	-£211,400 -36.67%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	7.65	14.84	10.46	2.81 36.73%	-4.38 -29.51%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. Revised budget includes externally funded posts that hadn't been confirmed at the time of budget setting.
2. Revised budget includes externally funded project expenditure (level currently unknown for 2022/23) as well as various non-recurring expenditure carried forward from 2020/21.
3. Awaiting level of external funding to be confirmed for 2022/23.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Externally funded posts have been removed from the budget where this funding has not yet been confirmed for 2022/23.

Building Control

Building Control	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£714,777	£714,777	£757,287	£42,510 5.95%	£42,510 5.95%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£52,740	£79,869	£13,760	-£38,980 -73.91%	-£66,109 -82.77%
3. Direct Income	-£743,840	-£747,770	-£747,770	-£3,930 0.53%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£23,677	£46,876	£23,277	-£400 -1.69%	-£23,599 -50.34%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	14.61	16.61	16.61	2.00 13.69%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2021/22 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. 2 x New Building Control Partnership posts added during the year.
2. Revised estimate includes 1 off budget provision carried forward from 2020/21 relating to Partnership contributions for marketing.
3. In line with expected income.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. See 1 above.

Economic & Community Development Work & Skills

Partnerships	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£318,152	£336,832	£312,907	-£5,245 -1.65%	-£23,925 -7.10%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£138,372	£367,768	£141,154	£2,782 2.01%	-£226,614 -61.62%
3. Direct Income	-£65,639	-£98,616	-£47,759	£17,880 -27.24%	£50,857 -51.57%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£390,885	£605,984	£406,302	£15,417 3.94%	-£199,682 -32.95%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	8.37	8.37	7.73	-0.64 -7.65%	-0.64 -7.65%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. 2021/22 revised estimate includes non-recurring expenditure brought forward from 2020/21, expenditure budget has been added for the Grant funded Kickstart scheme, and The Welcome Back fund.
3. As per the above, grant funded budget added.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. End of fixed term contract.

Lightbulb

Light Bulb, Hospital Enabler and DFGs	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£1,102,553	£1,223,453	£1,187,755	£85,202 7.73%	-£35,698 -2.92%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£162,800	£624,220	£227,749	£64,949 39.89%	-£396,471 -63.51%
3. Direct Income	-£1,134,492	-£1,719,760	-£1,315,385	-£180,893 15.94%	£404,375 -23.51%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£130,861	£127,913	£100,119	-£30,742 -23.49%	-£27,794 -21.73%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	29.78	30.42	30.42	0.64 2.15%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The 2021/22 budget has been revised to include DFG funded posts.
2. The revised includes one off budget provision for funding carried forward from 2020/21 in relation to the HET team and Lightbulb project. DFG capital funds have been transferred to fund 4 specific projects approved by the DFG Management Board.
3. Income from the Districts and County for the Lightbulb project, funding for the HET team, and as per the above, DFG funding for projects.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. As per note 1, plus end of fixed term post.

Management and Admin

Management and Admin	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£119,122	£119,122	£123,282	£4,160 3.49%	£4,160 3.49%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£2,659	£1,810	£2,360	-£299 -11.24%	£550 30.39%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£121,781	£120,932	£125,642	£3,861 3.17%	£4,710 3.89%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	1.61	1.61	1.61	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The budgets have been reviewed and reductions made where possible.
3. Not applicable.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

Leisure Centres

Both Covid 19 and the recent landfill gas incident at Huncote have had a major impact on the financial return from SLM in operating both Enderby and Huncote Leisure Centres. Regular updates are provided to the portfolio holder and it is hoped that a report will be presented to Full Council to update on the financial position in Q4 (January to March) of this financial year.

Health & Leisure Services

The reduction in income and expenditure in relation to Health & Leisure Services is in recognition of the fact that no confirmation has yet been received of external funding. External funding currently supports services such as exercise referral, positive activities for young people, heartsmart and 'falls prevention' programmes.

The service provides a range of outreach services across the District engaging over 5,000 residents, and continues to be successful in securing significant levels of external funding from various sources.

Tourism

The pandemic has of course had an impact on the achievement of the targets we set within the Tourism Plan however at this time we are not planning to change the targets but we will continually review them. A presentation was undertaken to full council on the 14th December which detailed the wealth of progress that has been made. We are currently within the allocated budget to support Tourism.

Lightbulb

The funding for staffing comes from Leicestershire County Council and all those district and borough councils for which we are running Lightbulb. In terms of the central hub team this is a shared cost with all 8 partners making contributions based upon an assumed caseload. A small contingency budget remains out of the Transformational Challenge Award Grant, and this will be used to support the delivery of Lightbulb across Leicestershire. All districts have supported the establishment of a Housing Occupational Therapist, SafeSpaces and assisted technology projects funded from their Disabled Facilities Grant allocation.

Hospital Housing Enablement Team

The Hospital Housing team is funded through Leicestershire and Leicester City Better Care Fund and with a contribution from Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT). Going forward the funding will come from the LPT and the amalgamated Clinical Commissioners Group. Currently, HET are operating a pilot expansion in the Mental Health Rehab sites which is funded by LPT until the end of March 2022, at which point, a decision will be made on whether to extend the pilot, grant permanent funding or end the pilot.

Building Control Services

The Service continues to operate as a lean self-financing business unit, competing for work against the private sector. All fees across the six partners are now aligned and the plan is to increase partnership fees by 3.5% from 1st April 2022. This will also be the date that the service moves from a shared service arrangement to a delegated service.

Portfolio Priorities

1. Monitor and manage the performance of the Leisure Contract with SLM.
2. Deliver the Tourism Growth Plan.
3. To expand our offer of support to employers and business through a sector specific approach
4. To work with key partners to deliver our Work and Skills Plan
5. To continue to work with our health partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. Increase physical activity levels across the District by delivering the Sport & Physical Activity Commissioning Plan, the Playing Pitch Strategy and the 'Active Blaby' scheme.
6. To deliver an implementation plan that moves the Building Control Service from a shared service to a delegated service.
7. To extend the Lightbulb offer to include support through Assisted Technology and the Safe Spaces project.
8. To ensure that advantage is taken in any flexibility in the DFG mandatory legislation to allow new initiatives and provide more options to residents to keep them at home and enable independence.
9. To further develop the Trusted Assessor framework to improve the range of services to residents.
10. Review the staff structure for the Hospital Enabler Team following changes due to the pandemic and health restructure.
11. To secure further funding for the current HET pilot expansion into the Mental Health Rehab sites & seek funding for a HET pilot expansion into the Community Hospitals.
12. To deliver the LLEP projects - Walk & Ride and Blaby Town Centre Public Realm.
13. To deliver the Net Zero 2050 element of the Green Action Plan.

Services

Leisure Centres

Huncote provides a range of leisure services including; a fitness suite (gym), exercise classes, all weather pitches, squash courts, sports hall, café, dance studio, Virtual Spinning Studio and meeting room. This service is delivered through a leisure contract with SLM (expires 2029).

Enderby Leisure Centre provides a range of leisure services including a swimming pool, swimming lessons, fitness suite, health suite, indoor bowls, golf course, fitness studios, all weather pitches, café and meeting room. This service is delivered through a leisure contract with SLM (expires 2029).

Health & Leisure

- Health Improvement– services include A Place to Grow, Dementia Action Alliance, Health Promotion, delivering the Blaby District Staying Healthy Partnership. This area of work also includes delivery of the Social Prescribing model and links with our Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Public Health, GPs and other partners around health.
- Tourism & Heritage – services include the delivery of the Blaby District Tourism Growth Plan, a range of projects such as Walk & Ride, Heritage and Tourism Map and the VisitBlaby digital offer.

- Sport & Physical Activity – these services complement the universal offer in our Leisure Centres by providing outreach programmes throughout our District to residents who may not be able to access our centres. They also provide support to help develop our network of community sports clubs. The services include exercise referral, outreach physical activity sessions, cardiac rehabilitation scheme, falls prevention, older people activities, weight management, inclusive activities, sports development, events, the Positive Activities Referral Scheme (PARS), JUST (women's activity programme) as well as national and local awareness campaigns. This service secures a significant amount of external funding from Public Health (this amount is still to be confirmed for 2022/23).

Building Control

A statutory service that safeguards public health and safety within the built environment in addition to controlling accessibility and improving energy efficiency of buildings by ensuring the requirements of the Building Regulations and associated legislation are complied with.

This service competes with other private sector building control providers. Additional services are provided to deal with dangerous structures, safe demolition of buildings and street naming and numbering, in addition to providing support and added resilience to the Council's Property Services team and other services as and when required.

Blaby Building Control currently supports the delivery of building control services at Harborough District Council, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, Melton Borough Council and Rutland County Council.

Economic and Community Development, Work and Skills

Following the transfer over of the Economic Development Team in September 2020 and the establishment of the Business Hub to provide support to businesses both during and post pandemic, we have continued to offer a whole range of support including financial, training, access to specialist support and advice, skills including digital skills to enhance how businesses operate. Our vision is to extend our sector specific offer so we are able to offer a range of initiatives that supports our businesses with recruitment and retention.

The Community Grants scheme supports the voluntary and community sector to develop and strengthen facilities and activities. The health checks that are offered to community group's support them to have the correct governance structure and documentation in place. Our community volunteer week supports the voluntary and community sector to achieve tasks it may not ordinarily have capacity to do. Over the last twelve months our focus has been helping these groups to open and operate safely again post pandemic. The pandemic has highlighted how crucial our third sector is to supporting the community and we want to strengthen the reach of our Good Neighbour Schemes.

The Love Blaby Lottery is a weekly online lottery created to support local good causes within the district. The lottery mission is to raise money in the community for the community and has an annual income of around £30,000.

The Work and Skills action plan is our approach to how we will focus ideas to meet the 3 overarching themes contained within the plan. The themes have helped shape the priorities around the work and skills agenda, giving a clear timetable and defined steps for how this will be implemented, measured and reported against.

Lightbulb

Lightbulb is about helping people to remain independent in their home for longer. It provides a range of practical housing support into a single service. It is delivered through a hub and spoke model with Lightbulb Team's in every district across the county.

The team offer:-

- Minor adaptations
- Disabled facilities grants
- Wider Housing Support
- Assisted technology, falls prevention
- Housing options (planning for the future)
- Advice & signposting

Lightbulb's approach is to deliver benefits to customers and partners. Improving the customer journey, making services easier to access and navigate. Delivering the right support at the right time while delivering savings in service delivery. It is part of the unified prevention offer within the Better Care Fund.

Hospital Housing Enablement Team

The Housing Enablement Team (HET) places specialist housing professionals into inpatient settings, with the goal of assisting patients with housing issues so that they can be safely discharged, reducing or preventing discharge delays and improving patient outcomes. HET is a Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland service, also covering patients from out-of-area and those with no recourse to public funds, where they are occupying an inpatient bed and have a housing related barrier.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Leisure Contract:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase usage of new facilities across both sites <p><u>Health & Leisure:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch Active Blaby • Develop our walk and ride offer including launching “Go Jauntly” and the development of our LCWIP. <p><u>Tourism:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Tourism Growth Plan with a range of projects • Marketing our tourism offer via VisitBlaby <p><u>Work & Skills and Businesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expand our work & skills offer to other industries apart from construction and logistics for example Tourism, Health and Retail. • To support our businesses to access national and local funding • To deliver a comprehensive offer to our schools and academies for those young people who are not choosing an academic route. • To increase job fairs and introduce more sector based work academies with partners, <p><u>Lightbulb</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop the preventative offers to residents • To continue to review how the service is delivered and what can do done virtually and via self-assessments • To start work on the visioning document for Lightbulb post March 2024. <p><u>Housing Enablement Team</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work on HET becoming a key component of the Integrated Discharge Team to improve joint working with key partners in UHL. • To continue to work on the expansion of the service to improve service access for patients • To look at restructuring the service so that HET offers the best value for money at every level.
<p>Income generation</p>	<p><u>Health & Leisure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure income from the Leisure Contract. • Continue to secure external funding to support front line delivery. • Continue to secure funding to deliver the social prescribing service <p><u>Building Control</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market share and income levels are closely monitored. Fees will be increased from April 2022 by 3.5% across all partners. • To consider how the delegated service can produce more financial savings at the same time as maintaining the quality of the service to our customers. • To continue to look at opportunities for Lightbulb to commission Building Control to support the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants.

Capital plans for the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Blaby Town Centre Public Realm project funded through LLEP.
---------------------------------	---

Key Performance Indicators

- Health, Leisure & Tourism Services:
- Active Lives Survey (measures levels of physical activity).
- STEAM Data (provides local Tourism statistics).
- Health Profile & Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (provides local Health statistics).
- Leisure Contract (Enderby & The Pavilion Leisure Centres):
- Usage levels
- Income levels
- Number of complaints
- QUEST score (independent inspection)

Work & Skills and Businesses

- Number of people supported to take up a work placement, trial and or a job.
- Number of businesses supported.
- Number of VCS groups supported via the Community Grants Programme and Health checks
- Number of community development projects completed
- Number of new Good Neighbour Schemes

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2020/21 RESULTS	2021/2022 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
Building Control inspections carried out on the same day as requested	3073 Blaby 9576 LCBP	1950 Blaby 7010 LBCP	Building Control has maintained its 100% record of undertaking inspections on the same day when requested to do so.
Total number of people supported through our work and skills programme	463	1263	2020/ 21 was very lean in comparison to what we would typically expect, all curriculum support and site visits for young people were cancelled. However the figure to date for year 2021/ 2022 is looking very healthy thanks mainly to the Glen Parva Prison rebuild, and as a team we have increased our curriculum support offer this year.

			*Figures include work experience, training, sector based work academies, school visits, jobs, Kickstart, apprenticeships.
End to end times for completion of DFGs (time taken from receipt of a completed application to approval of grant – average days)	11.75 Weeks	14.53 Weeks	Below the KPI of 20 weeks overall
Time taken to complete DFGs (from initial enquiry by customer to completion of work, broken down by stages)	34 Weeks	55 Weeks	Increased overall wait times for OT assessments and builders to get quotes / materials etc – being monitored locally
Demand for DFGs (number of recommendations received)	228	154	The number of DFG's is not as high as the previous year which was exceptional, it is on average inline other years
Number of holistic housing needs assessment carried out (through Lightbulb Programme) and outcome	4137	2186	Demand this year is in line with pre covid years, last year there were exceptional numbers of referrals.
Number of patients supported to be able to leave Hospital through intervention by The Housing enabler team and referral to resolution	1169 patients seen, Referral to resolution times	513 patients seen, Referral to resolution times Of 3.74 days	Increase in staffing to cover the rehab hospitals during pandemic added to increase in referrals

	Of 7.84 days		
--	-----------------	--	--

Customers

- Use data to understand our customers and local trends, such as the Joint Strategy Needs Assessment, Health Profiles, Sport England data and Mosaic.
- Conduct evaluations and seek customer feedback to improve services.
- Collection of positive comments and compliments from our customers and partners.
- SLM – monthly joint working meetings and quarterly contract monitoring

Risks

- External Funding:

External funding supports 6 posts (Physical Activity Development Officers – PADOs) across the Health and Leisure Services Team. These posts currently deliver physical activity and GP referral services that support inactive, vulnerable, the elderly, people with dementia and disability, residents at risk of developing health conditions including mental health and vulnerable young people.

Securing external funding is, therefore, essential to continue these services. A significant amount of this is received from Sport and Physical Activity Strategic Commissioning funded by Leicestershire Country Council Public Health (PH). Informal indications for 2022/23 suggest we will receive a similar level of funding to 2021/22, although this has not been confirmed. Other funding is made available through partnership working with Leicestershire and Rutland Sport (LRS).

- Commitment from partners to deliver joint services for example, health, construction, retail, tourism, other local authority partners
- Performance of Leisure Contractor (SLM) and the impact of the ongoing land fill gas situation at Huncote Leisure Centre site.
- Reducing Council budgets
- Recruitment and retention of qualified staff.
- Competency of all Regulatory Officers (continued professional development).
- Building Control's inability to react to increased workloads and economic upturn whilst funding and staffing levels within the Council and Public sector as a whole are in active decline.
- Market share for Building Control who are in competition with many private sector Building Control providers.

- Demand for Lightbulb preventative work has increased as a result of Lightbulb Programme's proactive/early identification of need. The flexibility in the DFG legislation has not, which could hinder new initiatives
- Demand has increased for the Hospital Housing Enablement Team and the system for patient flow has been redesigned. Without expansion into community hospitals, residents risk being stranded.
- Any further funding may be limited and demand may exceed allocation of funding for either residents or businesses.

This page is intentionally left blank

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES & ASSETS PORTFOLIO
Councillor Nigel Grundy**My Key focus for Neighbourhood Services and Assets in 2022/23**

What a year it has been for the delivery of front line services across Blaby district and yet despite unprecedented challenges our neighbourhood services and Assets teams have excelled.

The lack of HGV drivers nationally and the pandemic causing staffing issues has proved challenging for our refuse collection service. During 2020/21 we did not have to cancel a single refuse or recycling collection. Unfortunately during the last few days we have suffered from staff illness that has affected our service. The sickness issues affecting refuse collections is a daily challenge which can and will change overnight. Councillors should be aware that increased costs may come into play this year as we may need to rely on more agency cover. There is a contingency within the budget to cover this.

The Parks and Open Spaces team have delivered a number of highly popular projects through its capital programme this year. Replacement steps at Crow Mills, new seating at Bouskell Park and the successful completion of the popular new all weather paths through Woodland Trust owned land linking Countesthorpe and Blaby. Its major achievement though is keeping our parks and open spaces in such fantastic condition. Despite staffing issues due to Covid we have received unprecedented levels of compliments from residents who have found solace and distraction in their visits during these troubling times.

The District Cleansing team have worked wonders across the whole of our district. It is fantastic that our residents have been able to enjoy our parks and green open spaces but this has caused challenges in keeping them litter free. The rollout of dual use bins in more strategic locations has certainly helped in this battle. The litter 'wombles' have made a massive difference to the litter situation across our district. As a Council we are proud to support their activities. Our refuse collection teams liaise with the groups to collect the bagged up rubbish whilst keeping them supplied with the 'blue bags' which identify them as 'womble' collections. We had £10,000 in the budget last year for litter picking kits and as much as I would normally like to save money in this case I'm proud to say the litter kits and the £10,000 are nearly all gone. These actions have led to residents sending us comments that they have never seen our district looking so 'clean'.

All of that you have read is a synopsis of the fantastic work our 'neighbourhood team' has done this year. My key focus and the focus of the budget figures before you is to not just continue with this level of excellence but strive to provide more. More 'greener' solutions to refuse collection. More support for the 'wombles' and residents who wish to make a 'cleaner' difference. More resident enjoyment of our parks and open spaces. "So much more for not much more" is what this budget provides.

The Assets team has worked incredibly hard this year. We have seen the council move into the private rented sector market and the upgrade works to our existing Council building is pushing on. Next year will see some major challenges with the longer term future of the Council's office accommodation being one such major challenge.

Another challenge for 2022 will see us continue on our journey towards a greener future. Exploring options for more efficient fossil fuel alternatives for heating and lighting of the Council building/depot will be considered along with developing charging infrastructure at the depot for electric refuse vehicles.

As we say farewell to a difficult 2021 there have been many successes for Paul and his team to reflect back on with pride. I am very proud of all they have achieved and no doubt will achieve going forward. Myself, Paul and all the teams are looking forward to a very ambitious, exciting, and challenging 2022.

My thanks goes to Paul Coates and his team who have shown again a great commitment and team effort to deliver what's important to Blaby.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nigel Grundy

Senior Officer: Neighbourhood Services & Assets Group Manager

Portfolio Total

Corporate & Neighbourhood Services - Total	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£2,895,512	£2,914,339	£3,014,638	£119,126 4.11%	£100,299 3.44%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£1,706,462	£1,925,494	£1,820,881	£114,419 6.71%	-£104,613 -5.43%
3. Direct Income	-£1,892,548	-£2,028,493	-£2,285,423	-£392,875	-£256,930
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£2,709,426	£2,811,340	£2,550,096	-£159,330 -5.88%	-£261,244 -9.29%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	80.61	80.41	80.41	-0.20 -0.25%	0.00 0.00%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio includes the establishment and running costs in relation to the teams based at the Whetstone Depot, as well as Property Services. As with other portfolios, allowance has been made for a 2% pay award in 2022/23, and also contractual increments and on costs for national insurance and pensions. Other than this there have been no significant movements between 2021/22 and 2022/23, and the headcount for this portfolio remains substantially unchanged.

During 2021/22 there has been a significant increase in the number of new or replacement bins that have been needed, leading to an increase in budget of £87,000. This trend is expected to continue into 2022/23 albeit at a reduced level – an additional £50,000 has been allowed. It should be noted that these additional costs have been more than met by increased income, particularly from green waste collections. Also included in other gross direct expenditure are the recently approved costs of the Green Space Strategy (£15,000 in 2021/22 and £20,000 in 2022/23), and the options appraisal of the main office building (£50,000 each year). Both years make provision for the supply of litter picking kits to voluntary groups (£10,000 per annum), and replacement of public space bins (an additional £18,000 per annum).

This portfolio contains some of the Council's key income streams, including trade waste fees and charges and green waste collections. When the Schedule of Charges was approved by Cabinet in November 2021, it allowed for an inflationary increase of around 3% for most fees and charges relating to refuse and recycling. Since then, due to the size of the budget gap, Cabinet have informally approved the inclusion of additional increases to fees and charges, in particular, green waste collections and trade waste collections from schools and charities. Green waste charges are proposed to be increased by 10% on top of the current year charges, which would still not put Blaby out of line with many of our neighbouring authorities and would bring in approx. an additional £80,000 of income. Currently schools and charities receive a discretionary discount on the standard trade waste fees and it is proposed that this be removed from 1st April 2022, bringing in an additional £110,000.

The income budget also now includes £36,000 rent income in respect of the Old Bank, Narborough.

Parks & Open Spaces

Parks and Open Spaces	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£387,871	£387,871	£400,339	£12,468 3.21%	£12,468 3.21%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£160,075	£197,054	£186,104	£26,029 16.26%	-£10,950 -5.56%
3. Direct Income	-£45,114	-£45,114	-£46,614	-£1,500	-£1,500
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£502,832	£539,811	£539,829	£36,997 7.36%	£18 0.00%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	11.00	11.00	11.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The revised estimate includes non-reoccurring budget carried forward from 2020/21 for Tree Maintenance, Training and Open Spaces development due to delays caused by Covid-19 pandemic.
3. Budget in line with income received to date, and income expected by year end.
4. The net impact of changes referred to above.
5. No change.

District Cleansing

District Cleansing	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A] 	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£386,776	£366,603	£378,102	-£8,674 -2.24%	£11,499 3.14%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£34,595	£65,895	£64,200	£29,605 85.58%	-£1,695 -2.57%
3. Direct Income	-£83,200	-£83,200	-£90,000	-£6,800	-£6,800
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£338,171	£349,298	£352,302	£14,131 4.18%	£3,004 0.86%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	11.00	10.80	10.80	-0.20 -1.82%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The revised budget includes a virement of funds to cover the cost of changing Dog Waste Bins to Public Space Bins.
2. Adjustments to the revised budget as per note 1, plus additional budget added to cover the litter picking kit required for the volunteer litter pickers.
3. Increase in line with inflation.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Minimal change in hours.

Refuse Collection & Recycling

Refuse Collection & Recycling	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£1,716,827	£1,755,827	£1,788,282	£71,455 4.16%	£32,455 1.85%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£517,598	£577,558	£514,519	-£3,079 -0.59%	-£63,039 -10.91%
3. Direct Income	-£1,366,810	-£1,493,560	-£1,691,750	-£324,940 23.77%	-£198,190 13.27%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£867,615	£839,825	£611,051	-£256,564 -29.57%	-£228,774 -27.24%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	49.61	49.61	49.61	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The revised budget increase is due to Agency cover that has been required due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19.
2. Increase in the revised estimate is due to an increase in Domestic waste and Garden bins requests.
3. Increase in Garden and Domestic waste bins. Proposed Budget includes an increase in fees and charges for Green Waste and the removal of current discounts on Trade Waste.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

Fleet Management

Fleet Management	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£240,409	£240,409	£275,615	£35,206 14.64%	£35,206 14.64%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£406,800	£392,185	£409,555	£2,755 0.68%	£17,370 4.43%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£90	-£1,790	-£1,790	-£1,700
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£647,209	£632,504	£683,380	£36,171 5.59%	£50,876 8.04%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	0.00

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The revised fuel budget has been reduced to reflect the latest estimate of price and usage.
3. The income budget relates to repair charges recovered.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change.

Assets

Assets	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£163,629	£163,629	£172,300	£8,671 5.30%	£8,671 5.30%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£587,394	£692,802	£646,503	£59,109 10.06%	-£46,299 -6.68%
3. Direct Income	-£397,424	-£406,529	-£455,269	-£57,845	-£48,740
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£353,599	£449,902	£363,534	£9,935 2.81%	-£86,368 -19.20%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	4.00	4.00	4.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Non-recurring budget has been added to the revised from the Agile Working reserve to cover office changes. Additional budget has been added to cover costs of business rates in relation to vacant units at Enderby Road Industrial estate.
3. The income budget has been reviewed and revised in line with expected income for 2022/23.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No changes.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

Neighbourhood Services

No movement in staff has occurred over the last year.

Assets

No movement in staff has occurred over the last year.

Portfolio Priorities

Neighbourhood Services

To deliver an efficient and cost effective refuse and recycling service; and provide a clean and tidy district with well-maintained areas of open space.

Deliver a green spaces strategy.

Assets

Maximising the use of the council's assets.

Services

Neighbourhood Services

- **Refuse & Recycling**

The Refuse and Recycling service provides an alternate weekly collection service to over 43,000 households and a chargeable garden waste collection service to over 25,000 households. The service also provides bulky waste collection services with over 2,000 collections made per year. Trade waste collections are provided to over 500 local businesses

- **Parks & Open Spaces**

The Grounds Maintenance service carries out the amenity mowing and horticultural services on all the Strategic Parks and Open Spaces owned by Blaby District Council. Additional works are also carried out for a number of Parishes, local sports clubs and external partners.

- **District Cleansing**

District Cleansing delivers the litter picking, dog and litter bin emptying and street sweeping throughout Blaby District. In addition to this we also offer a litter and dog bin emptying service and the option of additional litter picking operatives for Parish Councils

at agreed rates. We currently have approximately of 1,000 litter and dog bins which are emptied on frequencies dependant on their usage.

- **Fleet Management**

The Fleet consists of 21 HGV's, 25 Vans (below 3.5 Tonnes), 1 pool car, 1 tractor and side arm, 1 compact sweeper, 7 ride on mowers, 6 trailers, 12 assorted plant and equipment all of which are maintained and serviced in house at Whetstone Depot. The O licence for the fleet, for which there is a legal requirement in order to operate the service, is held by the Transport Services Manager.

- **Assets**

This includes costs for the Council Offices and the Depot, including the facilities management and maintenance of the buildings and the associated grounds maintenance. Also includes expenditure incurred in relation to public conveniences, the Glebe Road Caravan site in Countesthorpe, bus shelters, car parks, Enderby Road Industrial Estate and costs associated with the administration of property and assets owned by the Council. The team also administers Asset of Community Value applications made by residents.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Refuse & Recycling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trade waste charging structure will be reviewed in the coming year to ensure that charges are competitive and to identify opportunities for further income generation. • At time of writing the national waste consultation due imminently may require the authority to undertake separate weekly food waste collections in 2023/24. This year will see the preparations of weekly food waste collections. A review of the Leicestershire Waste Strategy is in progress concurrently and will have an associated action plan to be approved by Council in summer 2022. <p><u>District Cleansing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and build on the success of the Council's volunteer litter picking initiative and continue to rationalise litter and dog bin locations following the move to dual waste bins in the district. <p><u>Parks and Open Spaces</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review long term management plan for the development of countryside sites as part of developing and delivering a new green spaces strategy
---	---

	<p><u>Assets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An options appraisal of the Council's future accommodation requirements will be undertaken with consideration given to maximising the potential of its key strategic sites. Focus will continue on improving staff side accommodation to the existing building to build on the momentum of agile working and to ensure the building is still fit for use in the short to medium term. • The Assets team will be undertaking a number of green related projects this year including internal LED lighting in the offices, and replacement green heating solutions at the Council offices. Work will continue at the depot to explore the potential for providing heating and lighting solutions from renewable energy such as solar panels and Air Source Heat Pumps. In addition work will continue to understand the Council's future fleet energy solutions to ensure a reliable and robust electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
Income generation	<p><u>Refuse & Recycling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will continue to charge for larger or additional bins following the introduction of alternate weekly collection. • The Council will continue to charge for Garden bins. • The Council will review its fees and charges to identify options of further growth in income. <p><u>District Cleansing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will continue to provide chargeable services to parish councils and developers for litter bin collections. <p><u>Parks and Open Spaces</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service will continue to provide services for Parish Council's and will explore other opportunities to maximise income. <p><u>Fleet Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will implement chargeable taxi vehicle inspections and MOT's in 2022-23. <p><u>Assets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The utilisation of the Council's assets to obtain revenue or improve usage is an ongoing initiative. The lease of the Council offices to NHS and Citizens Advice Bureau not only bring revenue opportunities but also better outcomes for our customers with partners such as these delivering services alongside our own officers. • Income generation is also obtained via leased rental agreements on the Enderby Road Industrial Estate and Countesthorpe Mobile Home site.

Capital plans for the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various schemes to improve the accessibility and enjoyment of the Council's strategic countryside parks • Replacing end of life fleet vehicles in accordance with the 5 year capital programme. • The replacement of the central heating system, and LED lighting, at the Council Offices, and various works on management plans at our strategic parks and open spaces. • Replacement of existing toilet block on Blaby village centre with a modern self-cleaning, unisex unit that will minimise anti-social behaviour.
---------------------------------	---

Key Performance Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR – NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES	2020-21	COMMENTS
Percentage of waste collected which is recycled.	42.4 %	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling rates have remained static which is usual when there is no service change such as reduced refuse capacity or no additional recyclable material collected.

Customers

The portfolio delivers many frontline services. Customer feedback is essential with all services to ensure we are outcome focussed and are actually delivering what really matters to and is valued by the customer. This information is used to help shape and measure service delivery.

The Assets team has a variety of different customers, both internal and external. These include, for example, requests from staff and managers for changes to the layout of the offices, local businesses in respect of the Enderby Road Industrial Estate, and also Parish Councils and a variety of legal representatives. Internally the team provides professional property advice as required. The team also has a clear responsibility to ensure that all council buildings are accessible and meet the wide needs of residents who visit the offices.

Risks

Increased staffing issues particularly regarding HGV driver shortage nationally and self-isolation from particularly virulent Covid variants may result in some service disruption throughout the year.

This page is intentionally left blank

Foreword

This is the first time the areas covered in my portfolio have come together as one group since the reporting changes in May 2021 and during this time there has been a significant number of new requirements and priorities across all the teams.

These changes have led to increases in the range and level of work and the focus of immediate priorities meaning that staff have had to constantly adapt their approach throughout.

The group have risen to the challenge and whilst being at the forefront of the ongoing management of the Covid 19 pandemic have continued to deliver the core aims of the business.

The work has ranged from Covid business Spot checks and advice provision through to the invaluable support for our residents who are facing times of hardship with rising rent, food and fuel costs, reductions in the uplift to Universal Credit and increases in the levels of domestic abuse and homelessness to name a few.

Housing Services have responded to the increased numbers of households that are presenting as homeless by utilising funding streams such as the “contain grant” and recruiting into fixed term posts to meet the additional need presenting. The team continue to provide homeless households, including those with mental health issues and those who face losing their homes, as a result of the lifting of the eviction ban, with a safe place to stay.

The Council Tax & Benefits team have managed an increased level of change with the 2020 hiatus in residents being unable to move freely then impacting and doubling up the numbers of residents moving out, in and within the district in 2021 – coupled with the temporary relaxation of stamp duty initiatives. In addition to that the NHS Test and Trace, introduced as a temporary measure and devolved to local authority staff to draw up schemes and administer for a few months in 2020 has now seen its 5th extension through 2021 and is still running – at present until 31 March 2022.

The Community Services team have incorporated the role of the Community Hub into everyday work ensuring that food parcels, vouchers and where needed, more complex help, is offered to those residents who need it most within the district.

Environmental Health whilst continuing to deliver the additional Covid 19 advice and enforcement requirements are now also well on the way to achieving the standards set out by the Food Standards Agency Covid recovery plan.

Environmental Services are back on target with permitted process inspections and delivery of the Air Quality DEFRA funded grant bids whilst also continuing to manage the ongoing emergency incident at HLC.

The priorities for my Portfolio are:

Housing Services

- Increasing the supply of Affordable Homes
- Provide specialist housing for vulnerable groups
- Work to prevent homelessness and end rough sleeping
- Work to minimise the environmental impact of the existing housing stock and future housing development.

Community Services

- Refresh the Prevent Strategy Action Plan.
- Refresh and update the Community Safety Partnership Action Plan.
- Effective delivery of the new youth divisionary programme.
- Embedding Trauma Informed Practice across the service delivery.
- Develop a new digital offer to offer more “self-help” access and allow focus to be maintained on more complex cases.
- Delivery of both group work and face to face sessions for areas such as Felling Safe, Recovery Toolkit and Healing Together.

Council Tax & Benefits

We still await details for any plans of further roll out of Universal Credit and the phasing out of older legacy benefits. The Department for Work and Pensions are not yet in a ‘steady state’ to be able to move to this stage. The national picture has not yet stabilised and challenges continue on different fronts. Other DWP initiatives are moving albeit slowly with occasional pausing whilst other temporary schemes are extended.

- To recruit to key personnel positions within the team
- To re-direct a proportion of email demand over to alternative self-serve or digital services.
- To procure and implement a new Document Management System and Workflow system within the team.
- To maintain a steady state benefit and council tax/business rates system.

Environmental Health

- Ensure the statutory food inspection programme is delivered in line with the Food Standards Agency Covid Recovery Plan.
- To continue to tackle Envirocrime across the district through the use of marketing campaigns, social media and enforcement.
- To continue to deliver the new legislative requirements of the Covid-19 advisory and enforcement role.

- To implement the new Fit & Proper Person Policy within the Caravan Site Licensing scheme

Environmental Services

- Develop the long term strategy for managing the land fill gas at the Huncote Leisure Centre site
- Undertake a review of contaminated land and its management across the district
- Deliver our Air Quality Action Plan.
- Review and Update Car Parking Strategy.
- Deliver our Carbon Neutral Action Plan.
- To review, update and renew our core Licensing policy and procedural documents.

The risks and challenges to my Portfolio are:

- The possible introduction of new Covid restrictions and regulations that may fall to the Environmental Health team to regulate.
- The introduction of new Covid restrictions that may impact on the ability of the Environmental Health team to undertake the statutory food inspection programme.
- We cannot build enough affordable homes to meet the demand, this continues to be tested by an increase in homelessness cases.
- The increase in homelessness cases has and will continue to impact on the availability of temporary accommodation.
- Lack of supported provision for single households with complex needs will increase the time some people stay in temporary accommodation.
- A reduction in affordable housing funding or strategic partnership funding will impact upon new affordable housing for both general needs and supported accommodation.
- Lack of land availability or suitability for Registered Providers to acquire land will result in a drop in new affordable housing units and available public subsidy being repositioned elsewhere.
- Embedding Trauma Informed Practice into our frontline services.
- Key personnel leaving or reducing their hours within the Council Tax & Benefits team.
- To implement a new document management and workflow system within council Tax & Benefits.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Les Phillimore

**Senior Officer: Environmental Health, Housing & Community Services
Group Manager**

Portfolio Total

Housing, Community and Environmental Services - Total	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£2,673,060	£2,673,884	£2,768,718	£95,658 3.58%	£94,834 3.55%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£12,020,972	£20,035,391	£11,121,692	-£899,280 -7.48%	-£8,913,699 -44.49%
3. Direct Income	-£12,360,662	-£19,580,918	-£11,355,371	£1,005,291 -8.13%	£8,225,547 -42.01%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£2,333,370	£3,128,357	£2,535,039	£201,669 8.64%	-£593,318 -18.97%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	68.22	70.56	72.02	3.80 5.57%	1.46 2.07%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio incorporates the establishment and operational costs in respect of Housing, Community Services, Revenues & Benefits, and Environmental Health & Services. As with all other portfolios, the establishment costs include provision for a 2% pay award, contractual increments, national insurance and pension contributions. The social care levy forms part of the national insurance contributions. The headcount shows a slight increase over 2021/22 due to the inclusion of three fixed term, externally funded posts within Environmental Services, and an apprentice post in the Housing team.

Under the umbrella of other gross direct expenditure in 2021/22 we have included a number of one-off, non-recurring items of expenditure that are largely funded by grant. The most significant of these relates to the business support grants issued by Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Linked to this are a number of smaller grant-funded items in relation to the test and trace initiative and other similar new burdens associated with the pandemic. There are also grant-funded budgets in relation to climate initiatives (LAD2), and air quality projects that are expected to be time limited to 2021/22 only, subject to the availability of new funding in 2022/23.

The reduction in direct expenditure reflected in 2022/23, compared with the original 2021/22 budget, is in relation to an expected fall in the housing benefit caseload. This is mirrored by a reduction in housing benefit subsidy within the income line, and reflects the trend highlighted in the latest subsidy claim.

The movement in direct income is reflective of the matters highlighted above in relation to non-recurring grant income or other external funding, as well as an expected reduction in housing benefit subsidy. Within that overall movement there is also a reduction in expected income from car parks. Football has still not returned to pre-pandemic levels and as a consequence income is expected to fall around £75,000 short of the approved budget. It is hoped that the picture will improve in 2022/23 but we are still unlikely to return to the same level of income as seen in previous years. A review of the car parking strategy is due to commence in quarter 4 (January to March) in this financial year.

Environmental Health and Environmental Services

Environmental Health	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£833,691	£834,515	£886,221	£52,530 6.30%	£51,706 6.20%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£280,174	£661,215	£274,136	-£6,038 -2.16%	-£387,079 -58.54%
3. Direct Income	-£402,921	-£561,896	-£375,771	£27,150 -6.74%	£186,125 -33.12%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£710,944	£933,834	£784,586	£73,642 10.36%	-£149,248 -15.98%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	20.03	22.37	22.37	2.34 11.68%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2021/22 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Budget carried forward from 2020/21 for specific projects is included within the revised estimate, as well as additional funding received in the year for Climate change and Air Quality projects.
3. The income budget for car parking has been revised and reduced in line with actual income received and expected, and additional funding received as per note 2 has been added to the revised estimate.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. 3 x fixed term externally funded posts added

Council Tax & Benefits

Revenues and Benefits	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
6. Establishment Costs	£817,814	£817,814	£832,327	£14,513 1.77%	£14,513 1.77%
7. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£11,511,148	£18,636,400	£10,585,416	-£925,732 -8.04%	-£8,050,984 -43.20%
8. Direct Income	-£11,782,941	-£18,677,622	-£10,798,500	£984,441 -8.35%	£7,879,122 -42.18%
9. Net Direct Expenditure	£546,021	£776,592	£619,243	£73,222 13.41%	-£157,349 -20.26%
10. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	24.10	24.10	24.56	0.46 1.91%	0.46 1.91%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Gross Direct Expenditure mainly comprises the amount of estimated rent allowance that is due to be paid out by the authority to assist local residents in staying in their homes because they are on a low income, or in receipt of certain benefits. The revised estimate includes Covid-19 Discretionary and Small Business Grants paid to residents, as well as budget carried forward from 2020/21 to fund specific projects.
3. The Direct Income figures include all government grants, one off costs, new burdens, rewards and subsidy.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. Fixed term post removed.

Community Services

Community Services	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£443,075	£443,075	£434,355	-£8,720 -1.97%	-£8,720 -1.97%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£34,650	£235,340	£27,300	-£7,350 -21.21%	-£208,040 -88.40%
3. Direct Income	-£26,700	-£80,000	-£27,600	-£900 3.37%	£52,400 -65.50%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£451,025	£598,415	£434,055	-£16,970 -3.76%	-£164,360 -27.47%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	10.59	10.59	10.59	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. One off budget provision carried forward from 2020/21 is included in the revised budget to fund specific projects.
3. Revised Estimate includes Grant funding received and contributions towards Resident Support service expenses.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change. Fixed term post which was due to end in 2021/22, is to be funded by unspent External funding in 2022/23.

Housing Services

Housing Services	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£464,513	£464,513	£510,465	£45,952 9.89%	£45,952 9.89%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£193,000	£500,500	£232,800	£39,800 20.62%	-£267,700 -53.49%
3. Direct Income	-£148,100	-£261,400	-£153,500	-£5,400 3.65%	£107,900 -41.28%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£509,413	£703,613	£589,765	£80,352 15.77%	-£113,848 -16.18%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	12.00	12.00	13.00	1.00 8.33%	1.00 8.33%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Revised includes Grant funding received in the year and Government grant funding carried forward from 2020/21 to be used for reducing homelessness.
3. This represents income from Housing Benefit for households placed in temporary accommodation as well as Government grant funding.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. Apprentice post added.

Management & Administration

Group Manager	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£113,967	£113,967	£105,350	-£8,617 -7.56%	-£8,617 -7.56%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£2,000	£1,936	£2,040	£40 2.00%	£104 5.37%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£115,967	£115,903	£107,390	-£8,577 -7.40%	-£8,513 -7.34%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Budget revised in line with actual expenditure.
3. No income in respect of this cost centre.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

Council Tax & Benefits

The 2021/22 direct income does not include any new burdens funding, administration grant funding for pandemic related initiatives or grants, any one off cost contributions made to the Council from various sources for any new, sudden and immediate, or software changes or costs for start-up or administration.

Community Services

Income only includes external funding where that funding stream has been confirmed. Similarly, staffing costs do not include externally funded posts for which funding is unconfirmed (0.5 FTE Children's Worker funded by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council) 1 FTE fixed term Community Services Staff is to be funded from unspent External funding to be carried forward to 2022/23.

Housing Services

A review of the service was approved by Members in May 2020. This results in an increase in posts and recruitment into those roles has now been completed. This will assist the Housing Services Team in managing the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act, the increase in homelessness applications as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as being able to retain experienced staff members that have previously been lost to higher paying neighbouring authorities. The apprentice and part time posts were covered by the Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2020/21, however these posts are now also part of the establishment budget.

Environmental Health

Additional funding has been received from National government to support the delivery of the additional enforcement work in relation to guidance and enforcement of Covid 19 Restrictions. This has included additional hours at the weekend and evenings for existing staff, some of the food inspection work has also been outsourced to a consultant and the additional cost of a marshalling service to undertake regular advice and compliance visits at events to ensure compliance to Covid 19 regulations.

Environmental Services

A bid has been submitted to DEFRA for an Air Quality Grant, we should know the result of this in February 2022. Car park usage has not increased to pre-pandemic levels but the number of transactions using pay by phone has increased. Unspent budget allocation allocated to the green agenda and the air quality grant will be carried forward to the next year.

Portfolio Priorities

Council Tax & Benefits

- To recruit to key personnel positions within the team
- To re-direct a proportion of email demand over to alternative self-serve or digital services.
- To procure and implement a new Document Management System and Workflow system within the team.
- To maintain a steady state benefit and council tax/business rates system

Community Services Team

- To refresh the annual CSP strategy action plan
- To support all high Schools to take up the offer from the Violence Reduction Network.
- To support all Primary Schools to improve uptake of the schools offer.
- To become a Trauma Informed Practice Team
- To deliver new group work sessions (Healing Together in particular)
- To deliver the annual programme of campaigns and awareness for Community Safety

Housing Services:

- To take an active role in the delivery of the County wide Government funded Rough Sleepers Initiatives and Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme.
- Preventing and relieving homelessness in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act
- To ensure maximisation of affordable housing delivery
- To enable new supply of supported housing provision
- To increase Private Sector Housing provision
- To provide further Member Training on the local housing and homelessness picture and affordable housing delivery.

Environmental Health:

- Delivery of the statutory food inspection programme in line with the Food Standards Agency Covid Recovery Plan.
- To continue to tackle Envirocrime across the district through the use of marketing campaigns, social media and enforcement.

Environmental Services

- Develop the long term strategy for managing the land fill gas at the Huncote Leisure Centre site
- Undertake a review of contaminated land and its management across the district
- Deliver our Air Quality Action Plan
- Deliver our Carbon Neutral Action Plan.

- To review, update and renew our core Licensing policy and procedure documents.
- Review and update the Car Parking Strategy.

Key points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Council Tax & Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to revise the service to take account of any legislative changes or phasing of Universal Credit. • To move demand into a self-serve option or explore digital options. • To replace the document management storage and retrieval system along with options for work flow. <p><u>Housing Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to influence housing requirements on major planning applications • Review and reduce temporary accommodation options • Improve housing statistics reporting and information management • Enabling new supported provision within the District • Operating an effective private rented sector service for both tenants and landlords <p><u>Environmental Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scanning of licensing documents into the DMS system and getting rid of paper files. • Work continues to implement back office system for EPR, Contaminated Land, Service Requests, Licensing and Planning Consultations. • Online access to Licensing Services. • Undertake taxi testing at the depot and online access for all licenses to improve the customer journey. • Deliver actions within the adopted air quality action plan. • Deliver the Carbon Neutral Action Plan <p><u>Community Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To produce the Annual Community Safety Partnership Strategy Action Plan for 2022-23 • To support the delivery of the Violence Reduction Network Mentors In Violence programme in all High Schools • To fully embed Trauma Informed Practice in our front line service delivery
---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop our performance management process to produce meaningful outcomes and data. <p><u>Environmental Health:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue to develop the Envirocrime work plan, liaising with colleagues from the Neighbourhood Services Team and partners across the county. • To introduce the Fit & Proper Person Register within the caravan site licensing regime. • To undertake a full review and update of the procedures across the work area.
Income generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maximise overpayment recovery. • To minimise local authority overpayment error by getting it right first time and maintain DWP reward incentives • Timely returns for the DWP, NHS Test and Trace and Inland Revenue • The correct interpretation and applications of any government led change, grants or funding • Collection from the timely and efficiently paid instalments of Council Tax and Business Rates • Car parks • Licensing for animal health • Permitted process income • Regulatory income • Provision of Accommodation certificates • Food Hygiene Re-Score requests. • Provision of Food Product Export Certificates
Capital plans for the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purchase of a replacement document storage and management product with full workflow capability for the Council Tax and Benefits Team and the Income and Collection Team. • To renegotiate the contract for the provision of the Council Tax and Benefits software. Northgate has changed its name to NEC and there have been previous extensions. There is still no pressing need to replace the current software • Money to undertake works at Huncote Leisure Centre to mitigate the impact of landfill gas.

Key Performance Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
Number of cases where homelessness has been prevented	323	207	118	The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) places a duty on the Council to work with applicants for longer in order to help prevent them from becoming homeless. The figure currently remains consistent with previous years.
Number of homelessness applications taken	230	193	110	The total number of applications no longer applies as the HRA splits cases into 'prevention' and 'relief'. This 2020/21 figure represents the number of homeless cases that fall into the relief category. It should be noted that in addition to this figure there have been a further 207 prevention cases that have also been opened and to which the Council has a duty to take reasonable steps (including setting up personalised housing plans) in order to prevent homelessness.
Number of Affordable Houses	47	30	69	Due to delays in receiving completions data this figure is no longer recorded on a month by month basis. The actual figure will be recorded at year end.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
Percentage of benefit claims which were paid correctly	87.72%	87.72%	88.89%	There has been a reduced amount of monitoring carried out since September 2020 due to the Monitoring Officer role being seconded to the Test and Trace support payment work and service. To address this we have used screen sharing and virtual training sessions to improve accuracy. The previous external audit outcome confirmed good accuracy in compilation of the subsidy claim.
Number of ASB cases reported in Blaby	984	926	643	These are Police figures of total ASB reported.
Support services (Resident Support/Children's Worker/Domestic Abuse)– number of people supported	480	427	309	Reduced numbers reflect periods of time during lockdown meant that some of the services were unable to operate or operated in a different way.

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
Total number of long term empty homes returned into use		884	770 (up to end of Sep 21)	Due to the transfer to a new database 19/20 data is not available. Over the last two years staff have been undertaking a large amount of work on the new database and improving reporting and recording mechanisms.
Number of large fly tipping incidents	689	1092	434 (up to the end of November 21)	Large increase seen in 20/21 due to the impact of lockdown & tip closures. Since March 21 the number of incidents have dropped to close to pre-pandemic levels.

Number of food premises with a rating of 3 or above (satisfactory)	753 out of 835 food businesses (some businesses don't get a FHRs such as Manufacturers etc)	537 out of 553 rated food businesses . 907 food businesses in total	594 out of 611. 888 food businesses in total	We have seen an increase in the number of new businesses starting up during the pandemic providing take away food and home caterers. The majority have now been rated as part of the food inspection recovery programme.
--	--	---	---	--

Customers:

- There continues to be an Increased use of email for both outgoing and incoming contact will save on postage costs and information supplied more efficiently to the Council Offices
- Changes or phasing for the DWP Universal Credit process will receive careful and considered preparation
- Businesses will receive clear guidance and timely responses to applications for assistance
- Community Services carry out an annual Community Safety Partnership survey asking residents for their views on how safe the district is and what their community safety priorities are.
- Licensing have and will be continuing to consult on changes in Policies and Practices within the Licensing function.
- Information on how many Community Trigger (ASB reviews) and the outcomes are now on the website and the approach is continuing to be reviewed.

Risks:

- Recruitment and retention of qualified staff.
- Should Covid restrictions be introduced in the hospitality sector it may not be possible to complete the food inspection programme in line with the Food Standards Agency recovery plan.
- Should further Covid restrictions be introduced there will be a significant impact on the workload of the Environmental Health Team, which could have a detrimental impact on the ability to deliver other services within the team.
- Lack of affordable housing will increase homelessness.
- Lack of suitable supported provision in the affordable sector could lead to a lack of appropriate accommodation for the more complex homelessness cases.
- Any reduction in the homelessness grant funding will impact on service delivery.
- Errors made by less experienced staff that may then impact on residents (Council Tax & Benefits).

This page is intentionally left blank

The past year has seen us move toward a post-Covid world. We have seen some return to normal, however, customer demand remains high. Household planning applications have increased, as have call volumes through the customer services and online visits with form submission increasing.

Planning, Enforcement & Local Plan

Our new Local Plan is progressing well, we continue to be mindful of future impacts including Leicester City unmet need, White Paper – Planning for the future and changes to how we work.

We ran several local plan workshops and we'll run more. These informally keep members up-to date of the progress so far, further supporting the work of scrutiny to ensure we're all happy with our new Local Plan when we make that final decision.

Development services are still getting planning decisions through to our customers. With investment in the last year for further resources, we can ensure they continue to deliver, allowing us to also look at other opportunities, such as charging for pre-app.

Large-scale projects are progressing at pace. New Lubbesthorpe continues to grow with critical infrastructure being provided at the right time, and work on other potential strategic sites continue, which will ensure that any potential development proposals are shaped through the work from officers, right from the start.

Enforcement continues to be customer focused, working with residents to ensure the best outcome. High-profile and sensitive enforcement cases are ongoing.

Digital & Customer Services

In the last year our Corporate Services Group Manager and Customer Services Manager left the organisation. As an interim measure, the Communications Manager is leading the ICT and the Project Advisor and Co-ordinator has taken on the role of Interim Customer Access Service Manager.

While changes to how we work continue, it's important that our organisation and members are correctly equipped to carry out their duties. That's why in the last year we have invested in ICT equipment for officers and members, allowing mobile working especially useful when home working is required. Our ICT contract/ service is evolving (see the ICT Briefing Note at Appendix F for details), and we'll continue to make sure this best fits our Blaby District ambitions.

Remote working and virtual meetings have become the norm, we'll continue to invest here to make sure officers and members can work flexibly.

Future

Our focus continues to be on delivering for the customer. While pressures have been increased as a result of the Covid pandemic, we are being successful in reducing our planning backlog and delivering on digital service improvements. For example, our success in the garden waste campaign has increased subscriptions and revenue for the Council.

We will be reviewing our approach to customer access over the coming year, including opening hours and the use of the reception. We'll ensure that we continue to provide and improve digital access to services for residents and businesses.

My thanks go out to all our officers who have worked tirelessly to ensure customers come first in such a difficult time.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ben Taylor

**Senior Officer: Strategic Director, Planning & Strategic Growth Group
Manager, Communications Manager, Interim Customer
Service Access Manager**

Portfolio Total

Planning Delivery & Enforcement and Corporate Transformation - Total	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£2,293,522	£2,372,523	£2,377,984	£84,462 3.68%	£5,461 0.23%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£1,252,910	£1,514,187	£1,170,799	-£82,111 -6.55%	-£343,388 -22.68%
3. Direct Income	-£779,400	-£679,285	-£731,626	£47,774	-£52,341
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£2,767,032	£3,207,425	£2,817,157	£50,125 1.81%	-£390,268 -12.17%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	53.21	54.21	53.25	0.04 0.08%	-0.96 -1.77%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio includes the establishment and operational costs relating to Planning, ICT, Customer Services and Communications. Once again, establishment costs make allowance for a 2% pay award, contractual increments, and national insurance and pension contributions. The headcount remains materially unchanged overall.

Other gross direct expenditure has been increased in the 2021/22 revised estimate to take account of unspent budget and/or funding brought forward from 2020/21. This is largely new burdens funding for costs in relation to the Brownfield Land Register and Custom Build Register, and is not a guaranteed annual income stream.

In terms of 2022/23, Cabinet has informally agreed that the Contact Magazine budget is removed. Contact has not been produced since before the pandemic and no negative feedback has been received from residents in the meantime. This brings a saving of £27,100. £50,000 has been removed from the budget in respect of the potential cost of inspection of the Local Plan. This will not be needed until at least 2023/24 and will, in any event, be funded from the Local Plan Reserve.

The current contract for delivery of ICT services, outsourced to Sopra Steria, comes to an end on 31st December 2021. The new contract, led by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, takes effect from 1st January 2022 at an additional cost in 2021/22 of £126,000. Due to underspends in the wider ICT budget it is felt that this additional cost can be accommodated within existing budgets. The full year cost to Blaby in 2022/23 is expected to be £505,000, including the Web Team. This represents an estimated increase of £92,000 compared with the current year approved budget. The cost is based upon Blaby's share of the number of active users across the partnership (Blaby, Hinckley, and Melton). Other savings within the wider ICT budgets mean that this additional cost has broadly been negated. The Council will also be working with the Partnership to ensure ongoing investment to support the transformation of services.

The key income stream within this portfolio is planning fees. Income from planning fees has taken a significant hit as a result of the pandemic; even though planning application numbers have remained high, they have mainly been small householder-type applications that do not generate such high fees. Larger scale applications have fallen away since 2020/21 and, although income has begun to pick up again it is unlikely to return to pre-pandemic levels for some time. The shortfall in 2021/22 can be met from a combination of the income loss provision and compensation received from the Government. That is not the case in 2022/23, where a shortfall of £208,000 is forecast in comparison to the 2021/22 approved budget. The other income within this portfolio is mainly grant funding and S106 contributions, both of which are used to offset expenditure relating to major planning schemes and salary costs.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Development Strategy	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£268,581	£268,581	£277,679	£9,098 3.39%	£9,098 3.39%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£93,594	£194,897	£39,834	-£53,760 -57.44%	-£155,063 -79.56%
3. Direct Income	-£2,000	-£39,260	-£2,000	£0	£37,260
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£360,175	£424,218	£315,513	-£44,662 -12.40%	-£108,705 -25.62%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.50	5.50	5.50	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The revised budget includes significant grants and S106 monies carried forward from 2021/22 relating to the Neighbourhood planning, Local Development Framework and the production of the Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). Any budget that is not utilised in the year will be transferred to an Earmarked reserve.
3. No change.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

PLANNING DELIVERY

Planning Delivery	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£580,621	£580,621	£583,996	£3,375 0.58%	£3,375 0.58%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£107,663	£124,724	£108,917	£1,254 1.16%	-£15,807 -12.67%
3. Direct Income	-£768,000	-£520,000	-£560,000	£208,000	-£40,000
4. Net Direct Expenditure	-£79,716	£185,345	£132,913	£212,629 -266.73%	-£52,432 -28.29%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	13.61	13.61	12.65	-0.96 -7.05%	-0.96 -7.05%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions as well as increase due to career progression posts.
2. The revised budget includes a one off carry forward from 2020/21 towards consultant fees and training.
3. Income budget reduced in line with expected income, reduction due to the impact of Covid-19.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. One part time post seconded to the Strategic Growth team.

ENFORCEMENT

Planning Enforcement	2021/22 Approved Budget	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2022/23 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£204,541	£204,541	£216,725	£12,184 5.96%	£12,184 5.96%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£13,046	£19,306	£12,396	-£650 -4.98%	-£6,910 -35.79%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£217,587	£223,847	£229,121	£11,534 5.30%	£5,274 2.36%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	4.81	4.81	4.81	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The revised budget includes budget approved for consultants' fees relating to Enforcement action carried forward from 2021/22.
3. Not applicable.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

STRATEGIC GROWTH

Strategic Growth	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£228,238	£307,239	£262,288	£34,050 14.92%	-£44,951 -14.63%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£14,784	£150,017	£31,410	£16,626 112.46%	-£118,607 -79.06%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£88,225	-£158,826	-£158,826	-£70,601
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£243,022	£369,031	£134,872	-£108,150 -44.50%	-£234,159 -63.45%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.86	6.86	6.86	1.00 17.06%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The budget also includes a seconded part time fixed term post.
2. 2021/22 revised estimate includes non recurring expenditure brought forward from 2020/21.
3. Revised budget and proposed budget includes confirmed external funding.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. As per note 1.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£733,953	£733,953	£750,018	£16,065 2.19%	£16,065 2.19%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£226,300	£211,080	£181,980	-£44,320 -19.58%	-£29,100 -13.79%
3. Direct Income	-£9,400	-£31,800	-£10,800	-£1,400	£21,000
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£950,853	£913,233	£921,198	-£29,655 -3.12%	£7,965 0.87%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	20.43	20.43	20.43	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The budget has been reviewed and revised to make savings where possible.
3. The increased income reflected in the revised budget relates to one off external Web support.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change

ICT Services

ICT Services	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£736,550	£736,550	£735,649	-£901 -0.12%	-£901 -0.12%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£736,550	£736,550	£735,649	-£901 -0.12%	-£901 -0.12%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Reasons for Variances

1. No associated Establishment costs
2. The proposed budget includes an increase in relation to the change in ICT Service.
3. No associated income
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No applicable

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

Management & Admin	2021/22 Approved Budget [A]	2021/22 Revised Estimate [B]	2022/23 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£277,588	£277,588	£287,278	£9,690 3.49%	£9,690 3.49%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£60,973	£77,973	£60,973	£0 0.00%	-£17,000 -21.80%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£338,561	£355,561	£348,251	£9,690 2.86%	-£7,310 -2.06%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	3.00	3.00	3.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2022/23 Establishment budget takes account of the estimated pay award yet to be confirmed, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Revised estimate includes one off carry forward of budget from 2021/22 in relation to Software Maintenance due to procurement delays following the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. No income receivable in respect of this service.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

The establishment budget for this portfolio includes contractual increases in relation to the new pay spine, increments and employer contributions for national insurance and pensions. Approval was given for additional posts in the Planning & Strategic Growth department, following a report to Council in November 2021; and whilst this is reflected in the head count, the increase to the establishment budget for the additional resource does not take effect until 2023/24 due to external funding.

There is currently a vacant post in the Communications Team and Customer Services will begin recruiting for at least 1 Customer Service Advisor (this could include a 2nd or an Apprentice) during the year.

An Interim Customer Access Service Manager has been appointed from the 6th December 2021.

Portfolio Priorities

Priorities for 2022/23 for the portfolio include:

- 1. Large scale strategic projects.** The strategic growth team is managing a full range of large-scale projects. These include a rail freight terminal, garden village, further potential large-scale site near to Stoney Stanton, and Fosse Park West. Significant milestones for 2022 include a formal public consultation for rail freight terminal project.
- 2. New Local Plan.** The next 12 months will see a number of important milestones for the new Local Plan, as we move closer to a submission version. Further detailed work will result in a draft final version of the Plan during 2022.
- 3. Respond to Planning Reforms.** During 2020, a number of consultations were undertaken by the Government on proposed reforms to the planning system. These reforms, should they be taken forward, will have a significant impact on the way we work in most planning related areas. We are hopeful of further consultation and guidance from Government as quickly as possible, which enables us to start considering the changes.
- 4. Delivering a high performing Development Management Service.** Planning application levels continue to be extremely high, and the team have delivered a quality and customer focussed service despite these demands. The focus for 2022 will be on continuing with this approach, reducing the backlog even further, and ensuring sufficient resources.
- 5. High profile enforcement action.** Ongoing action will continue for a number of current high-profile cases; with Enforcement Notice appeal outcomes expected during 2022. In addition, the team will continue their pro-active approach across the District, in dealing with a varied case load of investigations.
- 6. Joint Strategic Planning –** work continues across Leicester and Leicestershire to support the delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan, key infrastructure to enable

future growth, and other 'cross boundary' projects. We are exploring all opportunities to work collaboratively with other local authorities; to ensure that we can maximise opportunities and efficiencies.

- 7. Delivery of the Lubbesthorpe Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE).** The new community is going from strength to strength. Around 600 houses are now occupied, the first primary school is open, and works continue to deliver the road infrastructure. To date the development has now won five awards. Key milestones for 2022/23 will include the opening of the first Local Centre (including health centre), and development of the leisure offer and secondary school.
- 8. Continue to deliver a high quality, first point of contact, service to the customer.** Review the Customer Service Delivery Model, in line with the review of customer access channels and the digital transformation activities across the authority.
- 9. Digital service delivery and integration for Council Tax and Benefits.** Review and improve the digital transformation activities for Council Tax and Benefits. Implementing solutions to further improve operational efficiency with the service, whilst retaining or improving the customer experience.
- 10. Raise the profile of the Leicestershire Building Control Partnership.** Following the work to launch the partnership in April 2022, including the new website, online forms and marketing/launch campaign – communication and marketing activities will continue throughout the year to help raise the profile and reputation of LBCP.
- 11. Development and delivery of the annual communications and marketing plans.** To support new initiatives and service delivery.
- 12. Continue to maintain and develop the Council's corporate website** www.blaby.gov.uk, www.visitblaby.org.uk, and launch www.lbc.co.uk for the building control partnership. Work also continues to support services with corporate branding and accessibility compliance of web solutions.
- 13. Delivery of the ICT priorities.** Please refer to the ICT briefing note for ICT, digital transformation and web priorities. HBBC will be recruiting for the LICT Partnership to a number of key roles.

Services

The portfolio comprises the following services:

Planning & Strategic Growth:

Development Strategy

The purpose of the Development Strategy Service is to ensure that the district has a robust and up-to-date strategic framework for planning decisions. The Local Plan, and other key planning policies, are the key mechanisms for place shaping and the delivery of many other corporate priorities.

This budget includes the costs of Planning Policy Officers and a Planning Obligations Officer; all involved in developing robust policies and guidance, gathering and interpreting the data necessary to do this, advising on the interpretation of policies and designing and implementing initiatives to deliver strategic objectives.

Planning Delivery

The purpose of the Planning Delivery Service is to ensure that development is acceptable whilst determining planning applications as fast as possible.

This budget includes the costs of Planning Officers and Technical staff involved in providing advice to potential applicants and determining applications.

Planning Enforcement

This budget includes the costs of Enforcement Officers, who monitor development across the district, carry out investigations, enforce planning controls, and take forward prosecutions where necessary.

Strategic Growth Team

This team manages a range of high profile, large-scale, strategic projects. These are considered to be projects which fall outside of the usual planning process, due to their profile and need for a more complex range of skills – a typical example would be housing developments of more than 1,000 houses.

This budget includes the cost of a manager, Major Schemes Officers and an admin officer, along with some external funding which covers the cost of two of these posts.

Corporate Services:

Customer Services

The team provide the main front of house services for the authority – at present this includes answering general queries, payments, incoming / outgoing post and telephony services. The team also assist with linking residents and businesses to our other Partners, Services and promote the use of online / web services.

Communications

Includes the provision of internal and external communications, marketing and brand management, e-newsletters, social media, website, intranet, corporate branding and print and design services. The Communications Team also lead on the digital development of services and channel shift and are responsible for customer relationship management software, My Account, customer access technologies and online processes allowing the Council to become more accessible to our customers.

ICT Services

The Council receives ICT support and services from the Leicestershire ICT Partnership, through delegation to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council providing an insourced ICT service for Blaby District Council and Melton Borough Council.

Management & Administration

This budget includes the costs of the Corporate Services Group Manager (vacant post) and the support staff who manage the portfolio budgets and systems.

Key Points

Doing things differently – plans for the coming year	<p>The portfolio continues to perform well, despite a further unprecedented and challenging year as the pandemic continues. Staff are working hard, but remain motivated. Over the last year the remit of the portfolio has continued to grow – particularly in the areas of strategic growth and infrastructure planning.</p> <p>As set out in the priorities for the forthcoming year; we expect the next 12 months to be equally challenging – but also rewarding and exciting.</p> <p><u>Strategic Growth</u></p> <p>The team will continue to project manage some of the district's most high profile and complex strategic projects. This includes a wide range of sites; from retail and commercial developments, to a garden village, and of course Lubbethorpe.</p> <p><u>Development Strategy</u></p> <p>The team will continue to focus on strategic planning, Neighbourhood Plans, planning obligations and the Local Plan</p> <p>Work will continue during 2022/23 on the new Local Plan.</p> <p><u>Planning Delivery</u></p> <p>The workload of the team has continued to increase over the last year, as application levels rise at an unprecedented rate.</p>
--	---

	<p>During 2022/32 the team will focus on ensuring the continued delivery of an excellent service in this demanding environment.</p> <p><u>Enforcement</u> The enforcement team will continue its proactive monitoring approach next year. In addition, work on the high profile and sensitive sites will also progress.</p> <p><u>Corporate Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop digital processes and on line services making it easier for customers to access services and track progress. • Continually review and consider the approach to customer services and associated technologies. <p><u>ICT Service</u></p> <p>Modern Workplace, productivity and Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office 365 OneDrive and SharePoint migration • Migration to Windows 10 devices and SCCM packaged apps (expected completion in 2024) • Data Centre Procurement rescheduled from 21-22 due to procurement issues • Active / Active Data Centres • IT Asset Management deployment <p>Security and Compliance</p> <p>Migration from Server 2016</p> <p>Security Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firewall and border security upgrades • Deploy Privilege Access Management • Deploy Network Access Controller • ITHC • Vulnerability Scanning • Immutable Cloud Backup <p>Network Upgrades Phase 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAN and WAN • Dynamic routing
--	---

	<p>People and Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of 3x Business Systems Analysts • Recruitment of permanent Infrastructure and Security Manager • Recruitment of Infrastructure and Security Engineer • Recruitment of between 1 and 3 additional End User Services Engineers • ICT technical development of ICT staff to support 'straight to 3rd line' model • Digital champion training and awareness on SharePoint/OneDrive and PowerApps <p><u>Management & Administration</u> The focus for 2022/23 will be on the delivery of high quality services, whilst supporting and enabling staff development.</p>
Income generation	<p>The fees and charges for all aspects of the services will be kept under review to ensure that these maximise income without impacting on the quality of communications and applications submitted and increasing costs elsewhere in the delivery of the services.</p> <p>Income generation across the group is restricted to fees for documents; and nationally set planning application fees. A project to look at charging for pre-application advice will commence during 2022/23.</p> <p>The group will seek to maximise opportunities for cost saving through collaborative working, particularly on Local Plan technical work.</p>
Capital plans for the portfolio	There are no current capital plans for the portfolio.

Key Performance Indicators

Planning & Strategic Growth	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 Apr - Nov
Number of planning applications received	1091	1132	1089	1111	1104	1305	768
Planning application fee income	£676,273	£470,671	£656,689	£775,940	£647,370	£513,563	£333,889
Number of planning applications determined	1010	1048	1076	1099	1043	1004	841
% of applications delegated	94.06	93.73	93.60	94.2	95.2	94.6	97.76
% of major applications determined in 13 weeks	94.44	100.00	93.54	100	96.3	100	100
E2E (householders)	44.03	33.55	46.50	47.89	46.2	74.12	92.6
E2E (minors)	65.85	53.07	65.92	84.5	80.33	97.73	115.22
E2E (others)	55.98	48.02	38.61	44.8	50.59	59.9	56.43
Housing Land Supply	Currently at 7 years						

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – CORPORATE SERVICES	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
	(up to Dec)					
Number of followers on Facebook	5329	5,118	3,893	2,680	1,997	1,115
Number of followers on Twitter	5182	5,010	4,502	4,028	3,696	3,329
Number of followers on LinkedIn	1555	1,422	1,159	880	732	621
Number of online forms submitted by customers	37,367	66,832	54,385	39,613	43,053	53,487
Number of email subscribers	26,897	25,843	22,002	18,684	12,862	6,712
My Account Subscribers	44,663	40,771	32,434	25,063	16,106	10,495
% of positive (4-5*) online form feedback ratings	88.5%	86.4%	84.7%	85.1%	85.5%	73.2%

Customers

- The Planning Delivery and Enforcement services in particular have heavy interaction with residents and we will continue to monitor customer feedback to ensure that all interactions with customers and stakeholders to these services are conducted appropriately and professionally.
- There are a number of significant public consultations planned for 2022/23 including the next stage of the new Local Plan, and a number of large strategic sites.
- The Communications Team continually collect, review and analyse metrics and customer insight data to shape the delivery of its service, this includes improving performance of communication and marketing activities and in the development of online processes.

Risks

- The increased level of planning applications, particularly the sharp recent increase in householder applications, continues to place significant demands on the service. Ongoing resource and service delivery reviews are essential to help to mitigate against this.

- Failure to progress the new Local Plan could leave the District vulnerable to unacceptable types of future development.
- High number of appeals would place further pressures on the Development Services Team.
- Inability to progress with the delivery of a clear and robust policy framework would put delivery of sustainable development at risk.
- Delivery of Lubbesthorpe against the current proposed timetable is essential – failure to do so could affect the 5 year housing land supply, and in turn the council's ability to defend against undesirable development.
- Ongoing lack of clarity, or a long period without further guidance, on planning reform proposals would lead to long periods of uncertainty; and could in turn delay the new Local Plan.
- Failure to deliver an effective enforcement service could result in reputational damage.
- Failure to ensure a robust and risk assessed approach to enforcement investigations, on sensitive and high-risk sites, could leave staff at risk of harassment or violence.
- Failure to comply with the Web Accessibility Standards, would result in a breach of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, resulting in potential legal and reputational damage.
- Ongoing lack of clarity around the ICT and digital transformation deliverables through the LICT Partnership would lead to long periods of uncertainty and wasted investment. Ongoing discussions and project plans would help to mitigate against this.
- Failure to retain skilled staff within the services could lead to a loss in service delivery and reputational damage
- Failure of the STORM telephone system. This is a separate system from the back office (Jabba) system and provides the platform for the Customer Services Team.