

The past year has seen us continue to evolve our post-Covid world approach. We have seen significant achievements despite the difficult economic climate and customer demand remains high. Household planning applications have stayed at high levels, as have call volumes through the customer services and online visits with form submission increasing.

Planning, Planning Enforcement, Strategic Growth & Local Plan

Our new Local Plan is progressing well, we continue to be mindful of future impacts including Leicester City's unmet need, and potential planning reforms arising from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

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, and applications levels continue to be healthy despite the current economic climate. Work is underway on a number of new projects such as charging for pre-application advice, bringing historic buildings advice in-house, and a potential net zero development toolkit.

Large-scale projects are progressing at pace. New Lubbethorpe continues to grow with critical infrastructure being provided at the right time, and work on other potential strategic sites such as a potential new garden village and potential new rail freight terminal continues, 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. A number of high-profile cases have progressed to successful outcomes and some other sensitive enforcement cases are ongoing.

Transformation and Customer Services

The Transformation Group Manager has now joined the authority, as has the Service Manager for Transformation.

The launch of the transformation brand 'Transforming Blaby Together' saw 74% of employees in attendance at Blaby Matters rate their understanding as positive following the introductory presentation.

As we develop the transformation programme, engaging with and upskilling authority wide change champions, we will invest in and support each other, allowing and enabling, through the creation of space and time, to adapt and change to meet the

challenges we face, head-on, through developing new opportunities and different ways of working to drive effectiveness and build in efficiencies.

Customer Services and its importance in terms of customer experience continues to be of high priority. Our Service Manager for Customer Insights, Experience and Engagement will join in January, leading the Customer Services Team to not only further enhance what we do well, but explore with the team through authority wide engagement, how we can broaden our reach and adopt continuous improvement to ensure our customers truly are at the heart of everything we do.

There is a handover of ICT to bring it into the Transformation Service going forward.

ICT

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 L 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.

UKSPF

The last year has seen the allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to local authorities across the country, for expenditure across a range of Levelling Up themes and priorities. The Council will allocate its c£2.1m to a range of projects between now and 2024/25, in accordance with the submitted Investment Plan.

Future

Our focus continues to be on delivering for the customer. While pressures are still being experienced from the post-covid world and more recently the economic climate and cost of living crisis, we are being successful in reducing our planning backlog and delivering on digital service improvements.

We will be developing our corporate transformation programme over the coming year and implementing changes which will see benefits and efficiencies for both customers and colleagues. We will 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 remain at the heart of what we do in what continue to be challenging times.

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ben Taylor

**Senior Officer: Executive Director, Planning & Strategic Growth Group
Manager, Transformation Group Manager, Corporate
Services Group Manager**

Portfolio Total

Planning Delivery & Enforcement and Corporate Transformation - Total	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£2,377,984	£2,549,044	£2,872,276	£494,292 20.79%	£323,232 12.68%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£1,170,799	£1,956,346	£1,989,390	£818,591 69.92%	£33,044 1.69%
3.Direct Income	-£731,626	-£937,460	-£1,356,302	-£624,676 85.38%	-£418,842 44.68%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£2,817,157	£3,567,930	£3,505,364	£688,207 24.43%	-£62,566 -1.75%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	53.66	57.95	59.61	5.95 11.09%	1.66 2.86%

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This portfolio includes the establishment and operational costs relating to Planning, Transformation (including ICT and Customer Services) and Communications. The establishment budget for 2022/23 has been adjusted to allow for the recently settled pay award and uplifted pension contribution rates. The 2023/24 establishment costs make allowance for a 3% pay award, contractual increments, and national insurance and pension contributions. The increase in headcount includes two new posts in Transformation which were approved as part of the management restructure, along with a further two transferred from the Performance team.

Other gross direct expenditure includes one-off unspent budget brought forward from 2022/23, reflected in the revised estimate for 2023/24. In addition to this, the revised estimate includes provision of £100,000 for specialist advice on the Hinckley National Rail Freight project, additional funding released from the Local Plan Reserve, and provision to cover specialist advice on matters such as the Cork Lane planning appeal, and a solar farm application.

There have been several IT issues arising during the financial year which have incurred additional cost, and budget provision has been added accordingly.

Direct income includes sums in both financial years in recognition of allocations from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The sums receivable will be allocated to individual services once funding bids have been reviewed.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Development Strategy	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£277,679	£288,598	£330,661	£52,982 19.08%	£42,063 14.57%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£39,834	£165,285	£94,471	£54,637 137.16%	-£70,814 -42.84%
3. Direct Income	-£2,000	-£24,000	-£4,000	-£2,000 100.00%	£20,000 -83.33%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£315,513	£429,883	£421,132	£105,619 33.48%	-£8,751 -2.04%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.50	5.50	6.51	1.01 18.36%	1.01 18.36%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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 grants carried forward from 2021/22 relating to the Local Development Framework and funding taken from the Local Plan Reserve in respect of the production of the Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD).
3. The additional income in 2022/23 is grant received in relation to the Leicester Forest East Neighbourhood Plan.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Additional Planning Policy Officer on a fixed term contract until end of September 2023.

PLANNING DELIVERY

Planning Delivery	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A] 	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£583,996	£609,834	£670,655	£86,659 14.84%	£60,821 9.97%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£108,797	£176,291	£136,247	£27,450 25.23%	-£40,044 -22.71%
3. Direct Income	-£560,000	-£560,000	-£560,000	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£132,793	£226,125	£246,902	£114,109 85.93%	£20,777 9.19%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	12.65	12.65	14.61	1.96 15.49%	1.96 15.49%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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 budget carried forward from 2021/22 plus additional costs of specialist advice relating to the Cork Lane appeal and a solar farm planning application.
3. The income budget was reduced during the pandemic and fees and charges have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Additional posts approved after initial budget was set.

ENFORCEMENT

Planning Enforcement	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£216,725	£226,646	£240,596	£23,871 11.01%	£13,950 6.15%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£12,396	£17,508	£19,628	£7,232 58.34%	£2,120 12.11%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£229,121	£244,154	£260,224	£31,103 13.57%	£16,070 6.58%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	4.81	4.81	5.00	0.19 3.95%	0.19 3.95%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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.
3. Not applicable.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. One officer has increased their working hours.

STRATEGIC GROWTH

Strategic Growth	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£262,288	£296,212	£281,841	£19,553 7.45%	-£14,371 -4.85%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£31,410	£308,231	£154,766	£123,356 392.73%	-£153,465 -49.79%
3. Direct Income	-£158,826	-£89,884	-£266,712	-£107,886 67.93%	-£176,828 196.73%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£134,872	£514,559	£169,895	£35,023 25.97%	-£344,664 -66.98%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	6.36	6.36	4.86	-1.50 -23.58%	-1.50 -23.58%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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. Also reflects the removal of fixed term posts that were previously externally funded.
2. 2022/23 revised estimate includes non-recurring expenditure brought forward from 2021/22. It also includes an additional, one-off £100,000 approved by Council for external support on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Initiative.
3. Revised budget and proposed budget include confirmed external funding.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. As per note 1.

Transformation, Customer Insight & ICT

Transformation & Customer Insight	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£495,954	£583,449	£797,353	£301,399 60.77%	£213,904 36.66%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£754,549	£770,877	£807,875	£53,326 7.07%	£36,998 4.80%
3. Direct Income	-£9,400	-£9,400	-£9,400	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£1,241,103	£1,344,926	£1,595,828	£354,725 28.58%	£250,902 18.66%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	14.89	19.18	19.18	4.29 28.81%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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 estimate and 2023/24 budget include new posts approved as part of the management restructure. Two posts have been transferred from the Performance team to Transformation as part of the same restructure.
2. Includes additional costs in relation to the ICT contract, with inflationary increases applied to 2023/24 where applicable.
3. Income in relation to rent of floorspace to CAB.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. New posts approved in the management restructure plus posts transferred from Performance.

Management & Administration

Management & Admin	2022/23 Approved Budget	2022/23 Revised Estimate	2023/24 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£287,278	£278,892	£265,394	-£21,884 -7.62%	-£13,498 -4.84%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£60,733	£108,029	£102,129	£41,396 68.16%	-£5,900 -5.46%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£2,800	-£2,800	-£2,800 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£348,011	£384,121	£364,723	£16,712 4.80%	-£19,398 -5.05%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	3.91	3.91	3.91	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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. Where officers have opted out of the Local Government Pension Scheme, pension contributions have been removed from the budget.
2. Revised estimate includes uplifted cost of software maintenance following migration to a new supplier, and one-off administration fees associated with the Levelling Up bid.
3. Contribution towards the cost of provision of open data.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

UK Shared Prosperity Fund	2022/23 Approved Budget	2022/23 Revised Estimate	2023/24 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£0	£250,695	£513,390	£513,390 0.00%	£262,695 104.79%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£250,695	-£513,390	-£513,390 0.00%	-£262,695 104.79%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. Not applicable at this stage.
2. Reflects the actual allocation due for 2022/23 and indicative allocation for 2023/24.
3. As above.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Not applicable.

COMMUNICATIONS

Management & Admin	2022/23 Approved Budget [A]	2022/23 Revised Estimate [B]	2023/24 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£254,064	£265,413	£285,776	£31,712 12.48%	£20,363 7.67%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£163,080	£159,430	£160,884	-£2,196 -1.35%	£1,454 0.91%
3. Direct Income	-£1,400	-£681	£0	£1,400 -100.00%	£681 -100.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£415,744	£424,162	£446,660	£30,916 7.44%	£22,498 5.30%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.54	5.54	5.54	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The revised estimate allows for the pay award effective from 1st April 2022, which exceeds the provision made in the original budget. The 2023/24 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. Change to contractual cost of Web Team as part of LICT Partnership – transferred to main contract.
3. Short term contributions from Melton Borough Council towards website costs.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

Portfolio Priorities

Priorities for 2023/24 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 2023 include the submission of the 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 2023.
- 3. Neighbourhood Plans.** Work will continue to progress and finalise a number of Neighbourhood Plans, to support our parishes to shape their places.
- 4. Respond to Planning Reforms.** During 2022, consultations continued to be 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.
- 5. Delivering a high performing Development Management Service.** Planning application levels continue to be high, and the team have delivered a quality and customer focussed service despite these demands. The focus for 2023 will be on continuing with this approach, progressing a number of specific projects such as the pre-application charging project, and ensuring sufficient resources.
- 6. High profile enforcement action.** Ongoing action will continue for a number of current high-profile cases; with Enforcement Notice appeal outcomes expected during 2023. In addition, the team will continue their pro-active approach across the district, in dealing with a varied case load of investigations.
- 7. 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.
- 8. Delivery of the Lubbethorpe Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE).** The new community is going from strength to strength. Around 800 houses are now occupied, the first primary school is thriving, and works continue to deliver the road infrastructure. To date the development has now won five awards. Key milestones for 2023/24 will include the opening of the first Local Centre (including health centre), and development of the leisure offer and secondary school.
- 9. 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.

- 10. Transforming Blaby Together.** Development of a robust corporate transformation and change programme. Our transformation team will work in collaboration with services to upskill and enable colleagues' authority wide, to not only adopt a culture of continuous improvement, but make that concept a reality through support and successful, measurable delivery of effective and efficient services.
- 11. ICT.** To ensure that the ICT provision for Blaby DC is robust, reliable and the infrastructure is fit for purpose. In addition, the Blaby ICT provision should support Blaby to utilise digital means as effectively as possible. See also Appendix L ICT Briefing note.
- 12. 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.
- 13. Raise the profile of the Leicestershire Building Control Partnership.** Following the launch of the partnership, including the new website and online forms communication and marketing activities will continue throughout the year to help raise the profile and reputation of LBCP.
- 14. Acting on the Recommendations from the LGA Communications Review.** Continuing to support new initiatives and service delivery whilst making improvements to internal and external communication.
- 15. Continue to maintain and develop the Council's corporate website** www.blaby.gov.uk, www.visitblaby.org.uk, and www.lbcp.co.uk Work also continues to support services with corporate branding and accessibility compliance of web solutions.

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 and Major Schemes Officers, along with some external funding which covers the cost of two of these posts.

Transformation & Customer Insight:

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.

This budget includes Customer Insights, Experience and Engagement Manager, Customer Service Team Leaders, and Customer Service Advisors associated costs.

Transformation [Transforming Blaby Together]

A newly formed team which will develop a transformation and change programme, driven corporately to meet the Council's strategic aims and ambitions. This team will enable the organisation to continuously realise improvements that are efficient, cost effective, and sustainable. This will be achieved through the promotion of a culture of high performance, continuous improvement and innovation, that values learning and commitment.

This budget includes Transformation Group Manager, Service Manager, and Project Support Officers associated costs.

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. See also Appendix L – ICT Briefing note.

Management & Administration

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

Communications

Delivery of external and internal communications, management of the website and intranet and digital improvements for customer access.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p>The portfolio continues to perform well, despite a further unprecedented and challenging year due to the economic crisis. 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, a strategic rail freight interchange 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>
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Work will continue during 2023/24 on the new Local Plan.

Planning Delivery

The workload of the team has reached a steady level over the last year, as application levels have become more manageable, and this will enable focus to turn to the delivery of a number of specific projects.

During 2023/24 the team will focus on ensuring the continued delivery of an excellent service to customers.

Enforcement

The enforcement team will continue its proactive monitoring approach next year. In addition, work on the high profile and sensitive sites will also progress.

Transformation (Transforming Blaby Together) & Customer Insight

- Develop our transformation strategy and programme
- Through a suite of workshops enable and upskill colleagues, instilling confidence resulting in a cross-cutting team of successful change champions
- Develop a robust framework to support transformation benefit realisation
- Develop our customer insights, experience and engagement strategy ensuring it cuts across the depth and breadth of Blaby District Council with positive customer experience at its heart
- Continue the development of online services and processes to improve the digital experience for our customers accessing services and tracking progress through these channels
- Always look for ways to integrate front facing interactions with back-office processes to enhance the customer experience
- Continuously review the approach and consider improvements to customer services and associated technologies

ICT Service

- Emergency Generator to ensure our applications and data can be closed down safely in the event of power outages
- Multi-factor authentication for our devices for enhanced security
- Uninterrupted power supply replacement due to ageing equipment
- Network load rebalancing hardware to ensure optimal systems performance

See also Appendix L ICT Briefing note

Management & Administration

The focus for 2023/24 will be on the delivery of high-quality services, whilst supporting and enabling staff development.

Communications

- Implement the recommendations from the LGA Communications Review

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 continue to delivery in 2023/24.</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	<p>The capital programme for 2023/24 allows for £245,000 to be spent on various ICT schemes including security upgrades (£107,000), network upgrades (£46,000), Office 365 consultancy (£32,000).</p>

Key Performance Indicators

Planning & Strategic Growth	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 Apr - Nov
Number of planning applications received	1132	1089	1111	1104	1305	943	512
Planning application fee income	£470,671	£656,689	£775,940	£647,370	£513,563	£572,724	£279,917
Number of planning applications determined	1048	1076	1099	1043	1004	1280	708
% of applications delegated	93.73	93.60	94.2	95.2	94.6	97.53	96.21
% of major applications determined in 13 weeks	100.00	93.54	100	96.3	100	100	100
E2E (householders)	33.55	46.50	47.89	46.2	74.12	91.65	74.46
E2E (minors)	53.07	65.92	84.5	80.33	97.73	121	150.9
E2E (others)	48.02	38.61	44.8	50.59	59.9	58.92	57.47

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – CORPORATE SERVICES	2022/23 (up to Dec)	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18
Number of followers on Facebook	6,014	5,558	5,118	3,893	2,680	1,997
Number of followers on Twitter	5,334	5,294	5,010	4,502	4,028	3,696
Number of followers on LinkedIn	1,893	1,636	1,422	1,159	880	732
Number of online forms submitted by customers	38,989	64,637	66,832	54,385	39,613	43,053
Number of email subscribers	28,013	27,409	25,843	22,002	18,684	12,862
My Account Subscribers	50,165	46,914	40,771	32,434	25,063	16,106
% of positive (4-5*) online form feedback ratings	86.6%	87.9%	86.4%	84.7%	85.1%	85.5%

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 2023/24 including the next stage of the new Local Plan, and a number of large strategic sites.
- Customer Insights, Experience and Engagement will continue to be pivotal as the 'face' (virtual or in person) of Blaby District Council when customers make contact. As such we will prioritise monitoring interactions, measuring performance, and seeking feedback as critical enablers for continuous improvement.

Risks

- Planning application levels have stabilised, but should they increase suddenly this will 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.
- 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.
- With regard to the communications and digital team there is a risk in ensuring that there is capacity and skills to deliver the improvements identified by the LGA Communications Review.
- The Council has experienced downtime in key ICT systems during 2022 and although a range of mitigation measures have been put in place there remains an on-going risk whilst historic infrastructure is replaced and/or upgraded and data storage capacity is increased.