

Blaby District Council

Cabinet Executive

Date of Meeting 29 June 2026

Title of Report Increase in resources as a result of legislative changes

This is a Key Decision and is on the Forward Plan.

Lead Member Cllr. Ben Taylor - Leader of the Council

Report Author Chief Executive

Strategic Themes All Themes: Enabling communities and supporting vulnerable residents; Enhancing and maintaining our natural and built environment; Growing and supporting our economy; Keeping you safe and healthy; Ambitious and well managed Council, valuing our people

1. What is this report about?

This report seeks approval to increase staffing resources across a number of service areas within the organisation, in order to respond to new legislative requirements and rising service demand.

Building Control:

The Building Safety Levy (BSL) is a new statutory charge levied on certain residential developments which comes into force on 1 October 2026. The BSL is being introduced as part of national building safety reforms to fund the remediation of unsafe cladding and improve building safety standards. Blaby District Council is required to administer, manage and enforce the levy, including determining liability, issuing notices, collecting payments and ensuring compliance. The introduction of the levy creates a significant new service area and associated administrative workload. As a result, it is proposed that three posts are created to support the introduction of the BSL - two Building Safety Levy Officers and a Team Leader/Senior Administrator.

Environmental Health:

The introduction of the Renters' Rights Act represents the most significant reform to private rented sector legislation in decades. It brings enhanced regulatory controls, increased tenant protections, and a likely rise in complaint volumes, resulting in greater operational demand and enforcement responsibilities for the service.

Historically, private sector housing functions have been delivered within the Environmental Health team. It is proposed that the new statutory requirements are incorporated within this service area, alongside additional staffing capacity to ensure effective delivery and to provide appropriate support to residents, landlords and tenants.

Housing:

The homelessness service continues to experience sustained high caseloads, placing significant operational pressure on the team. An additional Homelessness Assessment Officer, approved by Cabinet in 2023 on a fixed-term basis, remains essential to maintaining the effective delivery of the service.

2. Recommendation(s) to Cabinet Executive

2.1 To approve three new posts to sit within the Building Control team (two Building Safety Levy Officers and a Team Leader/Senior Administrator).

2.2 To approve three new posts to sit within the Environmental Health team (Private Sector Housing Team Leader, Senior Housing Technical Officer & Tenancy Relations Officer).

2.3 To approve the change from a fixed term contract to an establishment post for the Homelessness Assessment Officer approved originally approved by Cabinet in 2023.

3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

3.1 The Council has a statutory duty to implement and administer the Building Safety Levy from 1 October 2026. Additional staffing resource is required to ensure the Council can meet its legal obligations, including processing applications, managing accounts, monitoring payments and enforcing compliance. Early recruitment is necessary to allow time for training, system configuration and testing prior to the go-live date.

3.2 To approve the proposed structure for the Environmental Services Team to meet the new statutory duties and rising service demand brought about by introduction of new legislation requirements and focus.

3.3 Fixed-term contracts are less effective in retaining officers with the necessary skills and experience to support service delivery during periods of sustained high demand. The role has experienced a turnover in postholders, and it is proposed that converting the post to a permanent establishment position will improve staff retention and provide greater continuity within the team.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

Building Safety Levy:

The introduction of the Building Safety Levy forms part of wider Government reforms following the Building Safety Act, placing new responsibilities on local authorities. The Council were formally notified in October 2024 that under the Building Safety Act 2022, the Secretary of State had the power to introduce a Building Safety Levy on applications for building control, in order to help fund building safety improvements. The Council were appointed as a collection agent for the building safety levy. To collect the levy in line with the timescales given, the Council must be operationally ready by 1 October 2026 to fulfil its role as Charging Authority.

Approval was given in January 2026 to recruit to a Building Safety Levy & Audit Admin Team Leader. This post is key to planning the implementation of the collecting the new levy. However, to enable the collection of the levy and to meet our statutory requirement to deliver the service effectively an increase in capacity is required.

As implementation plans have been developed and progressed it has become clear that, to ensure that the new service is legally compliant from day one, there is a need for a dedicated Senior Role to oversee the service/staff, check quality of outputs, identify required process improvements, take corrective action and provide training as required, and implement controls to prevent/minimise recurrence. At present, we are unable to accurately forecast the demand on the new BSL service so there is the potential for this role to provide the same compliance oversight to the rest of the LBCP function for which an Audit/Compliance Framework is already in development.

The Council has received confirmation of new burdens funding to support the implementation and delivery of the service. As the lead authority for the Building Control Partnership, it is agreed with all partners that Blaby will provide this service on behalf of the other members and the relevant funding will be transferred to Blaby to cover the costs incurred.

Local Authority	Allocation of Building Safety Levy New Burdens Grants for 2026/27 (£)
Blaby	111,800
Harborough	132,900
Hinckley & Bosworth	132,900
Melton	111,800
Oadby & Wigston	111,800
Rutland	111,800
Total	713,000

The on-going burdens of administering the levy will be funded on a cost recovery basis, whereby the Council will retain the costs from the levy receipts collected. In the event of a shortfall, any additional costs of administering the service would be met by the Government.

Environmental Health Services:

In advance of and following the introduction of the Renters' Rights Act, the Environmental Health Services team (EHS) has experienced an increase in housing disrepair cases, including damp and mould complaints, general enquiries and required site visits.

This increase in demand has been accompanied by growth in several additional workstreams within the private sector housing remit, including caravan site licensing (inspections, enquiries and complaints), a rising number and diversity of Houses in Multiple Occupation, expanded activity relating to empty properties, and the delivery of other housing-related schemes.

To ensure the Council was well positioned to respond effectively to the initial requirements of the Renters Rights Act from 1 May 2026, a seconded team of three officers was established to assess demand and to review, develop and prepare the necessary policies, procedures, training and resources for implementation.

Following this work it has been decided that the EHS are a front-line service with a strong skillset within investigation and where necessary, enforcement work making it the most appropriate location to place the additional statutory duties and associated staff members long term.

Some New Burdens Funding has been allocated to support the implementation of the Renters Rights Act (shown in figure 1), but it will not fully fund the proposal outlined below.

Figure 1:

Financial Year	RRA 2025 New Burdens
2025/2026	£22,000
2026/2027	£39,275
2026/27 (Private Sector Housing Fund)	£60,000
2027/2028	£18,493
Total Allocation	£139,769

In addition to the above funding enforcement activities and associated fixed penalties are intended to make the service self-funded.

However, the level of income likely to be generated remains uncertain at this stage as there is no data yet to evidence number of offences likely to be committed and/or the success rate of cost recovery.

In addition to the above, the mandatory landlord database, due to be introduced in October 2026, will operate on a chargeable basis and is expected to contribute towards cost recovery. Nevertheless, key variables including level of registration fees, landlord participation levels, and the costs of a system implementation and its ongoing management mean that projected income cannot yet be reliably estimated at this time.

Housing:

Over the past eight years, there has been a significant and sustained increase in demand for homelessness services. In response, Cabinet approved the introduction of an additional Homelessness Assessment Officer in 2023 on a fixed-term basis, funded through the Homelessness Prevention Grant. While demand has remained consistently high and the need for the post continues, the fixed-term nature of the role has made it challenging to retain staff with the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver the service effectively.

4.2 Proposal

Building Control:

The creation of two Building Safety Levy Officers and one Team Leader/Senior Administrator to establish and deliver the new Building Safety Levy function, including system operation, process management and customer handling.

As detailed in section 4.1 the annual cost will be externally funded from New Burdens for 2026/27 and from cost recovery of income collection going forward.

Environmental Health Services:

The creation of a dedicated Private Sector Housing Team to sit within the Environmental Health Service. The proposal is for the following work areas to sit within it:

- Renters' Rights Act
- Private sector housing standards (Housing Health and Safety Rating System HHSRS).
- Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) Licensing & Regulation
- Caravan Site Licensing
- Relocation and dispersal schemes
- Empty Homes

This will strengthen resilience by utilising existing PRS expertise held within the team and enable integration of growing service demands.

Proposed structure:

- Creation of a Private Sector Housing Team Leader (Scale 7, subject to job evaluation) **NEW POST**
- Creation of a Senior Housing Technical Officer post (Scale 5, subject to job evaluation) **NEW POST**
- Transfer of the existing Empty Properties/HMO Technical Officer into the team (Scale 4)
- Creation of a Tenancy Relations Officer role (Scale 4, subject to job evaluation) **NEW POST**

NB: the 3 secondment posts will cease on appointment of these roles

Housing:

That the existing fixed-term Homelessness Assessment Officer post, approved by Cabinet in 2023, be established as a permanent position within the Council's staffing structure. It is proposed that the post continues to be funded through the Homelessness Prevention Grant, whilst recognising that this funding is not guaranteed. Should future allocations be reduced, the post would need to be supported from the Council's core establishment budget.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

Consultation with Finance, HR and Legal have been and will continue to be undertaken as part of the implementation process.

4.4 Significant Issues

The proposal relates solely to the recruitment of officers to deliver statutory functions. The roles and associated processes do not introduce changes to service delivery, policy, or decision-making that would have a differential impact on any protected groups. The recruitment will be undertaken in line with the Council's standard, inclusive recruitment procedures, ensuring equal opportunity and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. As such, no adverse or disproportionate equality impacts have been identified

There are no significant issues

In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

5. Environmental Impact

No direct environmental impacts have been identified.

Environmental Health:

Any improvements made to the standard of private rented sector properties within the district would have a positive outcome on energy efficiency.

5.1 No Net Zero and Climate Impact Assessment (NZCIA) is required for this report.

6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

6.1 Building control:

The financial impact is set out in the table below. New Burdens funding is expected as set out above which will cover initial set-up costs, with ongoing operational costs expected to be offset through levy income.

Role	Cost £
Building Safety Levy Team Leader/ Senior Administrator	51,884
Building Safety Levy Officer	39,625
Building Safety Levy Officer	39,625
	131,134

6.2 Environmental Health Services:

<u>New Posts</u>	Scale	Full Time Equivalent	Total cost per post
			£
Private Sector Housing Team Leader	7	1.00	70,490
Senior Housing Technical Officer	5	1.00	58,042
Tenancy Relations Officer	4	1.00	48,387
	Total	3.00	176,918
Complete with oncosts		Total cost	176,918

See funding shown in Figure 1 and costs laid out in 4.2.

7. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

Current Risk	Actions to reduce the risks
Building Control - Failure to meet statutory duty from 1 October 2026.	Timely recruitment, training and system testing.
New Burdens funding is not received from MHCLG/partners in time to progress recruitment	Additional income received within the last financial year will be temporarily held rather than credited to partners and used if necessary.
Building Control & EHS Inadequate system readiness.	Dedicated resource to support implementation and testing.
EHS – Failure to meet statutory duties	Dedicated resource with the appropriate skills set
EHS – Failure to respond to complaints and enquiries within a timely manner	Dedicated resource with the appropriate skills set
Housing – Loss of experienced and qualified staff	Making the position permanent to provide staff with greater security and increase chances of retention

8. Other options considered

8.1 The option to not increase staffing has been considered and rejected due to the risk of non-compliance with statutory requirements.

9. Appendix

9.1 None

10. Background Papers

10.1 None

11. Report author's contact details

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