

Meeting	CABINET
Time/Day/Date	5.00 pm on Tuesday, 21 July 2015
Location	Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville
Officer to contact	Democratic Services (01530 454512)

All persons present are reminded that the meeting may be recorded and by attending this meeting you are giving your consent to being filmed and your image being used. You are kindly requested to make it known to the Chairman if you intend to film or record this meeting.

The Monitoring Officer would like to remind members that when they are considering whether the following items are exempt information under the relevant paragraph under part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 they must have regard to the public interest test. This means that members must consider, for each item, whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption from disclosure outweighs the public interest in making the item available to the public.

AGENDA

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
Under the Code of Conduct members are reminded that in declaring disclosable interests you should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is pecuniary or non-pecuniary.	
3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION	
4. MINUTES	
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7.	HOTEL STREET/HIGH STREET, COALVILLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER	
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8.	VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY FOR THE HOUSING SERVICE	
	Report of the Director of Housing Presented by the Housing Portfolio Holder	25 - 42
9.	EXEMPTION TO THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES - STRATEGIC GROWTH PLANNING CONSULTANT AND RIVER MEASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT	
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10.	2014/15 END OF YEAR REPORT	
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11.	DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND LIGHTBULB PROJECT	
	Report of the Director of Services Presented by the Community Services Portfolio Holder	67 - 76

Circulation:

R D Bayliss
R Blunt (Chairman)
T Gillard
T J Pendleton
N J Rushton
A V Smith MBE

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 16 JUNE 2015

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T J Pendleton and N J Rushton

In Attendance: Councillors F Fenning, J Geary, R Johnson, J Legrys, S McKendrick, T Neilson and M Specht

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Mr R Bowmer, Ms C E Fisher, Mr G Jones, Mrs R Wallace and Miss E Warhurst

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors T Gillard and A V Smith.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no public questions received.

4. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015.

Councillor R D Bayliss requested the following amendment in relation to minute number 109, Tenant Scrutiny Panel Report – Performance Monitoring and Access to Performance Information:

The paragraph on page 5 to read ‘He stressed that the report at appendix 2 was the work of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (and not officers) and that such inspection reports informed a large part of the work that the panel did.’

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2015/16

The Leader presented the report to Members on behalf of the Community Services Portfolio Holder.

He highlighted that it had been another successful year for the team with the number of establishments achieving a rating of three stars or higher on the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme having increased from 663 to 718. Other key successes were that 100 percent of programmed inspections at high risk food establishments were carried out, 99 percent of programmed food interventions were carried out and 90 percent of non compliant establishments selected to receive enhanced levels of interventions saw their hygiene standards improve significantly. He commented that the team were doing a good job and providing an outstanding service.

Councillor T J Pendleton commented that it was good to see the facility increasing and dealing with issues well.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Environmental Health Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2015/16 be approved.
2. The performance and achievements in 2014/15 be noted.

Reason for decision: To approve the content of the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2015/16 as required by the Food Standards Agency.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2014/15

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He outlined the key points of the report and highlighted that the Council's debt had been reduced, and that although investment returns were currently low the Council had achieved £171,559 interest compared to a budget of £68,000. Overall he felt that the finances were being managed well and he congratulated the officers for the work undertaken.

Councillor R D Bayliss asked why the Authority still had a billing account with the Co-op Bank. The Head of Finance explained that it was purely a holding account for the receipt of PayPoint payments and would be cleared regularly.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOVLED THAT:

The report be approved.

Reason for decision: It is a statutory requirement.

7. WHISTLE BLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He reported that the policy was first introduced in 1999 and had been revised on a regular basis with the last revision being in November 2014. The draft revised policy was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 25 March 2015 for Members to note, comment and recommend its adoption to Cabinet.

Councillor T J Pendleton commented that it was a good policy that should give anyone with concerns a framework by which to report.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOVLED THAT:

The updated Whistle Blowing Policy be approved.

Reason for decision: To formally approve the Council's updated Whistle Blowing Policy.

8. LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES AND BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report and nominated Councillors R D Bayliss and T J Pendleton to serve on the Joint Committee.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

Councillors R D Bayliss and T J Pendleton be appointed to serve on Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Constitution of the Leicestershire Partnership Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee.

9. RE-DESIGNATION OF SUPPORTED HOUSING PROPERTIES

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He informed Members that the Council had 720 supported housing properties which were originally allocated to people over a certain age which changed in 2010 with the introduction of Choice Based Lettings to people with a support need. For the past three years the Council had offered a financial incentive to households who were eligible to move to supported households to release family homes and to date only 27 households had made the move. He added that the scheme would increase revenue and referred Members to the results of the tenant consultation on page 70 of the agenda.

In response to a question from Councillor R Blunt, the Housing Portfolio Holder explained that by delegating powers the process would be quicker and that Cabinet were agreeing the principle so that the Director of Housing could continue to approve other re-designations. The Director of Housing confirmed this.

Councillor T J Pendleton expressed concerns that it was difficult to let first floor flats to older people in his Ward and that the scheme would really help.

Councillor R Blunt congratulated the Director of Housing for putting together the initiative as it was a good, pragmatic scheme.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The 'supported' designation of the flats at Cherry Tree Court in Moira be removed.
2. Authority be delegated to the Director of Housing to re-designate these properties, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.
3. Authority be delegated to the Director of Housing to re-designate other properties in future, after consulting with tenants and Ward Members, and in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Holder.
4. The 'supported' designation be removed from properties on a street by street basis where there is no or low demand from eligible home seekers and where there is a clear demand for general needs accommodation.

Reason for decision: To provide a framework that enables the prompt letting of properties, an efficient use of the housing stock, and effectively meets current and future housing demand within the District.

10. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE OFFS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The write offs over £10,000 as detailed within the report be approved.
2. The amounts written off under delegated powers be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with proper accounting practices.

11. 2014/15 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT AND END OF YEAR SUMMARY

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He reported that overall performance had improved and highlighted that the number of leisure centre members had increased, the targets met by the Housing and Waste Collection services, the increase in recycling income and that finance figures were under budget.

At the request of the Leader, the Chief Executive explained that there had been an increase in two areas of sickness absence, one being recovery from operations and the other in personal and family mental health. She confirmed that the increase in absence was not due to work related illness and it would continue to be monitored.

In response to a question from the Corporate Portfolio Holder, the Chief Executive explained that the sickness levels were average compared to similar sized Local Authorities and slightly lower than the private sector.

Councillor R D Bayliss referred Members to the Housing performance dashboard and reported that he was pleased with the progress.

Councillor T J Pendleton advised Members that the throughput of applications was high which had led to an increase in fees received, which was great news. Also 100 percent of major planning applications had been processed within 13 weeks and the River Mease problem had now been resolved. He also highlighted that although the target percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks had not been met, the new recruits within the service were now in place and an increase was inspected in the next quarter.

Councillor N J Rushton asked the Director of Housing to thank his officers for the swift response he had received recently to an enquiry as it had been dealt with very well.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

RESOLVED THAT:

The Quarter 4 Performance (January – March 2015) report be received and noted.

Reason for decision: The report is provided for Members to effectively monitor the organisation's performance.

12. MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY

The Leader presented the report to Members on behalf of the Community Services Portfolio Holder.

He advised Members that there was a new addition to the events programme 'Proms in the Park' which would feature a number of local bands playing traditional music culminating with the Land of Hope and Glory. He referred to the Capital Programme improvements and in particular the significant external funding of £150,000 for a new changing pavilion at Owen Street in Coalville. He also confirmed that warden presence was being increased in the parks, play areas and open spaces and concluded that the Coalville Special Expenses account was forecast to come in under budget with a surplus of approximately £16,000 being returned to balances.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. An additional sum of £1,500 from Coalville Special Expense balances be allocated to support signage and infrastructure for Proms in the Park / Picnic in the Park weekend as recommended by the Events Sub Group.
2. The sum of £1,800 be allocated from balances to undertake height reduction work to trees at Owen Street.
3. The sum of £1,443 be allocated from balances to undertake further one off improvements to Bardon Road, Phoenix Green and Ashby Road.
4. The sum of £2,500 be allocated from unallocated capital as a 10 percent contribution to the £25,000 Thringstone Bowls Club Toilet project.
5. An additional sum of £1,000 be allocated from balances for the Peace Garden project at Coalville Park.
6. The amounts requested from recommendations 1 to 5 inclusive total £8,243. It is proposed that this is funded via £5,743 from balances and £2,500 from unallocated capital reserves.

Reason for decision: To progress Coalville Special Expenses projects and programmes.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.29 pm

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**CABINET – 21 JULY 2015**

Title of report	PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2014/15
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community Yes
Contacts	Councillor Nicholas Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance 01530 454520 ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To present the Provisional Financial Outturn for 2014/15.
Reason for Decision	Requirement of Financial Procedure Rules
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Financial issues are contained within the report.
Link to relevant CAT	None.
Risk Management	There are significant financial risks to manage which were fully considered during the budget process.
Equalities Impact Screening	Not required.
Human Rights	No implications.
Transformational Government	No implications.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory

Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team
Background papers	<u>GENERAL FUND AND SPECIAL EXPENSES REVENUE BUDGETS 2015/16 – CABINET 10 FEBRUARY 2015</u>
Recommendations	THAT CABINET NOTES THE PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN POSITION FOR 2014/15.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is required to produce Financial Statements each year which “give a true and fair view” of the financial position and transactions of the Council. These have been prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards since 2010/11. The 2014/15 accounts will be considered and approved by the Audit and Governance Committee on 23 September 2015 after they have been audited
- 1.2 This report summarises the main elements of our financial performance in 2014/15 and the results are referred to as ‘provisional’ as they are still subject to external audit and may change.
- 1.3 Members will note that the financial tables are in more summarised form than those reported during the financial year and reflect various technical changes, although none of these adjustments affect the “bottom line” and consequently were not included in the original approved budget. The comparison between the approved budget and the expected actual expenditure is shown as a variance in each comparative table below.

2.0 GENERAL FUND

- 2.1 The expected final position on the General Fund is set out in Table 1. The provisional underspending of £1.6m is £0.6m more than projected when the 2015/16 budget was set in February 2015.
- 2.2 Budget reports presented to Cabinet and Council in February 2015 highlighted the increased volatility around the Council’s income sources, in particular New Homes Bonus and Business Rates, and the need to hold significantly higher revenue reserves than the minimum £1m set some years ago. It was agreed that in anticipation of a £1m underspending in 2014/15 it would be prudent to hold £2.4m in the General Fund Reserve and this could be achieved without impacting on service delivery.
- 2.3 The most significant variances for 2014/15 are explained below and summarised in Table 2.

Table 1		2014/15	2014/15
LINE NO.	GENERAL FUND	ORIGINAL ESTIMATE	ACTUAL
	TOTAL DISTRICT EXPENSES	£'000	£'000
1	CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UNIT	4645	4546
2	DIRECTOR OF SERVICES	5384	4431
3	CORPORATE AND DEMOCRATIC CORE	54	40
4	NON-DISTRIBUTED COSTS	115	99
5	NET FINANCING COSTS	1148	1092
6	INVESTMENT INCOME	-43	-122
7	CORPORATE CONTINGENCY	160	0
8	PROVISION FOR BAD DEBT	0	150
9	LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX GRANT – PARISH	87	87
10	REVENUE CONTRIBUTION TO CAPITAL	0	58
11	NET RECHARGES FROM GENERAL FUND	-1407	-1486
12	DEBT RESTRUCTURING PREMIUM	0	23
13	TRANSFER TO GEN FUND RESERVE	403	403
14	TRANSFER TO GENERAL RESERVE	0	1610
15	NET COST OF SERVICE AFTER RECHARGES	10546	10930
	INCOME		
16	REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	2357	2363
17	COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT 14/15	56	58
18	NEW HOMES BONUS	1395	1403
19	TRANSFER FROM COLLECTION FUND	147	147
20	COUNCIL TAX	4611	4611
21	NATIONAL NON DOMESTIC RATES BASELINE	1980	2349
		10546	10930

2.4 The additional £799k Planning income shown in Table 2 represents an increase of 145% on the original budget. There was a continuation of the increase in major applications received from 53 in 2012-3 to 73 in 2013-14, and 95 in 2014/15. A small number of schemes contributed a disproportionately high amount of fee income, such as the Aldi scheme at Sawley Cross (£126k) and solar farms each contributing tens of thousands up to £70k. Large housing schemes also contributed up to £32k in planning fees. There are a number of potential explanations for this, the lack of a five year supply of housing land encouraged house builders in particular to apply for planning permission to exploit the presumption in favour as set out in national policy. Since the five year supply has been achieved, however, housing schemes continue to come forward. There was also a run of solar farms, to exploit the national feed-in tariff, which ended in March 2015. Additionally North West Leicestershire is considered to be an

attractive location and the home to a number of house builders all of whom wish to have an active presence in the district. Therefore whilst the housing supply factor may lead to a reduction in the number of applications going forward, the market factors influencing the number of applications is not likely to change significantly in the short term and it is anticipated that the level of major applications will remain high at least for another year.

- 2.5 Prior to 1 April 2013 local authorities' Government Grant funding was announced before the start of each financial year and did not change. The introduction of a system of locally retained business rates from 2013/14 made this source of income far more volatile and introduced significant new risks, and opportunities, for the Council. As well as an ever-changing business rates base, the Council also shares the costs of appeals, debt write-offs etc. The picture was complicated further by the Council's participation in a County Pool during 2013/14. In February 2014 all of the participants in the Pool agreed to its temporary dissolution in 2014/15 in light of this volatility and the difficulties it caused in assessing whether or not having a Pool was beneficial to its participant councils. The Pool has resumed from 1 April 2015. Councils are continuing to develop their systems for projecting and monitoring this major income stream. In common with the rest of the information presented in this report the outturn figures for Business Rate income are provisional and subject to external audit. In 2014/15 an additional £368k Business Rates has been taken into the accounts compared with the original budget.
- 2.6 The Revenue Budget Contingency was not utilised, saving £160k. Managers have contained all their costs within their budgets without recourse to requests for supplementary estimates. The Contingency has not been called upon for a number of years and in light of this was reduced from £250k to £160k in the 2014/15 budget.
- 2.7 Waste Services income from the sale of recyclable materials has again exceeded its budget due to higher prices and volume than reflected in the budget. On-going risks from reduced paper quantities (as a national trend for receiving news and information electronically continues), thinner consumer product packaging and lower prices from contracts being re-procured did not all fully materialise. As these external factors remain on-going risks, income budget projections remain prudent compared to actual income received.
- 2.8 The Council has itself benefitted from a number of successful Business Rates appeals. This has produced a saving of £105k in 2014/15.
- 2.9 Investment income was £78k higher than budgeted chiefly because the Council is now lending for longer periods and getting higher returns. The current year's budget has already been updated to reflect the change.
- 2.10 Income from Local Land Charges is higher than budget which mostly reflects a recovering housing market. It is difficult to budget for income in this area and charges are set with the objective of breaking even over a three year period.
- 2.11 Legal Service income was £46k higher than budgeted. The legal services team have been selling legal services to other Council's for 5 years. The amount of income generated each year has increased and has been in excess of the targets set by the business plan for the service. The amount of income over and above the target this year is due in part to an increase in legal fees arising from S106 agreements and an increase in external clients and external income. The team operate in a commercial manner in dealing with internal and external clients, have a clear marketing strategy and an ambition to continue to reduce the net cost to the Council of providing legal services.

- 2.12 A change from quarterly to monthly direct debits has highlighted the need to correct the way Learn to Swim income is accounted for. At least 15 years ago the Council started to charge quarterly in advance for this service and at the time income was incorrectly credited to the accounts in advance of the service being provided. This meant that the first year there was an extra quarter's income taken into account but that at some point a future year would be short of a quarter's income. This has been corrected in 2014/15 when the Council has underspent and is able to make this necessary adjustment. The Council has also taken the opportunity to increase its bad debt provision by £150k. This is reflective of the resources being available in 2014/15 rather than there being any particular concerns around debt collection.

Table 2

Major Variances	£'000	£'000
Adverse		
Review of Bad Debt provision	-150	
Correction of Learn to Swim Income	-83	
		-233
Favourable		
Additional Planning Fees	799	
Additional Retained Business Rates	368	
Unspent Revenue Budget Contingency	160	
Additional Recycling Income	131	
Savings on Business Rates paid	105	
Additional Investment Income	78	
Additional Land Charges Income	68	
Legal Services – increased external business/income	48	
Employee Costs	22	
Other	64	
		1843
Total		1610

- 2.13 The employee budget is only slightly underspent overall (£22K). This is a lower underspending than experienced in previous years because the 2014/15 employee budgets were reduced to reflect a more realistic level of employee turnover and appropriate adjustments made to reflect savings from service reviews
- 2.14 An improving General Fund Revenue Budget performance has been reported throughout the financial year and the Cabinet has already explained its intention to increase the Council's General Fund balance at the end of the year using part of the 2014/15 underspending. The Cabinet is advised to wait until the Medium Term Financial Strategy is approved in September before deciding whether to approve additional expenditure funded from the additional £600k underspending in 2014/15.

3.0 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

- 3.1 The financial performance of the HRA is summarised in Table 3. The expected

final position is a surplus of £22k being £768k higher than the approved budget. The surplus on the account has been added to the HRA balance which stood at £5.291m at 31 March 2015.

Table 3	2014/15		
	Approved Budget	Provisional Outturn	Provisional Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT			
Repairs and Maintenance	4,922	4,203	-719
Supervision and Management	2,516	2,311	-205
Provision for Doubtful Debts	171	93	-78
Capital Financing (Depreciation, Impairment & Debt Management)	6,869	6,570	-299
Total Expenditure	14,478	13,177	-1,301
Less Rental Income & Service Charges	-17,153	-16,857	296
Net Cost of Service	-2,675	-3,680	-1,005
Capital Financing (Principal & Interest)	3,432	3,397	-35
Investment Income	-25	-62	-37
Premature Loan Redemption Premiums	14	14	0
Net transfer from reserves	0	309	309
NET (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT	746	-22	-768

- 3.2 Reduced Rent Income of £296k resulted mainly from an increased level of empty properties compared to budget. This void loss has reduced towards the end of 2014/15 and so should not be an ongoing issue into 2015/16.
- 3.3 A valuation adjustment was needed on Garages following a correction to the valuation method the Council was using. Whilst this is not a real cost, the Council has been required to create a one-off reserve of £489k in its accounts. This will be reviewed each year and can be reduced when valuations increase. This will happen naturally as rent levels increase because valuations are now based on rental income.

3.4 Revenue Contribution to Capital Expenditure was reduced by £822k as a result of an underspending on the Decent Homes programme. This is explained further in the section on Capital below.

3.5 There was a £466k underspending on Repairs and Maintenance as follows: Responsive repairs £ 158k, Painting £115k, Garages £ 50k. and other cyclical repairs £143k.

3.6 The full budgeted contribution to the bad and doubtful debts provision was not required due to rent arrears levels not being as high as anticipated allowing a saving of £78k.

4.0 SPECIAL EXPENSES

4.1 The expected final position on Special Expenses is an underspending of £25,000. Table 4 below gives further details.

Table 4 Special Expenses	Original Budget £'000	Provisional Outturn £'000	Provisional Variance £'000
Special Expenses	793	821	28
Net Financing costs	-107	-181	-74
Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	0	21	21
Expenditure Requirement	686	661	-25
Precept	584	584	0
Localisation of Council Tax Support Grant	96	96	0
Transfer to Reserves	6	-19	-25

4.2 The opening Special Expenses Reserves Balance was £121,000 and following the surplus of £19,000 for the year, this now stands at £140,000.

5.0 CAPITAL

5.1 The Council's capital spending is detailed in Table 5.

TABLE 5 Scheme	Original	Prior Year	In Year	In Year	Revised	Provisional	Provisional
	Budget	c/f	Approvals /funding	Slippage (Feb 2015 Cabinet)	Budget	Outturn	Variance
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
HOUSING							
Improvements and Modernisation	14677		4717		19394	14807	-4587
Disabled Facilities Grants	546	153	17	-175	541	378	-163
OTHER SERVICES							
Parks and Recreation Grounds	342	14	6		362	189	-173
Waste and Recycling	190				190	178	-12
IT & Software	137	167	5		309	209	-100
Transport Account Vehicles	645				645	465	-180
Leisure Centres	12		30		42	42	0
Car Parks	132	1	-12	-32	89	71	-18
Coalville Market Upgrade	168		127	-117	178	192	14
Other Capital Expenditure	325			-100	225	108	-117
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	17,174	335	4,890	-424	21,975	16,639	-5,336

5.2 There is always some slippage on Disabled Facilities Grant payments because approvals are given in advance of final payments being made. In 2014/15 additional slippage is primarily due to periods over the past two financial years where shortages in availability of Leicestershire County Council Occupational Therapists led to periods of time when no Disabled Facility Grant requests were received by NWLDC and as such no grant payments were made. The funding has been held in an ear marked reserve to cover any backlog that maybe forthcoming once the service is operating at full capacity.

5.3 The final Housing Revenue Account capital budget was under spent by £4.59m compared to the budget approved at Council in September of £19.39m. The main reason for this is a £3.1m underspend on the Decent Homes programme, of which £0.465m has been included in the 2015/16 capital budget for refusals and deferrals to complete the 2014/15 programme and additional slippage of £0.8m for works relating to 2014/15 programme have been completed in 2015/16. This saving has arisen due to a prudent approach in varying the budget in September 2014. At this time, the budget was increased by varying the revenue contribution to capital outlay (RCCO) to allow for full financial provision to complete the entire programme, inclusive of potential refusal of works or right to buy property sales which cannot be accurately predicted. On completion of the programme, this full budget provision was not required.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 JULY 2015

Title of report	CONTRACT RENEWAL FOR MICROSOFT SOFTWARE
Key Decision	a) Financial Yes b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Nicholas Rushton 01530 412059 nicholas.rushton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Finance 01530 454520 ray.bowmer@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To ask Cabinet to delegate authority for the award of contract to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder
Reason for Decision	To ensure the ICT service is delivered in an effective and efficient manner
Council Priorities	Value for Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	Financial implications can be met within existing budgets. There is no impact on staffing
Link to relevant CAT	Not applicable
Risk Management	Officers of the Council use Microsoft software for email, word processing and other core activities as part of their day to day work. Any delay in renewing the current contract would interrupt support for a core ICT service
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable
Human Rights	No human rights implications are apparent
Transformational Government	The approach to tendering for this service represents procurement best practice and will deliver optimum value for money.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory

Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET: DELEGATES THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT FOR MICROSOFT SOFTWARE TO THE HEAD OF FINANCE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CORPORATE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1.0 BACKGROUND.

- 1.1 550 officers use Microsoft software as part of their day to day work for tasks such as sending and receiving email, word processing and spreadsheets.
- 1.2 All Council desktop computers use the Windows 7 operating system, and the majority of the computer room servers run a server version of Windows.
- 1.3 The Council's email system, Intranet and many business systems (such as the Housing and Finance systems) depend on Microsoft software for their operation.
- 1.4 As such, Microsoft software forms a critical part of the ICT service.
- 1.5 The current license and support agreement for Microsoft software ends on 31 July 2015. In order to retain the right to use, upgrade and support this software, the agreement must be renewed.

2.0 PROCUREMENT APPROACH

- 2.1 Because Microsoft software is used extensively throughout the public sector, costs are negotiated centrally through the Cabinet Office and substantial discounts are made available to public sector organisations via a Crown Commercial Service framework agreement.
- 2.2 This approach is consistent with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the approach that was adopted when the current contract was awarded in 2010. As such, this is a straightforward procurement in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2.3 The centrally negotiated discounts available are such that this approach represents best value for the Council.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The contract value is approximately £207,000 over 3 years, i.e. £69,000 per annum. Note that the actual spend may vary because the cost is dependent on the number of

users and computers which change as officers join and leave the Council and as other staffing levels vary.

- 3.2 Significant features of the new contract include greater flexibility to change the contract should staff numbers change significantly.
- 3.3 The new contract also includes the option to use Microsoft cloud services should the Council consider it advantageous to do so. With this option, some or all of the email server and file storage infrastructure would be owned and managed by Microsoft. Benefits to the Council of this approach would include reduced server and support costs, and easier access to email for Members and other users requiring remote access. Testing of these cloud options is in progress and once this is complete a report will be made to CLT outlining options for using these extended services and recommending an approach.
- 3.4 Provision for these costs has been made in the ICT budget for 2015-16. These costs represent an overall 2% increase in the costs agreed in 2010.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That Cabinet delegates the award of the contract for Microsoft software to the Head of Finance in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**CABINET – 21 JULY 2015**

Title of report	HOTEL STREET / HIGH STREET, COALVILLE, LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Planning & Regeneration 01530 454782 jim.newton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To consider the responses to the Hotel Street/ High Street, Coalville Local Development Oder consultation, and to formally adopt the Order without modification
Reason for Decision	The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 provides for the local planning authority to formally adopt the Local Development Order
Council Priorities	Business and Jobs
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The Order will grant planning permission for specific work to specified buildings. It therefore avoids the need for Planning staff to process applications
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	The Order removes a risk that permission may be refused for specified works, and therefore encourages property owners to participate in the shopfronts improvement scheme.
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable
Human Rights	Not applicable

Transformational Government	The removal of red tape to encourage regeneration
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Public consultation in accordance with the regulations
Background papers	Coalville Shopfront Improvement Scheme Design Guide Hotel Street and High Street, Coalville Local Development Order Statement of Reasons
Recommendations	<p>1. THAT CABINET CONSIDERS THE RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION</p> <p>2. THAT CABINET ADOPTS THE HOTEL STREET AND HIGH STREET, COALVILLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER WITHOUT MODIFICATION</p>

1.0 THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ORDER

1.1 The Order is intended to encourage affected building owners to invest in their properties, and was specifically designed to support the Council's Shopfronts Improvement Programme by removing the need for planning permission to carry out applicable works. The properties covered by the Order are

- 10 – 52 High Street (evens only);
- Stamford and Warrington Hotel to the Constitutional Club; and
- 2a – 32 Hotel Street (evens only)

2.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

2.1 A public consultation about the Hotel Street / High Street, Coalville Local Development Order ran from 29 April to 27 May 2015. In accordance with the applicable regulations, the following methods of consultation were used:

- Three site notices were placed on street (one outside number 32 Hotel Street, one outside the library opposite number 10 High Street, and one outside the Stamford and Warrington Hotel);

- Letters were delivered to each of the properties covered by the Order;
- A notice was placed in the Leicester Mercury;
- Documents were placed on the Council's web site; and
- Documents were placed in the Council Offices for public inspection

2.2 Two responses were received to the consultation, both by email and both seeking clarification about whether the Order would compel building owners to carry out the works specified by it. Responses were sent by email confirming that the Order enables some or all of the specified works to be carried out without the need for planning permission, and reassuring people that it does not require any works to be done.

3.0 THE EFFECT OF THE ORDER

3.1 The Order will enable, for a period of 18 months from the date of adoption, property owners to carry out some or all of the following works to their properties:

- At ground floor: repair, refurbishment or replacement of shop fronts, subject to conditions and other limitations that are specified in the Order; and/or
- At first floor and above: refurbishment, repair or replacement of rainwater goods, brickwork, and windows, subject to conditions and other limitations as stipulated by the Order

3.2 The conditions include that the works done must comply with the design guide that accompanies the Order.

3.3 The Order enables a building owner to carry out some or all of the specified works to the buildings covered by it, regardless of whether they apply to the Council for a grant.

3.4 At the end of the 18 month period, the authority may either revoke the Order, extend it, or amend it.

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NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 JULY 2015

Title of report	VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY FOR THE HOUSING SERVICE
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Roger Bayliss 01530 411055 roger.bayliss@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To seek approval of the Housing Service's Value For Money Strategy.
Reason for Decision	To enable the Housing Service to deliver it's proposals in respect of Value for Money.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Homes and Communities
Implications: Financial/Staff	As included in report.
Link to relevant CAT	Delivering value for money will allow Housing and the Council to achieve the objectives for the service as set out in the Housing Business Plan and Service Team Business Plans.
Risk Management	The Council sets an HRA budget, which is regularly monitored throughout the year to ensure services are delivered within budget. Risks are managed through the corporate risk management process.
Equalities Impact Screening	None.
Human Rights	None.
Transformational Government	None.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory

Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Housing Senior Management Team, Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum, Performance and Finance Working Group, Policy Development Group
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET APPROVES THE VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY FOR THE HOUSING SERVICE.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) published its Value for Money Strategy in 2008.
- 1.2 All Housing Associations are required to issue a value for money statement with their accounts on an annual basis, in order to comply with the value for money element of the national Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) regulatory standards. Although the Value for Money standard does not apply to local authorities, the requirement for a VFM strategy does, and this also represents good practice.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 The Housing VfM Strategy (Appendix 2) has been developed to ensure that the service is in the best position to:
- Respond to a fast changing economic environment
 - Adopt latest housing best practice
 - Identify and embrace emerging housing policies and trends
 - Demonstrate to our tenants and leaseholders that the Housing Service at NWLDC is an efficient organisation making maximum use of it's resources
 - Deliver services in line with the council's values
 - Maintain rents at a fair and affordable level whilst ensuring that our properties remain decent and services are effective and efficient

3.0 STRATEGY OVERVIEW

- 3.1 In order to support delivery of our VfM Strategy we developed a framework involving eight pillars:
- **Effective Procurement** including
 - Considering quality of goods or service as well as cost.

- Consolidating purchasing across the service or council to reduce cost per unit
 - **Maximising Assets** including
 - Programming works to maximise working in local neighbourhoods
 - Design led planning with security, health and safety and estate environment at the core of it's thinking
 - **Contract Management** including
 - Maximising the performance of our contractors
 - Regular monitoring of Key Performance Indicators against cost, quality and tenant satisfaction
 - **Strong financial stewardship** including
 - Continuing to hold monthly Finance Clinics to monitor expenditure
 - Delivering the HRA budget timetable in line with the corporate budget setting programme
 - **Benchmarking and Improving Services** including
 - Annual comparison of the costs of our goods and services with other providers in the sector
 - Working collaboratively with providers in the top quartile to understand their processes and how these might be adopted
 - Challenging why or how we provide a service or function
 - Having full and open consultation with users
 - **Resident Involvement** including
 - Involving our residents in major procurement decisions
 - Setting and agreeing targets for service delivery
 - **Planning for our future** including
 - Scrutinising areas of spend and challenging current practices
 - Publishing value for money outcomes to residents and stakeholders
 - Learning from complaints
 - Ensuring effective scrutiny by elected Members
 - **Involving Staff** including
 - Maximising the opportunity of the BEE scheme in supporting what is possible
 - Embedding a value for money culture where staff are empowered to deliver against the Council Values
- 3.2 Each pillar is equally important therefore until each is being consistently delivered we will not be fully demonstrating value for money as a service
- 3.3 To oversee delivery against each of these pillars, a VfM Champion Group will be established, to be chaired by the Finance Systems Team Leader. This Group will present a quarterly progress report to the Performance & Finance Working Group and also to Housing Senior Management Team.
- 3.4 The timetable included in Appendix 1 outlines the strategy approval timetable and key milestones in implementing the VfM framework.
- 3.5 The strategy will be reviewed and updated every three years.

4.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 4.1 The strategy was considered by the Policy Development Group on 1 July 2015. The strategy has been updated as a result of comments received in relation to Member involvement in delivery of the strategy, the monitoring of compensation payments made to tenants as a result of complaints, and the requirement for the VfM Champion Group to incorporate learning from complaints.

- 4.2 The strategy was considered by the Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum (the Council's main Resident Involvement consultation body) for review and comment on 29 June 2015, and by the Performance and Finance Working Group on 9 July 2015. Any comments received from these groups will be presented to Cabinet via verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Housing.

APPENDIX 1

Housing VfM Strategy approval and implementation timetable

Item	Action	Who	When
1	Seek nominations from Housing Team Managers for VfM Champion Group representatives	Finance Systems Team Leader	June 2015
2	Present strategy to Tenants and Leaseholders Consultation Forum	Finance Systems Team Leader	29 June 2015
3	Present strategy to Performance and Finance Working Group	Finance Systems Team Leader	9 July 2015
4	Present strategy and timetable to Cabinet	Portfolio Holder Housing	21 July 2015
5	Inaugural VfM Champion Group Meeting	Finance Systems Team Leader	August 2015
6	VfM action plan developed for balance of 2015/16	Finance Systems Team Leader	August / Sept 2015
7	Share action plan with Housing Service	Team Managers Briefings	Sept 2015
8	Presentation on VfM delivery to date at half yearly housing briefing	Finance Systems Team Leader	November 2015

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Housing Service Value for Money Strategy 2015



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1. Introduction

The following builds on the Value for Money (VfM) Strategy developed by North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) in 2008. This strategy has been developed for the Housing Service. It will be reviewed and updated in consultation with our tenants on a three yearly basis and provides the opportunity to:

- Respond to a fast changing economic environment
- Align the strategy with the latest housing best practice
- Align the strategy with emerging housing policy areas and trends
- Demonstrate to our tenants and leaseholders that the Housing Service at NWLDC is an efficient organisation making maximum use of our resources
- Ensure that we are delivering against the council's values
- Review the effectiveness of the strategy.

2. Our values

At NWLDC we have a set of values to which the VfM Strategy for the Housing Service must align; these are:

- Delivering agreed value
- Being fair and proud
- Listening carefully
- Supporting what is possible
- Spending our money wisely.

3. Approach to our VfM Strategy

We recognise there will always be a tension in balancing the aspirational standards of our service with the cost of attaining such levels of service. In developing our efficiency initiatives we will seek resident feedback to ensure we prioritise what is important to residents - but at an affordable cost. This is important as the costs of our services are directly reflect in the rent levels and service charges for our properties.

In summary VfM is often referred to as 'the three Es':

- Economy – obtaining resources at best value, taking both price and quality into account
- Efficiency – performing tasks with reasonable effort in a productive manner
- Effectiveness – the extent to which the objective has been delivered and the impact achieved

A value for money service will be one that can identify and deliver efficiency savings by adopting an approach in line with the three Es. Such examples are:

- Getting the same results using fewer resources
- Getting better results using the same resources
- Paying less for something but getting the same result
- Putting in more resources and getting an exponentially better result.

4. Opportunities

We continually look for ways to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in providing our services. This process is driven by:

- Meeting the needs of our customers
- Linking resources to corporate priorities
- Constraints on available funding due to budgetary pressures
- Savings targets

We will ensure that our Housing Service is high quality, high performing and that our ambitions are informed through consultation and feedback from our tenants, stakeholders and partner organisations.

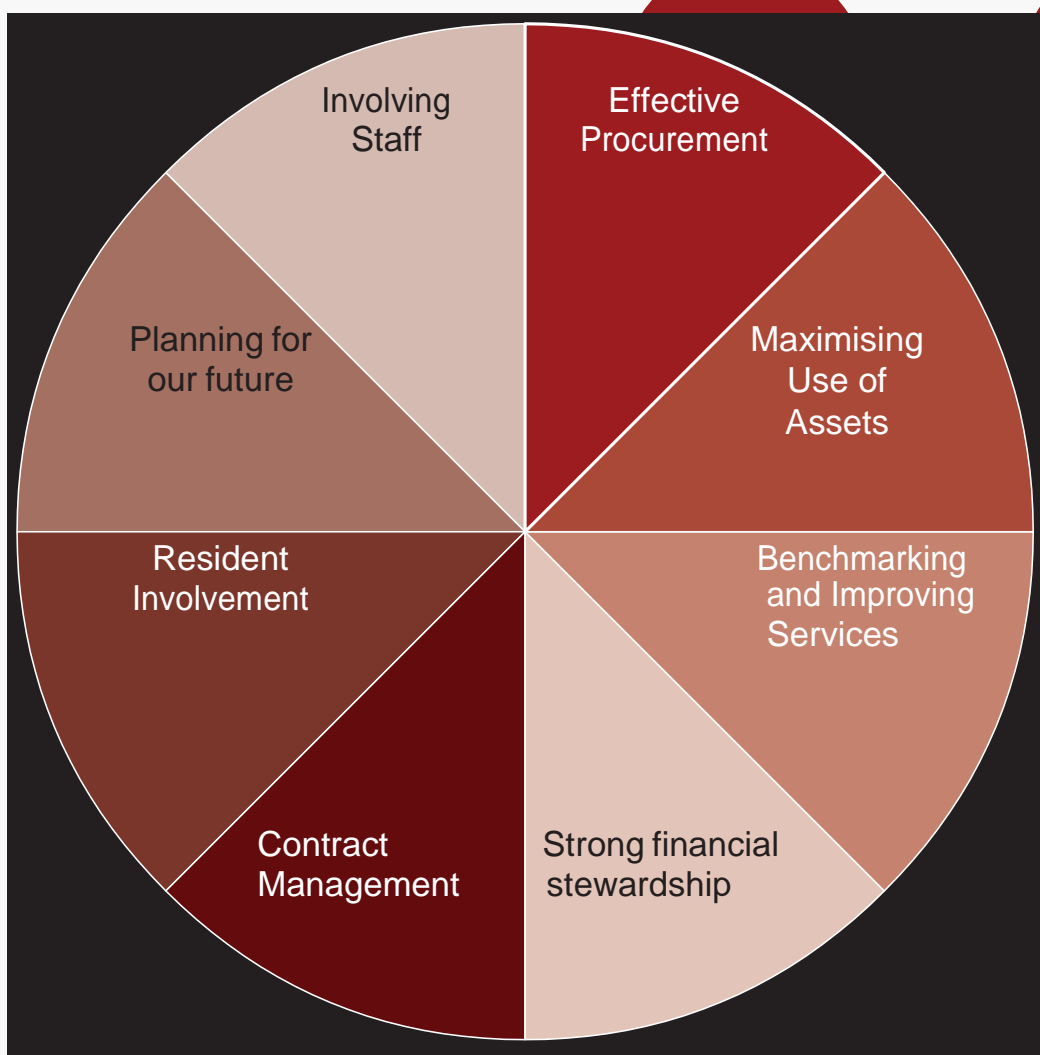
We are clear that VfM within the Housing Service at North West Leicestershire District Council means:

- The service is of the right quality and fit for purpose
- The services provided are planned and managed with due regard to the risks involved
- Services and products are provided economically from a supplier whose prices are competitive for the quality delivered
- Services and products are provided economically from a supplier whose prices are competitive for the quality delivered
- Services are provided efficiently through streamlined processes that link internally and with partner organisations where required
- Services are provided effectively in a way that meet the needs of our tenants and focus on the issues that matter most to our tenants
- Rents are kept as fair and affordable as possible whilst ensuring that investment is available to keep our properties decent
- External funding will be accessed wherever practical in support of Housing Service objectives and priorities.

5. Framework for delivering VfM

To support delivery of these opportunities, a structure has been put in place around which the strategy can be developed and success achieved.

VfM Delivery Framework



Each segment or 'pillar' included within the framework contributes towards the overall VfM strategy for NWLDC.

Delivery of the VfM strategy will be the responsibility of the VfM Champion Group with the support of Housing Strategic Management Team. Further information on the role of the Champion Group can be found on page 9.

6. VfM Strategy – our approach

Effective Procurement - The procurement of suppliers and partners will be evaluated on the basis of economically advantageous rather than lowest price. This ensures that a range of factors can be taken into account to ensure that the correct balance of fit-for-purpose, quality, cost and service can be measured and in so doing deliver value for money.

Involved residents will be consulted and their feedback will help determine the priorities in future procurement activities and inform the brief for negotiating service standards. Residents will continue to be involved in tender assessment panels especially for customer facing services, with recent examples including the Schedule of Rates Contractor and the Tenants Home Contents Insurance provider

Priority areas identified in consultation with both residents and officers, include:

- Development of a Procurement Guide to support a co-ordinated strategic approach to our procurement activity and processes as well as ensuring that procurement within the Housing Service is undertaken with consistency and probity
- Consolidated purchasing of supplies from across the housing service and council to maximise the opportunity of maintaining or reducing costs per unit, by reducing the administration costs through smaller supplier base / reduced invoice volumes and improving economies of scale
- Securing social value, for example through the creation of local apprenticeships and buying local to provide income and jobs within our district.

Contract management - As providers of services to our tenants, contractors have a key role to play in delivering VfM and improving service provision. Contractors must therefore understand this strategy and fully contribute to its delivery.

This will be achieved by participating in service reviews, attending workshops and training and by proposing change and innovation in the services they deliver. Contractors will be made aware of how they are expected to work with NWLDC and the principles that underpin our approach to VfM.

An effective approach to contract management will be implemented to ensure that all key contractual outputs are achieved and are measured, monitored and managed on a monthly basis for each contract. Formal contract management arrangements will be initiated from the outset of all contracts and housing staff will be given clear responsibilities for ensuring contracts achieve the required performance out-turns, including:

- Costs
- Quality
- Timeliness
- Customer satisfaction

Managing assets – An integrated approach will be taken to manage all our assets including planned cyclical maintenance and responsive repairs, greener and more efficient forms of energy, and new building development. This will be achieved through:

- Establishment of a minimum standard for components and energy efficiency within our current stock as for new builds and acquisitions
- Programming works to maximise working in neighboring localities (making best use of stock condition data and leveraging the scale of the council to secure best price)
- Identifying supply chain management and procurement opportunities working in partnerships
- Developing a consistent appraisal model to identify options for assets with high stock needs comparative to rental return and demand

- Design-led planning with security, estate environment and health & safety of residents at the core of its thinking
- Establishment of consistent service standards and specifications for boilers, windows and bathroom suites

Improving the energy efficiency of our homes will be a priority. We will develop and champion new and innovative green technology and this work has already started with the installation of new technologies in a small number of tenants' homes as part of the Green and Decent pilot programme. We will measure its success through a VfM review including the cost of the equipment, installation, and servicing compared against the savings on energy costs, user friendliness and resident satisfaction.

Involving Staff - Service and team business plan objectives will include VfM targets which will be cascaded through teams to individual staff targets.

Performance will be assessed in three areas:

1. Collective delivery of the Housing Service Business Plan
2. Officer delivery of their individual team targets
3. Officer performance against their own personal targets as outlined and discussed during individual appraisals

Further actions to strengthen our approach to VfM are consistent with the Council's Best Employee Experience (BEE) through which we are committed to:

- Robust annual appraisal and target setting through the Reflections Scheme
- Benchmarking of costs and quality against peer group performance
- Improved performance monitoring systems will offer better access to more timely information.
- Embedding a VfM culture where staff are empowered to deliver against the Council Values
- Encouraging staff to challenge inefficiencies and waste

Team leaders and managers are responsible for delivering services 'right first time', ensuring VfM exists in the day to day management of their service and teams and considering VfM in any new proposals or reviews of their service area. They need to work with the Housing Strategic Management Team (SMT) to ensure that VfM is understood by all and that VfM action plans are delivered once they are agreed by the VfM Champion Group.

All officers are to be made aware of the importance of VfM through the induction programme, training, briefings and team meetings. Staff will be encouraged to contribute ideas for the efficiency agenda using a staff suggestion pro-forma. They will help with implementing improvements and with target setting. It is everyone's responsibility to deliver VfM in their day-to-day activities.

Resident involvement – We will continue to consult with our tenants and residents in all of our decision making processes, including (but not limited to):

- Consultation regarding changes to, or introduction of, services
- Procurement decisions
- Customer analysis of complaints and customer satisfaction in order to gain insight into how the services can be improved
- Setting and agreement of targets
- Determining funding priorities
- Determining how any savings should be reinvested
- Three yearly review of this VfM strategy.

We will also regularly report on progress against this VfM strategy and subsequent action plans using a new VfM web page on the NWLDC website and In Touch, our resident led magazine.

Benchmarking to peer group – Through our ongoing commitment to Benchmarking we will monitor the cost and impact of delivering services within Repairs, Planned Investment and Housing Management. Weak or lower quartile performance compared to our peer group will be monitored and improved through the development of action plans monitored by the VfM Champion Group and SMT. Benchmarking results will help shape the Team Business Plans and priorities for the short and medium term.

Opportunities to learn from and work collaboratively with our peer group will be exploited to highlight changes in how the service might be delivered which in turn might lead to improved costs and/or performance. This might include visits by team managers and team leaders to operators within the top quartile to understand their approach and how appropriate this might be for NWLDC.

Improving services – continual improvement will be a priority for NWLDC.

Challenging what we do, the way we do it, is key to improving services. Service reviews, commissioned by the VfM Group, will address the following issues:

- Challenging why or how we provide a function or service
- Full and open consultation with users
- Competitive review i.e. can others deliver a service more cheaply and to a better standard?
- Comparison of performance or approach with others.
- Highlighting potential areas for joint working with other housing providers
- Identification of areas for improvement.

All reviews will seek to balance quality and cost considerations with the three Es – economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The corporate service review kit will support team managers in reviewing and improving their services. It can be used to inform a holistic approach to VfM, or to shape thinking and activity at specific stages of the VfM review and improvement

Any service improvements identified, of a significant scale, will normally require a business case to be developed and a project team to deliver. The business case will set out the current business position, the drivers for change, proposed investment and benefits (financial and qualitative), risks and mitigations together with milestones for delivery which will be monitored by the VfM Champion Group.

The group will conduct an independent review at each milestone, before the next phase of investment is approved. This is to provide assurance on:

- Spend and programme delivery status to date
- Benefits realised so far through a post investment appraisal
- Risks and issues arisen so far and mitigation
- Change management and projected programme outcome.

Planning for the future – We will put VfM at the heart of all future planning. The VfM Champion Group will consist of officers from each team within the Housing Service supported by an involved resident and chaired by the Finance Systems Team Leader. This group will be responsible for the integration of the VfM strategy with operational service delivery. The Housing VfM Champion Group's proposed terms of reference are:

- Provide leadership throughout the service on VfM issues
- Implement the strategy whilst promoting actions to further embed it in the culture of the organisation
- Monitor and publish VfM outcomes to residents and stakeholders
- Create, review and deliver a detailed action plan to deliver year on year efficiency savings
- Scrutinise areas of spending and challenge current practices
- Promote benchmarking
- Identify efficiency drivers
- Review the action plan in light of new business objectives, changes in economic and legislative environment and departmental savings targets
- Monitor the level of compensation payments arising from complaints
- Monitor and analyse complaint levels and trends, and work with the HRA Business Support Team to implement the learning points identified.

The priorities of the VfM Champion Group will be detailed in the annual Housing Business Plan. Scrutiny of the Group's activities (including savings delivered and service improvements) by elected Members will be achieved through the corporate Performance Report presented to Cabinet each quarter. Members will also continue to scrutinize and approve the annual housing revenue and capital budgets, and the HRA Business Plan.

Strong financial stewardship – As one of our council values describes VfM is about 'spending our money wisely' and not necessarily about spending less. To make sure this is managed and monitored we will continue to:

- Hold monthly finance clinics to monitor budgets and financial performance with all Team Managers. This provides independent challenge to Team Managers and delivers both scrutiny and accountability
- Hold Team Managers to account through SMT who in turn will be answerable to the Corporate Leadership Team for all spend
- Ensure that the HRA Budget timetable fully aligns with the corporate budget setting programme and that full tenant consultation is undertaken alongside internal review prior to budget being approved by both Cabinet and Council
- Supporting the Tenant Scrutiny Panel by providing useful financial information to assist with their inspections in areas such as Decent Homes Programme and Rent Collection.
- Work closely with our tenants on sharing and reviewing financial performance via the Performance and Finance Working Group
- Utilise the Internal Audit function in reviewing and identifying any areas of weakness in our controls and procedures
- Align the HRA Business Plan with the Treasury Forecast Model as well as the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

7. Measuring our success

Our success will be demonstrated by staff and tenants working together to deliver highly performing, cost effective services which result in increasing levels of tenant satisfaction with the Housing Service.

It will also be measured by delivering year on year savings which to date have been:

2008/09 = £56,210

2009/10 = £1,060,535

2010/11 = £1,176,975

2011/12 = £1,543,630

2012/13 = £417,949

2013/14 = £413,930

2014/15 = £59,866

Savings outlined above have resulted from:

- Improved procurement channels including the purchasing of housing repairs materials via a framework agreement
- Challenging previously accepted ways of working
- Delivery of more cost efficient repairs diagnostic tool
- Review of energy bills and subscriptions to organisations
- Direct procurement of surveys

Governance - The VfM Champion Group will monitor the delivery of the VfM Strategy. There will be quarterly reporting to Housing SMT on current progress against the strategy and action plans, as well as to the Performance & Finance Working Group. There will also be quarterly reporting to Members through the quarterly Performance Report to Cabinet.



www.nwleics.gov.uk



01530 454545



@nwleics



VFM@nwleicestershire.gov.uk



Council Offices
Whitwick Road, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 3FJ



NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 JULY 2015

Title of report	EXEMPTION TO THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES – STRATEGIC GROWTH PLANNING CONSULTANT AND RIVER MEASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Trevor Pendleton 01509 569746 trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	To note the granting of exemptions to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR), pursuant to rule 3.1.1 (a)
Reason for Decision	The CPR require that the exercise of the Statutory Officers' discretion to grant exemptions is reported to Cabinet.
Council Priorities	Value for Money Business and Jobs Homes and Communities Green Footprints Challenge
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The costs are available from within existing budgets
Link to relevant CAT	Not applicable
Risk Management	Risks have been assessed and addressed as part of the decision making process with Statutory Officers.
Equalities Impact Screening	Not applicable
Human Rights	Not applicable
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory

Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET NOTES THE GRANT OF EXEMPTIONS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULE 5.8 (I) TO ALLOW THE DIRECT AWARD OF A CONTRACT FOR SPECIALIST CONSULTANCY SERVICES; AND (II) TO ALLOW THE TRENT RIVERS TRUST TO UNDERTAKE THE RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

1. BACKGROUND TO PROCUREMENT OF SPECIALIST PLANNING CONSULTANT TO FACILITATE COUNTYWIDE SESSION RELATING TO STRATEGIC GROWTH PLANNING

- 1.1 In partnership with other authorities in Leicestershire, the Council has been leading on joint working around strategic planning matters affecting all districts, boroughs, the city and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). As part of this, a facilitated workshop was arranged for all authorities and the LLEP to enable officers to fully understand the national scene regarding the plans that have so far been completed and the learning from them.
- 1.2 The aim of the workshop was to understand what the strategic planning framework, its depth and complexity could be and to agree the next pieces of foundation work that can take place over the next three months and who will lead them.
- 1.3 This type of collaborative working will support the authorities' local plans and it will enable the Council (along with the other key stakeholders) to maximise the benefits of joint strategic planning. Engagement of this kind helps all partners involved to understand the conflicting demands, as well as the complementary interests within Leicestershire and will be key to move forward together and maximise the benefits to be obtained for residents.

2. THE CONTRACT PROCUREMENT

- 2.1 This work is not yet well researched or resourced nationally and has a limited field of recognised expertise.
- 2.2 The session was highly relevant to ongoing issues, relating to progressing the whole strategic planning programme and the timing of Local Plans.
- 2.3. From soft market testing only one consultant was available at such short notice with sufficient expertise in the area. This was Catriona Riddell of Catriona Riddell and Associates Ltd.

3. EXEMPTION

- 3.1 Having regard to the above, on the basis of the technical nature of the subject matter, Statutory Officers were asked to grant an exemption to the CPR pursuant to CPR 3.1.1(a).
- 3.2 The cost of the session was £2,000 plus travelling expenses, which would otherwise be a Band A (Minor) contract under Contract Procedure Rules 5.8. The Statutory Officers were asked to grant an exemption to the Contract Procedure Rules pursuant to rule 3.1.1 on the basis of the technical nature of the subject matter, allowing direct award of the contract to Catriona Riddell and Associates Ltd. The payment for the session came out of the joint strategic planning budget which is held for 9 planning authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP).
- 3.3 The exemption was granted on 25 March 2015 and pursuant to CPR 3.1.3, the Chief Executive is required to notify Cabinet of the exercise of the Statutory Officer's discretion in relation to this service area.

4. BACKGROUND TO PROCUREMENT OF TRENT RIVERS TRUST TO CARRY OUT RIVER MEASE SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT MEA002

- 4.1 The UK Government is committed to a catchment-based approach to sharing information, co-ordinating activity and making the case for collaborative action to protect and improve England's water environment.
- 4.2 In order to make this concept a reality, the Government has tasked the Environment Agency to test approaches to improved engagement, information sharing and coordination of action at a catchment level. The Environment Agency has delivered against this agenda by setting up several pilot catchments across England that are 'hosted' by third sector organisations. In the case of the Tame/Mease/Anker catchment, this is the Trent Rivers Trust (TRT). Start up funding was provided through DEFRA to support the establishment of functioning catchment partnerships however catchment partnerships needed to establish new funding sources thereafter.
- 4.3 This project (MEA002) is one of the projects delivering mitigation for the effect of additional residential development within the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) catchment and funded through the River Mease Developer Contribution Scheme.

5. THE CONTRACT PROCUREMENT

- 5.1 The Trent Rivers Trust (TRT) is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee and is part of the River Mease Partnership which also includes Natural England, Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water, and three local planning authorities: North West Leicestershire District Council, South Derbyshire District Council and Lichfield District Council. TRT are undertaking part of the above MEA002 project to consult and educate the local people of Measham about the project and the wider river restoration. The Environment Agency, as lead organisation in the delivery of the MEA002 project, are also part funding TRT to undertake these works.
- 5.2 The river restoration project (MEA002) to the south of Measham, and which forms part of the River Mease SAC Developer Contribution Scheme (DCS) agreed list of projects, is being delivered by the Environment Agency. The monies from the DCS are held by

the Council on behalf of the other local authorities involved. The Environment Agency worked with TRT, who deliver the public consultation and education element of this project, as catchment host and so the Environment Agency did not consider seeking quotations for this work was necessary. As noted above, DEFRA provided early funding, but not ongoing support to facilitate the catchment host. Therefore funding for TRT input into this project was provided through the Environment Agency and subject to approval through the DCS.

6. EXEMPTION

- 6.1 Having regard to the above, on the basis of the technical nature of the subject matter, the Statutory Officers were asked to grant an exemption to the CPR pursuant to CPR 3.1.1(a).
- 6.2 The value of this arrangement is £2,000. Under Contract Procedure Rule (CPR) 5.8, this would otherwise be a Band A (Minor) contract requiring the seeking of three verbal quotations. However, as set out above, only TRT is available to provide this service and so the Statutory Officers were requested to grant an exemption to the CPRs pursuant to CPR 3.1.1 to allow a direct award of this to TRT.
- 6.3 The exemption was granted on 8 April 2015 and pursuant to CPR 3.1.3, the Chief Executive is required to notify Cabinet of the exercise of the Statutory Officer's discretion in relation to this service area.

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 JULY 2015

Report Title	2014/15 END OF YEAR REPORT
Key Decision	a) Financial - No b) Community - No
Contacts	<p>Councillor Richard Blunt 01530 454510 richard.blunt@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Chief Executive 01530 454500 christine.fisher@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Director of Housing 01530 454819 glyn.jones@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>
Purpose of report	To provide an overview of the council's highlights of 2014/15 to update the public on the progress that the council has made in delivering its priorities.
Reason for Decision	To approve the publication of the end of year summary.
Council Priorities	The report summarises performance across the authority's key front line services for 2014/15.
Implications	
Financial/Staff	The report contains summary performance data on staff management & financial information.
Link to relevant CAT	The report links to the work of all Corporate Action Teams.
Risk Management	Risk management is applicable to all areas of the Council's statutory duties and service provision. Any relevant risks relating to actions set out in the Council Delivery Plan are managed through the Corporate Risk Register.
Human Rights	No direct implications.
Transformational Government	No direct implications

Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team
Background papers	(1) Council Delivery Plan 2014/15 - http://www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/council_delivery_plan_2014_15
Recommendations	THAT CABINET RECEIVES THE INFORMATION AND APPROVES THE END OF YEAR REPORT DOCUMENT FOR PUBLICATION.

1 Background

In previous years, as a requirement of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scheme administered by the former Audit Commission, the council had to produce an Annual Report. When CPA was abolished, the council chose to focus performance management attention on the key front line services and the council moved to only producing detailed quarterly performance reports.

2 Purpose of the End of Year Report

The purpose of the end of year report is to provide the public with an easy to read overview of the council's performance highlights for 2014/15. Links to our quarter 4 performance report mean that those who wish to see the detailed performance data can do so easily.

Members are asked for their comments on the document attached as Appendix 1 and to approve it for wider publication and promotion. If the document is well received it is intended that this be the format of production for future annual reports.

End of Year Report 2014/15



49



Introduction

We are working harder than ever to provide value for money in these challenging financial times. Our focus for 2014/15 was on providing high quality frontline services for our customers. Together, our waste, leisure and culture, environmental, housing, benefits and planning services affect everyone in the district.

You will read in the following pages about how these frontline services have performed.

We know there are areas to improve and are always seeking out ways to be more efficient and provide better services for our customers, so the picture is largely a positive one.

We feel that by living by our values, which you can find on the following page, we will always be heading in the right direction.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Blunt'.

Cllr Richard Blunt
Leader
North West Leicestershire
District Council

Our vision for the future is;

'North West Leicestershire will be a place where people and businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home'.

Delivering this vision is the focus of our four priorities;

Our priorities

- Value for money
- Business and jobs
- Homes and communities
- Green Footprints

Our staff live by our values. We **listen carefully** to the issues being raised by a broad range of people such as local communities, businesses, individual cases and council colleagues. In listening, we **support what is possible** and agree expectations which are **fair** to all. **We deliver to a jointly agreed** quality whilst **using the council's resources wisely**.

We would like to thank all our staff, customers and partners who have worked with us to shape and provide our services throughout 2014/15.

We look forward to building on our successes during 2015/16 and beyond.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christine E. Fisher'.

Christine E Fisher
Chief Executive
North West Leicestershire
District Council

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Our people

You will read in the following pages about how we've performed over the last year, about the projects we've funded, the services we've provided and the improvements we've made. This is possible because we have a positive, dedicated workforce. We believe in investing in our people.

Our Best Employee Experience is about recruiting the right people, welcoming them to the council and developing them in their roles.

- **Recruitment** based on beliefs and values, as well as technical ability
- **Training** that is linked to the strategic direction of the council
- Regular manager **appraisals** – addressing performance and development
- All staff 'living' our **values** in their work



The winners of our 'Unsung hero' award were Mandy Allsop, Julian Orme and Gary Nettel, who saved the life of a customer when he collapsed with a heart attack in the gym at Hood Park Leisure Centre. They were also given a bravery award by East Midlands Ambulance Service

← 87

staff were recognised in our BEE a Star Awards Scheme

119

staff recruited in 2014/15, who were able to show they can live by our values

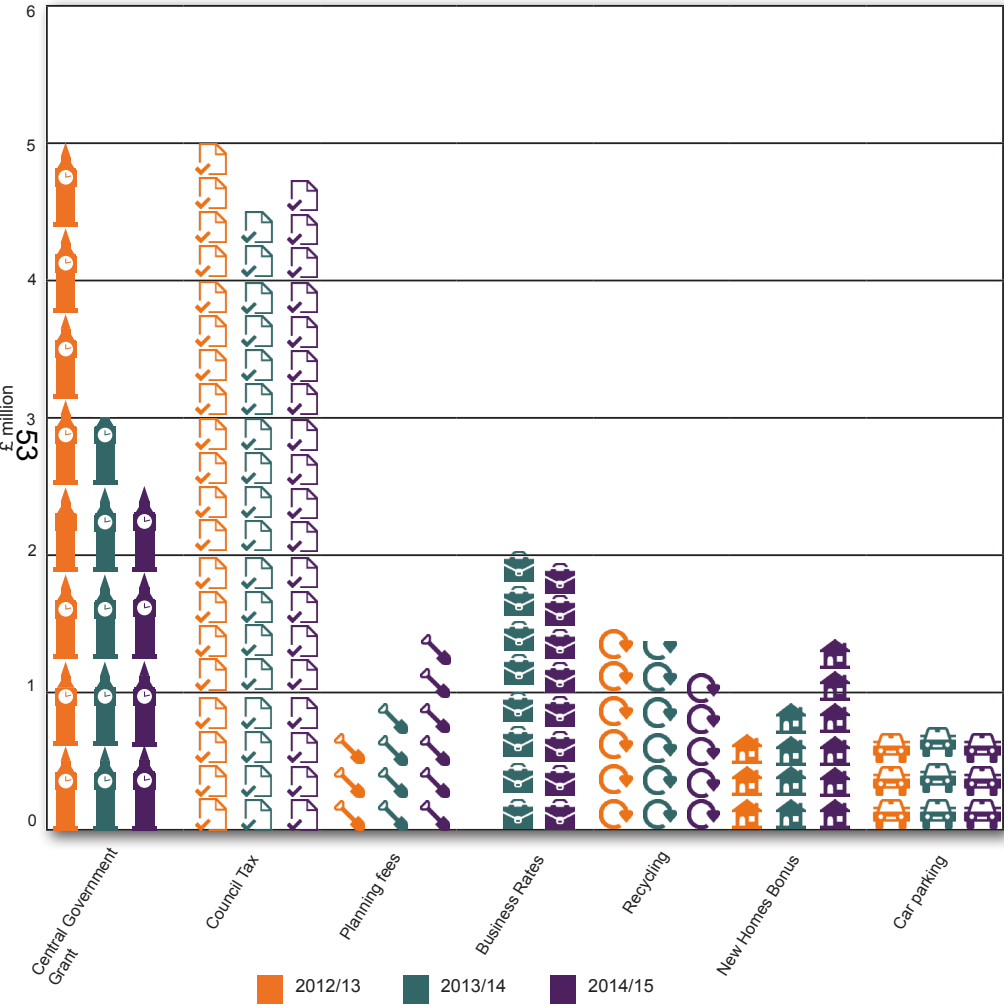
Best Employee Experience
NWL District Council

Our values

- Deliver agreed quality
- Be fair and proud
- Listen carefully
- Support what is possible
- Spend our money wisely

Our finances : Your money

This is where most of the council's money comes from:



The chart opposite shows the decreasing grant settlement that we get from central Government.

Finding ways to increase income locally is becoming more important to keep services running.

Improving the way we operate has been key to supporting local services for the community.



2014-15 savings and income mean that we have achieved an underspend of

£2.25 million

which we can re-invest into services and the community

How we spent your money - at a glance



Investing in your communities

£240,000 in the **£20,000 for Seven** grant scheme which enabled us to access over **£1 million** more for community projects!

1,849 council homes made decent in 2014/15 costing

£12 million



Supporting local businesses to create jobs

£500,000 Local Growth Fund helping businesses that support our growth priorities for the district

£500,000 Enterprising North West Leicestershire fund for local small and medium sized businesses

£225,000 Coalville Shopfront Improvement Programme



£250,000 invested in leisure facilities



3G pitches at Hermitage Leisure Centre

Technology improvements to make our services more efficient and accessible 24/7 through our new website
Why not check it out?

www.nwleics.gov.uk



Our communities



£20,000-for-Seven grants scheme

For the first time, a public vote decided which projects received funding.

3,000 +

people voted for their favourite project.

Six Community Assets listed after nomination by community organisations

Working with at least

50 families

at a time through Supporting Leicestershire Families



Strong Pubwatch + Bodycams = Reduced violent crime in Ashby

(down 16% during the World Cup and down 76% during first three months of Bodycams being worn by security staff)



500 The number of children who visited Warning Zone to learn about the risks of life and diversionary activities for young people at risk of committing anti-social behaviour (Safer North West Partnership funding paid for the visits)

Community safety work at Download Festival = 69% reduction in crime in 2014

compared to 2013 (1.7 crimes per 1,000 attendees in 2014 compared to 3.3 crimes per 1,000 attendees in 2013).



of a Green Apple Award for our Give and Gain event, which introduced community groups to businesses to see how they could help each other out

£500 one-off community grants now available (requires match funding)

8,800 trees

given out to residents and community groups as part of the Free Tree Scheme, Community Orchard Scheme and Hedge Fund



85 the number of people who came along to our Celebration of Volunteers event, where we thanked litter pickers, dog watch wardens and community groups for their help in keeping the district a clean and green place for everyone

Waste services

Thank you for your recycling efforts!

Last year, we sold your separated recycling for

£1.186 million (and put it back into council services)

46.3% of waste was recycled
(income exceeded target by 7.8%)



706 – the number of businesses we provided a

trade waste

collection service for. Giving us an income of

£337,844



We asked our customers what they thought of the refuse and recycling service

93.5%

of them said they were **satisfied** with it

20 tonnes of waste cleared from 16 miles of the A42 during our annual clean up

Resurfacing of car parks at Coalville Market Hall and London Road, on time and in budget

708

The number of new homes that we provided services for last year (and we didn't need to introduce any costly new rounds)

780

tonnes of street sweepings

393

tonnes of litter

700

fly tips

All removed from public areas in our district in 2014/15



Our environment



Highly commended

at the **Keep Britain Tidy** Diamond Jubilee Awards for our roadside litter campaign

150 volunteer litter pickers recruited to help us keep the district clean



New toilets provided at Coalville Market

National change to give **10 minutes** grace on expired car parking ticket enforcement



♪ Zero noise complaints during and after Download Festival 2014

Significantly reduced noise complaints during Strawberry Fields festival 2014

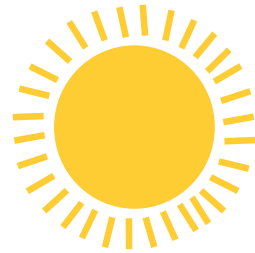
2,500

complaints and enforcement cases handled on:

- Planning
- Noise
- Odour
- Fly tipping
- Graffiti
- Litter

We responded by fining and prosecuting those who committed these enviro-crimes, and we cleared away any mess.

 @NWLEnviro



Decent Homes 100%

of our council homes are now decent

3,771
homes have had
Decent Homes work
(since work started in 2011)

Decent Homes cost

£27 million

(£19.5 million in Government Decent Homes Backlog funding + £7.5 million in NWLDC money)

- **2,094** new kitchens
- **1,584** new bathrooms
- **1,031** new heating systems
- **574** full electrical rewires
- **452** new roofs
- **3,188** new doors or windows

Green and Decent Homes pilot

12 families in council homes are testing out **renewable technology** for us

- Solar panels (photovoltaic and thermal)
- Biomass boilers
- Air source heat pumps

Cheaper bills for tenants and we can sell any extra electricity to the grid!



Housing



389

homes let in 2014/15



789

people

on the Housing Register at the end of 2014/15



56 days

average time it takes to re-let empty homes – we aim to improve this in 2015/16

Repair operatives get job orders and order materials using mobile devices.

Tenants can complete electronic satisfaction surveys straight after the work has been done.

Outstanding arrears £341,000 from annual rental income of £17 million

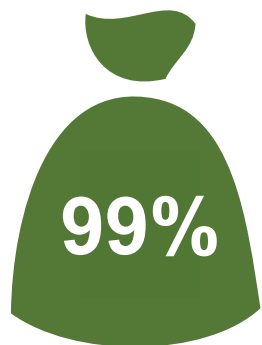
Arrears 2.01% of total gross debt (against target of 2.13%)

An extra £27,000 was knocked off the amount of rent owed

Achieved during a period of welfare reform

Revenues and benefits

Business rates

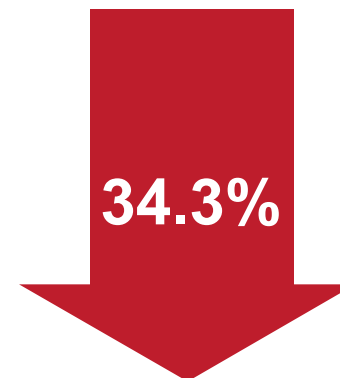


99%

£48.8 million
was collected

More than
£100,000
per year in
savings

identified with new structure.
We expect more non-staffing
savings in the future



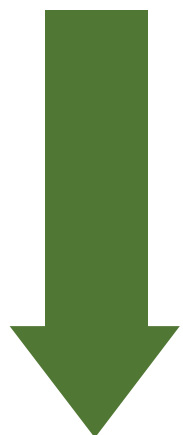
34.3%

Housing Benefit
overpayments recovered
(against a target of 40%)

Arrears reduced by **65%**

A total of
£1.084 million

Benefits



16 days

the time taken
to process new
Housing Benefit /
Council Tax Benefit
(down from 18.39
days in 2013/14)



6.7 days

the time taken to
process Housing
Benefit / Council
Tax Benefit change
in in circumstances
(down from 8.4
days in 2013/14)

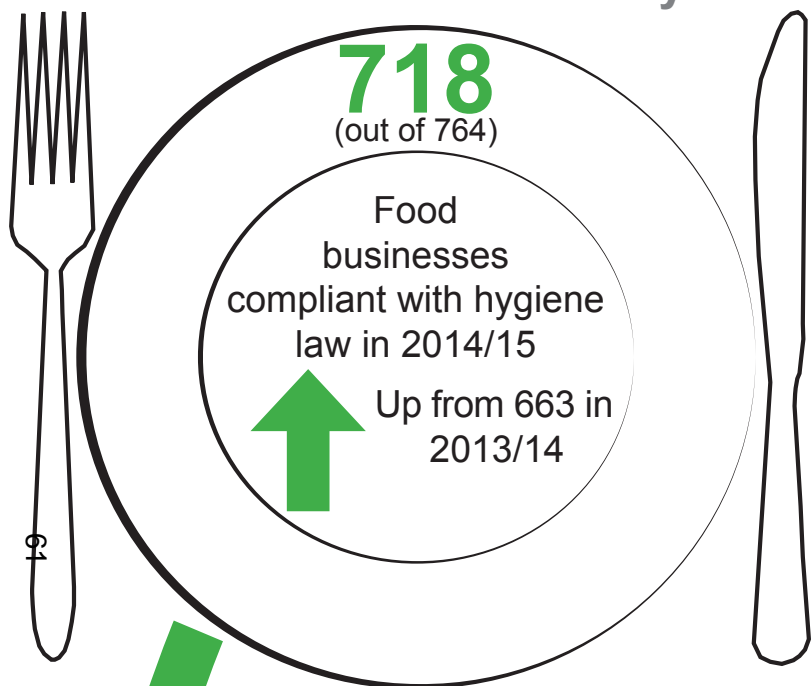
Council Tax collection



The ambitious Council
Tax collection target for
2014/15 was not met by
0.2%, but there was an
increase of 0.2% on the
previous year's collection
rate, showing movement in
a positive direction

Environmental health

Food health and safety



100% of 80 businesses surveyed said they would describe their relationship with Environmental Health as 'good' and said they were satisfied with the service

We take an advisory approach with food businesses, only using enforcement as a last resort. We provide enhanced advice and assistance to those businesses that don't comply to hygiene law, to help them become compliant and sustain it, which helps the businesses and protects the public.

29 the number of food businesses that had enhanced support from us because they were failing to comply with food hygiene law. Nine of these ceased trading. 18 out of the remaining 20 are now compliant (as of 31 March 2015).

Pest control

Customer demand for treatments up by **14%**

Rodent treatments saw highest increase **401 – 516**

Environmental health

Licensing

358 – public houses, clubs, bars and restaurants licensed to serve alcohol

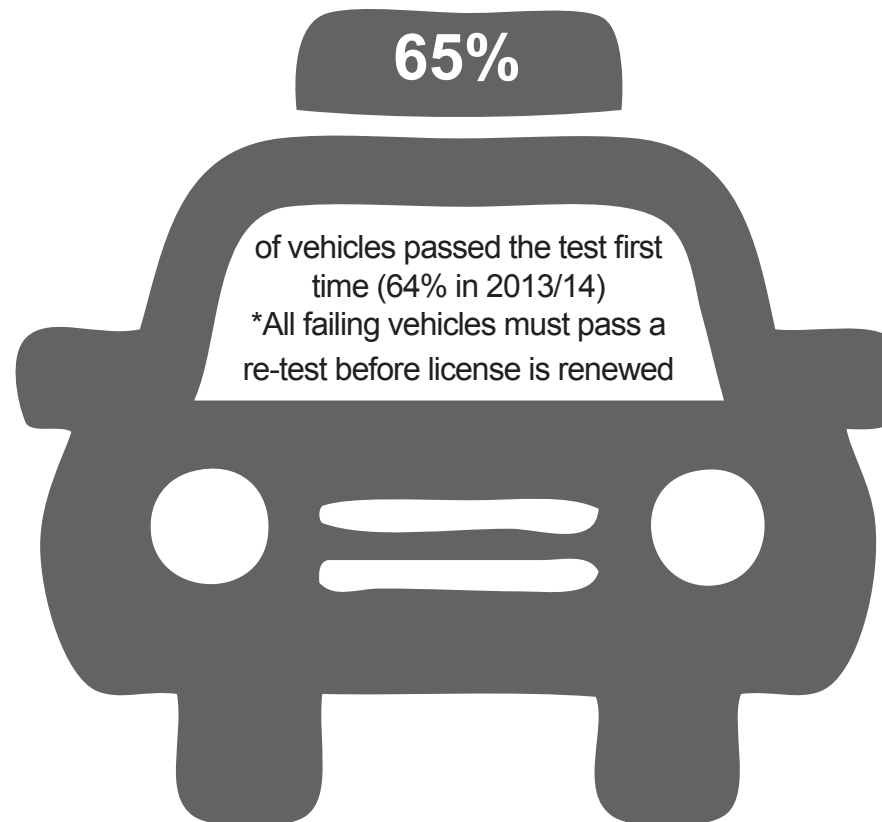
286 – events notices issued to businesses and community groups

249 – taxi drivers licensed

9 – licenses for caravan sites

12 – registered as scrap metal dealers and motor salvage operators

250 taxi vehicle inspections



Prosecutions

We hope successful prosecutions like these will result in more businesses complying with licensing laws:

Taxi

Successful prosecution of taxi driver dropping a passenger off while not displaying a taxi vehicle licence plate – licence had expired. Licence immediately removed and driver prosecuted for plying for hire without a licence, driving without an MOT and failing to return his driver's badge.
= Seven penalty points + £220 fine

Dog breeding

Successful prosecution of two people found to be breeding dogs without a licence.
= £1,200 fine x 2 + £6,384 legal costs + £101,340 removed from the couple by the police through the Proceeds of Crime Act

Leisure



New **NWL Learn to Swim** Academy launched in partnership with Amateur Swimming Association

1,883 children learning to swim with us each week (up from 1,816 per week last year)

Parents and teachers can now monitor progress online



@Hermitage_LC

@HoodPark_LC

3,876 young people used our **leisure centres** **22,447 times for free** through our award winning Club **Activ8** scheme



3,000 Direct Debit **health and fitness memberships** provide us with £75,000 per month income



New for 2014/15



New wheeled sports facility and BMX track improvements at Cropston Drive Recreation Ground (£30,000)

New 3G artificial pitch installed at Hermitage Recreation Ground (£160,000)



New spin studio at Hermitage Leisure Centre (22 classes every week) (£30,000)

Improvements to walkways, play station and footpaths at Urban Forest Park

323 residents
44 sports clubs / organisations recognised at our **Sports Awards**

Culture and events

Events

we organised and supported:

- Picnic in the Park
- Coalville by the Sea
- Ashby Arts Festival
- Coalville Christmas Lights Switch On
- Remembrance Day services
- 64 Ashby Town Council events, in partnership

Which were enjoyed by **14,000** people



14

Moira Furnace

We helped the attraction to secure

£60,000

in Heritage Lottery Funding

We continued to maintain the Scheduled Ancient Monument and the grounds



We reviewed our Tourist Information Centre and now save

£10,000 a year

on providing tourism services for the district



Get more information
[@somewhere_nice](#)

Planning and development

Five year land supply

We can now show we have a five year supply of land for housing (plus a buffer of 20%).

This is important because without it, we lost the ability to refuse planning permission on greenfield housing sites that were outside the limits to development.

Having a five year supply plus buffer means we can refuse permission if we think the site should not be developed.



400 homes

granted planning permission

(3,000 more homes in the pipeline – all helping us with our five year housing land supply)

£12.6 million

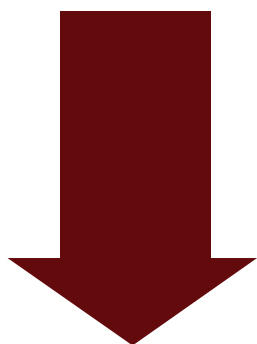
in Section 106 contributions from developers.

This money can now be spent on public facilities, including new roads, schools, medical facilities, etc...



£1.34 million

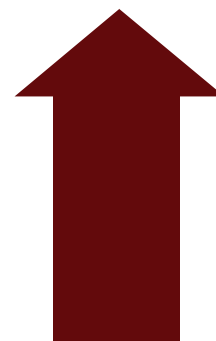
income received in planning fees in 2014/15. This has helped to plug the gap caused by reduced funding from Government.



Down from three weeks to

five days

– the time it takes to register planning applications as 'valid'



87.67%

of major planning applications decided within target time of **13** weeks (above national target of 60%)

Find out more about our performance at



www.nwleics.gov.uk/performance



@nwleics



01530 454545

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – 21 JULY 2015

Title of report	DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS AND LIGHTBULB PROJECT
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community No
Contacts	Councillor Alison Smith MBE 01530 835668 alison.smith@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Director of Services 01530 454555 steve.bambrick@nwleicestershire.gov.uk Head of Community Services 01530 454832 john.richardson@nwleicestershire.gov.uk
Purpose of report	Cabinet to note the transfer of service delivery of the Council's Disabled Facilities Grants into the Lightbulb project pilot
Reason for Decision	To ensure Cabinet are aware of service delivery changes for Disabled Facility Grants
Council Priorities	Homes and Communities Value For Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	NWLDC will fund the administration of NWL Disabled Facilities Grants within the Lightbulb pilot from within existing revenue budgets
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	Risk assessments will be completed as appropriate by the Pilot project team
Equalities Impact Screening	None discernible
Human Rights	None discernible
Transformational Government	Working in partnership within the Public Sector to generate improved resident outcomes and efficiency savings for the Public Sector is considered good practice.

Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Deputy Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Corporate Leadership Team Blaby District Council
Background papers	None
Recommendations	THAT CABINET NOTES - THE TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATION OF DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS INTO THE LIGHTBULB PROJECT PILOT WITH BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Lightbulb project is a major transformational programme across the 7 District Councils and the County Council which will integrate a range of housing support services such as Disabled Facilities Grant's (DFG), minor adaptations, affordable warmth and handyperson services into a single service available to all. This new service will be easier to access, easier to use and will provide support around an individual's need, not an organisations processes. Further detail of the Lightbulb project is available at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 A governance structure has been created by the Lead Chief Executive from Blaby District Council (BDC), Sandra Whiles, and North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) has representation throughout the governance levels as follows:
- Project Board – Glyn Jones, Director of Housing
 - Steering Group – Clare Proudfoot, Street Action Team Manager
 - Pilot Steering Group – Minna Scott, Street Protection Team Leader
- 1.3 Updates are also regularly provided to Chief Executives' meetings, Unified Prevention Board, Health Leads meetings and various other groups.

2.0 NWLDC CONTEXT

- 2.1 DFG's were introduced in 1989 and are provided in Leicestershire by the District Councils. They provide financial help for disabled people who need an adaptation to their home. This includes people who own their own home, tenants and people living in houseboats and caravans.

- 2.2 NWLDC receives an annual government grant to deliver DFG's to residents in need. The grant, which used to be paid to Districts direct, is now paid to Upper Tier authorities, specifically Leicestershire County Council (LCC) in our area. For 2015/16 it was agreed that LCC would passport the grant in total back out to Districts. Some Districts, such as NWLDC, then add to the grant with their own General Fund monies to allow more grants to be administered.
- 2.3 DFG grants are generally classed as 'Majors' (up to £30,000 and can include house extensions) or 'Minors' which can include wet rooms, stair lifts, hand rails and so on.
- 2.4 At NWLDC, DFGs are administered within the Street Protection Team of Street Action, as part of the team's Private Sector Housing duties. Aids and Adaptations (A&A's) which are for Council stock are managed within the Housing service, but in some authorities these are managed together. For those Councils that do not have a housing stock, DFGs are dealt with by the transfer landlord e.g. in BDC and Harborough District Council.
- 2.5 NWLDC's DFG administrating officer has recently retired and it seemed appropriate to take this opportunity to discuss NWLDC's DFGs entering the pilot phase of the Lightbulb project. This would allow a real life test of the principles of joined up delivery from a different authority to BDC.

3.0 PRE PILOT SECTION 113 AGREEMENT WITH BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report, the Lightbulb pilot is due to commence on 13 July 2015, whereas the NWLDC administering officer retired on 26 June. It therefore seemed prudent and efficient to ask BDC to administer NWLDC's DFGs from 26 June, as opposed to recruiting some very short term agency cover.
- 3.2 BDC agreed to this request and CLT supported this approach, with NWLDC's Chief Executive exercising delegated authority to enter into an Officer Sharing Agreement (also known as a Section 113 agreement) which was completed and commenced on 2 July.
- 3.3 BDC have agreed to provide this interim support for no cost, other than staff mileage for site visits, up until 13 July 2015.

4.0 PILOT PHASE

- 4.1 It is then proposed that NWLDC formally enters into the Lightbulb pilot project with BDC, which will run until 31 March 2016.
- 4.2 NWLDC will fund the administration of DFGs within the pilot project at an annual cost of £13,467 per annum; pro rata for 2015/16 it will be approximately £9,600. This is based on an estimate of 50% of the retiring officer's time (i.e. 2 days of the 4 day a week post) this will be reviewed after 3 months.
- 4.3 The entering into the pilot phase will be enshrined in an agreement which contain appropriate protections for NWLDC, as well as specifying appropriate service levels to ensure residents continue to receive an excellent service.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A legal agreement is being drawn up by Legal Services between BDC and NWLDC. This will cover the outsourcing of the Council's DFG administration to BDC and establish regular monitoring of the arrangement. Should NWLDC not be happy with the level of service being received provision will be included for the Council to terminate the agreement early.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive has delegated authority to agree to NWLDC entering the pilot phase through an agreement and has received the support of CLT to proceed on this basis.
- 5.3 It is also important to note that at the end of the pilot, if it is successful, the model for delivery going forward will require member approval, this is likely to be a Countywide report which will be used by all Districts and may encompass other service areas too. A further report to Cabinet and/or Council (subject to which service areas are to form part of the ongoing Lightbulb project) will address the proposals after the pilot has completed.
- 5.4 Policy links between the administration of and criteria for DFGs and A&A for NWLDC tenants over major adaptations will be built into the pilot agreement, to ensure a consistent service is provided to all NWLDC residents.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The breakdown of funding, grants and expenditure for the last 3 years can be seen below;

Year	Government Grant	NWLDC Contribution	Total Grants Paid	Total Amount Spent
2012/13	£292,715	£149,330	67	£482,264
2013/14	£228,717	£149,330	66	£314,143
2014/15	£237,304	£149,330	73	£378,030

- 6.2 It has been agreed that BDC will receive DFG monies at set intervals and BDC shall distribute the government grant initially. If demand begins to exceed those resources the NWLDC top up grant will then be released along with any DFG underspend from 2014/15. All NWLDC monies will only be used for NWLDC residents.
- 6.3 It is the intent of the Lightbulb project to lead to future efficiencies and a long term reduction in NWLDC's contribution to DFG's. This however, is a long term aspiration and the pilot will assess if this is achievable. There is also a risk that improved service delivery and awareness of DFG's may increase demand and lead to potential waiting lists.

- 6.4 Performance reports for the DFG service will be fed through the quarterly performance Cabinet reports and the Head of Service will receive monthly monitoring updates.
- 6.5 The payment to BDC for delivering the service will be met from the funding from the retiring Technical Officer post.

7.0 COMMUNICATIONS

- 7.1 The Lightbulb project will take the lead responsibility for the communication on all elements within the pilot project. A communications sub group is being established and NWLDC will be asked for a representative.
- 7.2 In the shorter term NWLDC's Street Action Team will develop information that will re-direct resident enquiries to BDC and also any enquiries from builders/contractors who may be undertaking works. A detailed handover process with BDC will also be undertaken.
- 7.3 NWLDC's website, Customer Services Team and internal officers will also be updated and provided with the relevant information in order to ensure a seamless transition of service.

The Leicestershire LightBulb Project

Purpose of Report

To set out the background to the LightBulb Project, a county-wide transformational project seeking to deliver housing based support services differently.

Background

District Councils, as housing authorities, are responsible for enabling and delivering a range of services which have an impact on the health, wellbeing and independence of people. This includes such services as Disabled Facilities Grants, energy efficiency and affordable warmth services and, in some Districts, Handy Person Services

Over the past few years Districts have worked together to improve services and access external funding opportunities for things such as end-end times for Disabled Facilities Grants and affordable warmth programmes

The Housing Services Partnership (HSP) was set up in 2012 to bring together senior housing staff from the districts along with commissioners from Public Health, adult and children's social services, registered housing providers and voluntary sector organisations such as the CAB and the Bridge. The purpose of the HSP is to strengthen joint working around housing services so that there is more of a place based approach to responding to commissioning and policy changes and issues which affect housing and how services support vulnerable people.

In 2013 the HSP worked with the Chartered Institute of Housing to identify the District's Housing Offer to Health (HOTH) locally. This was accepted by the county Health and Wellbeing Board and led to three practical housing based change projects. These projects are:

- **Housing Pathway to support Hospital Discharge** – *to identify and deliver housing solutions to prevent delayed hospital discharge. Two pilot housing projects are in place funded by health partners to demonstrate how housing can reduce delays in getting people back to stable accommodation once they are medically fit to be discharged*
- **Establishing First Contact in GP surgeries** – *to reduce demand on Primary Care by effectively signposting to multiple agencies for practical interventions using one referral for. First Contact is now being delivered through 44 of the County's GPs surgeries and 85% of practices have received training in the First Contact system. This is a good platform from which to develop social prescribing models of care*
- **LightBulb** – *to provide practical primary housing based prevention support to improve services for vulnerable people and reduce emergency admissions and delayed hospital discharge. Without such housing based support in place many of the benefits of integration health and social care services will be diluted if a persons home isn't suitable for them to live safely and independently*

In late 2013 the Government introduced the Better Care Fund (BCF) as a tool to drive integration between health and social care to reduce costs to the health system and improve outcomes for people. The BCF is a redirection of money, primarily from health, into a shared budget held by the County Council and is not new money. From 2015/6 the capital allocations to District Councils to support the delivery of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants become part of the BCF. For 2015/16 upper tier authorities are required to passport this capital back to District Councils on the basis of a national set allocation formula. It is not clear whether this passporting will be required to be continued beyond 2015/16 even though the mandatory statutory requirement on District Councils to deliver DFGs will remain. It is therefore vital that the HWBB and commissioners in health understand the role and contribution of district housing services such as DFGs to delivering health and social care transformation and better outcomes for people at lower cost to the whole system.

The BCF is designed to drive service innovation and change which will reduce emergency admissions to hospital. Unlike many other BCF submissions, the Leicestershire plan clearly recognises the role of housing services as a secondary prevention service and incorporates the HOTH in its focus.

The Lightbulb Project

Officers from District Councils, the County Council and Foundations (the national umbrella organisation for Home Improvement Agencies) have developed the vision and outline proposals for the Lightbulb Project. This work has been led through Blaby as their CE holds the role as strategic lead on health, housing and wellbeing for the seven Leicestershire District Councils.

The vision for Lightbulb is to integrate practical housing support into a single service that is available to all, easier to access, easier to use and will provide support shaped around an individual's need not an organisation's processes.

In essence the Light Bulb Project will redesign housing support so that it can manage, design, deliver, and commission holistic housing support that will support people to stay independently and safely at home and provide savings to the wider health and social care economy. This transformation will focus on the achievement of three key changes to the frontline offer which is currently spread across several agencies with different access routes, thresholds and hand offs between services.

- **A single point of contact or referral;**
- **A single, broader assessment process and case management service;**
- **A broader offer of housing support and advice** with access to handy person services, cost effective recycled furniture, affordable warmth advice and practical support including housing based assessment services and minor and major adaptations.

To deliver Lightbulb will require major change and commitment across all eight Leicestershire authorities and the support of health commissioners to ensure that financial resources are available to meet increased housing demands (and costs to housing authorities) which will then reduce demands and costs to the health system. There is sign up from all Districts and the County Council to the Lightbulb concept and a commitment to further partnership work to develop the business case, governance arrangements and change management.

Current Position

Funding: The LightBulb Project has secured £1m of DCLG Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) funding based on a business case developed in partnership across Leicestershire's public sector. In addition it has secured funding from the LCC Adults and Communities budget (£125k from October in 2015/16 and £250k annually from 16/17) and £100k from the BCF. This money will be held by Blaby as the lead project authority

Programme Management: A Programme Manager and Service Manager have been appointed on two year contracts. These posts are hosted by Blaby DC.

In addition Business Analysis, Programme Support , Finance, Procurement, HR and Communication resources are being allocated from across Blaby DC and LCC so that by May a dedicated team will be in place to deliver against the bid's timetable.

The draft project plan and risk register will be developed by the Programme Manager and considered by the Board

Governance: Terms of reference for a LightBulb Programme Board and Year One Steering Group have been agreed and the first Board meeting will be held in late March. The Board will be chaired by the Director of Integration, a shared post between LCC and the two county Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Board will consider and seek to agree a memorandum of Understanding for year one

Terms of reference for a Members Advisory Group will be developed. This group will bring together lead members from all eight partner councils with a brief for housing services and health in order for them to steer, challenge and champion the delivery of the LightBulb project

Customer Insight: External resources are being procured to seek to ensure that the needs of people who already use and those we would wish to access housing support become an established voice in the development of the project. By April the project will have reviewed the existing customer insight and start generating fresh insight to assist in the pilot design and evaluation process

Business Analysis: The project will identify key questions and design principles to form the basis for an "as is" end to end business analysis that will seek to identify savings, efficiencies and improvements on existing services. This will assist in the pilot design and evaluation process

Staff Input: An engagement plan will be developed shortly to ensure that the design of the pilot takes on board the input of front line staff

Pilot Design: A small group is working on the pilot scope, scale, cross section and work flows prior to testing and challenge by a wider group and consultants

Aim of Year One of LightBulb - 2015/16

In year one we need to further make the case for LightBulb and enable the necessary change to make the LightBulb service a reality.

This requires that by April 2016 we :

- design, implement and evaluate a pilot service
- have established an ongoing evaluation method to track return on investment to health
- have identified the metrics by which LightBulb will be judged a success to key stakeholders including all eight local authorities and the health economy
- provided assurance to partners that the financial, legal; and HR logistics are in place to allow the establishment of LightBulb via a pooled budget across public sector partners in Leicestershire
- provided assurance to partners that there is a fair allocation of resources to match the commitment of partners.
- secured the support of health partners to funding a proportion of the costs of LightBulb

Conclusion

The LightBulb Project is our opportunity to fundamentally redesign a complicated system which, in many cases, is over complicated, bureaucratic and doesn't always serve disabled or older people well.

If we can do this we will be directing money from high end health and social care interventions towards targeted prevention targeted which will help vulnerable and at risk people to stay living independently at home at less costs to the total Leicestershire pound and less distress to local people.

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