

NEIGHBOURHOOD & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Guy Jackson

Senior Officer: Neighbourhood Services Group Manager, Regulatory & Leisure Services Group Manager

Portfolio Total

	2016/17 Approved Budget	2016/17 Revised Estimate	2017/18 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£3,210,284	£3,289,688	£3,290,294	£80,010 2.49%	£606 0.02%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£1,249,649	£1,429,952	£1,364,627	£114,978 9.20%	-£65,325 -4.57%
3. Direct Income	-£2,447,178	-£2,478,363	-£2,504,513	-£57,335 2.34%	-£26,150 1.06%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£2,012,755	£2,241,277	£2,150,408	£137,653 6.84%	-£90,869 -4.05%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	95.60	94.59	93.57	-2.03 -2.12%	-1.02 -1.08%

Grounds Maintenance

	2016/17 Approved Budget	2016/17 Revised Estimate	2017/18 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£215,180	£222,982	£232,466	£17,286 8.03%	£9,484 4.25%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£88,142	£87,332	£86,975	-£1,167 -1.32%	-£357 -0.41%
3. Direct Income	-£187,131	-£193,001	-£197,488	-£10,357 5.53%	-£4,487 2.32%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£116,191	£117,313	£121,953	£5,762 4.96%	£4,640 3.96%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	6.00	6.00	6.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2017/18 budget makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. No significant variances.
3. Additional income based on actual position for 2015/16 plus expected additional works for Parish Councils in 2017/18.
4. Additional establishment costs offset by increase in income.
5. No change.

Environmental Health

	2016/17 Approved Budget	2016/17 Revised Estimate	2017/18 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£727,848	£727,848	£765,602	£37,754 5.19%	£37,754 5.19%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£321,383	£408,536	£357,149	£35,766 11.13%	-£51,387 -12.58%
3. Direct Income	-£325,844	-£347,908	-£340,268	-£14,424 4.43%	£7,640 -2.20%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£723,387	£788,476	£782,483	£59,096 8.17%	-£5,993 -0.76%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	20.38	19.78	19.78	-0.60 -2.94%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2017/18 budget makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Revised budget includes non recurring grant funded expenditure on air quality monitoring. Proposed budget includes the impact on the rateable value of car parks following the 2017 revaluation exercise, and a contribution towards the Multi Agency Travellers Unit.
3. Additional income from car parking charges based on current usage data.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Minor changes to working hours.

District Cleansing

	2016/17 Approved Budget	2016/17 Revised Estimate	2017/18 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£322,686	£322,686	£331,474	£8,788 2.72%	£8,788 2.72%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£20,423	£23,793	£19,365	-£1,058 -5.18%	-£4,428 -18.61%
3. Direct Income	-£60,000	-£66,428	-£62,000	-£2,000 3.33%	£4,428 -6.67%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£283,109	£280,051	£288,839	£5,730 2.02%	£8,788 3.14%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	10.22	10.22	10.20	-0.02 -0.20%	-0.02 -0.20%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2017/18 budget makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. One off cost in 2016/17 relating to disposal of gas canisters – recoverable from Leicestershire County Council.
3. 2016/17 Revised Estimate includes recovery of costs referred to above.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Minor changes to working hours.

Refuse Collection & Recycling

	2016/17 Approved Budget [A]	2016/17 Revised Estimate [B]	2017/18 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£1,529,065	£1,592,151	£1,568,463	£39,398 2.58%	-£23,688 -1.49%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£316,642	£407,082	£374,730	£58,088 18.35%	-£32,352 -7.95%
3. Direct Income	-£1,546,948	-£1,545,056	-£1,610,402	-£63,454 4.10%	-£65,346 4.23%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£298,759	£454,177	£332,791	£34,032 11.39%	-£121,386 -26.73%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	49.00	48.59	48.59	-0.41 -0.84%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2017/18 budget makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions. 2016/17 Revised Estimate includes non-recurring costs in relation to temporary and agency staff to cover long term sickness and vacant posts.
2. Commercial waste fees increased by £10,000 to reflect actual experience in 2015/16 and the year to date. A further £20,000 has been added to the budget in relation to the purchase of new and replacement domestic bins, reflective of the growth in the district. Caspak disposal fees have also increased by £50,000 although in 2016/17 £40,000 of this can be met from the unallocated balance of the Recycling Reward Scheme grant.
3. Additional income is largely due to a 3% increase in the value of recycling credits received, and increases in fees and charges.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Minor changes to working hours.

Fleet Management

	2016/17 Approved Budget	2016/17 Revised Estimate	2017/18 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£202,760	£211,276	£168,132	-£34,628 -17.08%	-£43,144 -20.42%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£480,004	£480,296	£504,180	£24,176 5.04%	£23,884 4.97%
3. Direct Income	-£52,255	-£35,970	-£4,355	£47,900 -91.67%	£31,615 -87.89%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£630,509	£655,602	£667,957	£37,448 5.94%	£12,355 1.88%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.00	5.00	4.00	-1.00 -20.00%	-1.00 -20.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2017/18 budget makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions. However, these increases are offset by the removal of a temporary post due to no longer providing support to Oadby and Wigston Borough Council in relation to their fleet operator's licence.
2. Reflects the projected rise in fuel costs in the next financial year.
3. Loss of income in relation to the end of support to Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. Loss of a temporary Vehicle Fitter in respect of the arrangement with Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

Building Control

	2016/17 Approved Budget	2016/17 Revised Estimate	2017/18 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£212,745	£212,745	£224,157	£11,412 5.36%	£11,412 5.36%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£23,055	£22,913	£22,228	-£827 -3.59%	-£685 -2.99%
3. Direct Income	-£275,000	-£290,000	-£290,000	-£15,000 5.45%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	-£39,200	-£54,342	-£43,615	-£4,415 11.26%	£10,727 -19.74%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2017/18 budget makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. No significant variances.
3. Increased income is based on current activity levels.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

Neighbourhood Services

In terms of headcount, the main change is a reduction of one full time equivalent in relation to the end of the O licence arrangements with Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. Salary budgets have generally increased to take account of the national pay award, increments, and on-costs.

Environmental Health and Environmental Services

No significant changes in headcount. The main changes to costs are in relation to contractual salary increases.

Building Control Services

The Service continues to operate as a lean self- financing business unit, competing for work against the private sector. Competition is still fierce and therefore Blaby's Building Control charges have remained the same as last year to enable it to maintain its customer base and income streams. Income figures for the current year have been positive. In the last 4 years the team have delivered a year on year increase in income levels.

The main changes are in relation to contractual salary increases, and additional income from fees and charges.

Portfolio Priorities

Neighbourhood Services

To provide an efficient and cost efficient refuse and recycling service and to keep the district clean.

Environmental Health and Environmental Services

Protect and improve the health, safety and wellbeing of local residents, visitors and people who live and work in the District of Blaby.

Building Control

Ensure the safety and quality of the built environment.

Services

Environmental Health and Environmental Services

Environmental Health is a predominately a statutory service that safeguards public health and the environment. The areas of work include food safety, noise, 'envirocrime' (graffiti, fly posting, litter, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles), private sector housing enforcement, empty homes, waste accumulations, filthy and verminous premises and hoarding, health and safety at work, public health, infectious disease control.

Environmental Service key areas are – air quality management, contaminated land, pollution control, car parking, land drainage/flood management, climate change, stray dogs and fouling, licensing of taxis and private hire operators, sale of alcohol, regulated entertainment and gambling.

Building Control

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

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

Refuse & Recycling

Refuse and Recycling service provides a weekly service to 40,000 Households and a fortnightly service to over 11,000 properties, which equates up to 2.32 million collections per year. The standard collection for Refuse and Recycling is with a 140L bin although larger bins can be provided upon request some of which are chargeable (refuse only). Garden waste customers have a choice of either a 140L or a 240L bin which are chargeable.

Grounds Maintenance

Grounds Maintenance service carries out the amenity mowing and horticultural services on all the Strategic Parks and Open Spaces within Blaby District Council, in addition to this we also deliver the Highways grass cutting on behalf of Leicester County Council both within Blaby and Oadby and Wigston for which we receive an income. We also do additional works for Parishes, local sports clubs and some businesses based on tendered works.

District Cleansing

District Cleansing delivers the litter picking, dog and litter bin emptying and street sweeping throughout Blaby District. In addition to this we also offer a litter and dog bin emptying service and the option of additional litter picking operatives for Parish Councils at agreed rates. We currently have in excess of 500 litter bins and a similar number of dog bins which are emptied on frequencies dependant on their usage.

Fleet Management

The Fleet consists of 22 HGV's, 29 Vans (below 3.5 Tonnes), a community bus BB19 and 25 items of small plant and equipment all of which is maintained and serviced in house at Whetstone Depot. The O licence for the fleet, for which there is a legal requirement in order to operate the service, is held by the Neighbourhood Services Group Manager.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Environmental Health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint working in Community Services and Housing Options.• Channel shift initiatives to improve access to services, service delivery and investigate alternative ways of working.• Review performance measures to include more proactive case management.• Develop more effective working relationships with businesses in line with the Better Business for All initiative.• Review the contract and process for the recovery of abandoned vehicles.• Review policy for graffiti and fly posting. <p><u>Environmental Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of systems thinking to improve the licensing process.• Online access to Licensing Services.• Delivery of projects using the Air Quality Grant obtained from DEFRA.• Channel shift initiatives include the possibility of taxi testing provision at the new depot and online access for all licenses to improve the customer journey.• Review of car parking across the district.• Implementation of the new Climate Change Plan for the Council. <p><u>Building Control</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take advantage of time now made available by channel shifting processes (e.g. online applications, online inspection requests) to market the service in different ways and capitalise on any efficiency and cost savings made.
---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to move towards electronic online access to Building Control services and complete all appropriate Channel Shift initiatives that will assist our customers to self serve. • Systems think the working methods of both ourselves and those of our private sector competition so that we may improve customer service levels in order to retain/grow the business unit whilst at the same time being better than most service providers. • Operate differently than our neighbouring District Councils and continue to build on our excellent reputation whilst competing against other private sector Building Control providers. • Develop our Partner Architects and builders so we can carry out the Building Control function within the District of other neighbouring Local Authorities. • Explore other operational business models and ways of working such as mobile working and associated technology, to increase efficiency and resilience within the section. • Explore shared service possibilities with other suitable Councils. <p><u>Refuse & Recycling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to look at best practice within the waste management industry and to adapt to changes in legislation. • Too look for efficiencies with adjacent local authorities where possible. • examine the options for a different service delivery model in light of the reduced funding from 2017/18.
Income generation	<p><u>Environmental Health</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine charging opportunities for serving statutory notices. <p><u>Environmental Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the delivery and management of car parks. • Implementation of licensing for animal health, hairdressers, piercers and tattooists. <p><u>Building Control</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Controls fee charges are to remain the same as they have done for the last 3 years due to fierce competition from the private sector. The measures referred to under the heading of doing things differently should assist Building Control to grow the business unit and income streams. • Market share and income levels are closely monitored. Blaby Building Control continues to perform well against both the private sector and other Leicestershire Building Control providers. • Blaby Building Control continually explores new opportunities and initiatives in order that it can continue to run on a cost neutral basis.

	<p><u>Refuse & Recycling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to charge for larger bins and Garden bins, limited room for expansion as over 60% of households currently have some form of a chargeable bin.
Capital plans for the portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the accumulated Air Quality Grant on specific projects to improve air quality in the district. The provision of data loggers for use with our 3 air quality monitoring stations. Replacement of fleet vehicles in accordance with the Capital Programme.

Key Performance Indicators

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2015/16 RESULTS	2016/17 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
Percentage of waste collected which is recycled	46.60%	46.65%	Recycling performance is static which reflects the national trend and in some Authorities this has reduced.
Building Control inspections carried out on the same day as requested	2650	2660	Building Control has maintained its 100% record of undertaking inspections on the same day when requested to do so.
Total number of long term empty homes returned into use	155	55 (data to Q2)	Proactive enforcement work on long term empties including the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders
Number of large fly tipping incidents	362	250	Part of scrutiny's work programme
Number of food premises with a rating of 3 or above (satisfactory)	478	516 (56 new businesses this year, 545 rated out of a total of 761)	Businesses are performing better and on average have a higher rating due to a focus on the poor performers. There are no zero rated premises for the first time in 10 years
Total number of flare case management reviews	294	224	Measure to ensure proactive monitoring of service requests.

Customers

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

Channel Shift

We are now managing the Building Control Service on behalf of Harborough District Council for an initial 6 months during which time we will look to develop a shared service model hosted by Blaby.

Risks

- Recruitment and retention of qualified staff.
- Competency of all Regulatory Officers (continued professional development).
- Building Control's inability to react to increased workloads and economic upturn whilst funding and staffing levels within the Council and Public sector as a whole are in active decline.
- Market share for Building Control who are in competition with many private sector Building Control providers.
- Risks associated with the loss of funding from LCC recycling Credits.
- Increased fuel prices over and above what has been budgeted for in 2017/18, which is beyond our control.

Looking Forward to the Future 2018/19 Onwards

In 2018/19 the income to support the Neighbourhood Services Portfolio is significantly reduced given the impact of the loss of Pickles grant funding and the impact of County Council changes to recycling credits. These together combine to generate a reduction of £732k.

Officers have started to consider ways in which changes to service may contribute to filling this gap and one such change that will partially contribute to this figure is to remove the recycling/bring sites located across the district.

There are 19 sites located across the district, which are often used as areas to dump items and which incur high cleansing costs. The majority of recycling products are catered for within the Kerbside collection scheme or those that aren't can be recycled at Whetstone Household Waste Site.

It is estimated that negotiations regarding their removal will commence in the latter half of 2017/18, with any financial savings contributing towards 2018/19 budget.

As suggested, in the comments of Councillor Wright at the first Scrutiny session, Members will need to consider carefully which services are prioritised and what level of service is given in future across a range of services. Members need to be aware that changes to services in refuse and recycling require significant time to plan and implement.