

PLANNING, HOUSING STRATEGY, ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Sheila Scott

Senior Officer: Planning Group Manager

Portfolio Total

	2017/18 Approved Budget [A]	2017/18 Revised Estimate [B]	2018/19 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£1,295,167	£1,316,837	£1,301,125	£5,958 0.46%	-£15,712 -1.19%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£427,094	£955,205	£427,216	£122 0.03%	-£527,989 -55.27%
3. Direct Income	-£667,000	-£754,204	-£663,270	£3,730 -0.56%	£90,934 -12.06%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£1,055,261	£1,517,838	£1,065,071	£9,810 0.93%	-£452,767 -29.83%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	31.73	32.34	30.99	-0.74 -2.33%	-1.35 -4.17%

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

	2017/18 Approved Budget [A]	2017/18 Revised Estimate [B]	2018/19 Proposed Budget [C]	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
1. Establishment Costs	£273,897	£273,897	£277,804	£3,907 1.43%	£3,907 1.43%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£217,500	£522,166	£207,999	-£9,501 -4.37%	-£314,167 -60.17%
3. Direct Income	-£27,000	-£63,505	-£2,000	£25,000 -92.59%	£61,505 -96.85%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£464,397	£732,558	£483,803	£19,406 4.18%	-£248,755 -33.96%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	6.65	6.65	6.65	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. 2018/19 allows for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in national insurance and pension contributions.
2. The costs associated with strategic planning have increased significantly as work progresses on the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan. There is a significant cost associated with the production of the Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). Costs include consultation, specialist studies, printing, publication of materials and consultants. It is very difficult to predict with accuracy exactly when the costs will arise due to the nature of the work. Overall though there is no significant increase in the total cost of producing the DPD.
3. Income largely relates to government-funded Neighbourhood Planning Grants, and monitoring contributions in respect of Section 106 agreements.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No changes.

PLANNING DELIVERY

	2017/18 Approved Budget	2017/18 Revised Estimate	2018/19 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£575,061	£502,722	£434,446	-£140,615 -24.45%	-£68,276 -13.58%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£94,041	£136,546	£91,563	-£2,478 -2.64%	-£44,983 -32.94%
3. Direct Income	-£640,000	-£640,000	-£640,000	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£29,102	-£732	-£113,991	-£143,093 -491.69%	-£113,259 15472.54%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	14.76	13.26	11.41	-3.35 -22.70%	-1.85 -13.95%

Reasons for Variances

1. 2018/19 allows for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in national insurance and pension contributions. The reduction between the approved budget and revised estimate for 2017/18 reflects the transfer of two posts to the new Strategic Growth team. One fixed term Senior Planning Officer post and a fixed term administrative post have been removed from the budget for 2018/19.
2. The revised estimate includes non-recurring expenditure in relation to two inquiries at Countesthorpe and Croft, as well as grant funded expenditure in respect of the requirement to maintain a Brownfields Register.
3. No change.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Reflects the transfer of Major Schemes Officer posts to the Strategic Growth team and the end of two fixed term post contracts.

ENFORCEMENT

	2017/18 Approved Budget	2017/18 Revised Estimate	2018/19 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£174,864	£174,864	£181,835	£6,971 3.99%	£6,971 3.99%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£13,526	£29,459	£14,246	£720 5.32%	-£15,213 -51.64%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£15,250	£0	£0 0.00%	£15,250 -100.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£188,390	£189,073	£196,081	£7,691 4.08%	£7,008 3.71%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	4.81	4.81	4.81	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. 2018/19 allows for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in national insurance and pension contributions.
2. 2017/18 includes non recurring expenditure in respect of land clearance at Beggars Lane, Enderby.
3. Works in default recharge in respect of Beggars Lane.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

STRATEGIC GROWTH

	2017/18 Approved Budget	2017/18 Revised Estimate	2018/19 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£56,558	£128,897	£155,351	£98,793 174.68%	£26,454 20.52%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£1,874	£121,469	£5,152	£3,278 174.92%	-£116,317 -95.76%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£58,432	£250,366	£160,503	£102,071 174.68%	-£89,863 -35.89%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	1.00	2.50	3.00	2.00 200.00%	0.50 20.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. 2018/19 allows for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in national insurance and pension contributions. This is a new team comprising the Strategic Growth Manager and two Major Schemes Officers.
2. 2017/18 includes non recurring expenditure backed by Site Capacity funding and Garden Village funding. Any unspent balance will be carried forward to 2018/19.
3. No income.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. Two Major Schemes Officer posts transferred from Planning Delivery.

MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

	2017/18 Approved Budget	2017/18 Revised Estimate	2018/19 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£115,394	£115,394	£127,654	£12,260 10.62%	£12,260 10.62%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£41,980	£53,121	£53,846	£11,866 28.27%	£725 1.36%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£157,374	£168,515	£181,500	£24,126 15.33%	£12,985 7.71%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	2.00	2.00	2.00	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. 2018/19 allows for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in national insurance and pension contributions.
2. Increases in software maintenance costs in relation to iDOX and the GIS system..
3. No income receivable in respect of this service.
4. Net impact of variances listed above.
5. No change.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships	2017/18 Approved Budget	2017/18 Revised Estimate	2018/19 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£99,393	£121,063	£124,035	£24,642 24.79%	£2,972 2.45%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£58,173	£92,444	£54,410	-£3,763 -6.47%	-£38,034 -41.14%
3. Direct Income	£0	-£35,449	-£21,270	-£21,270 0.00%	£14,179 -40.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£157,566	£178,058	£157,175	-£391 -0.25%	-£20,883 -11.73%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	2.51	3.12	3.12	0.61 24.30%	0.00 0.00%

Reasons for Variances

1. The 2018/19 makes allowance for a 1% pay award, contractual increments where applicable, and increases in employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The revised estimate and 2018/19 base budget make provision for the post of Employment, Skills and Training Co-ordinator which is backed by S106 funding..
2. 2017/18 revised estimate includes non recurring expenditure brought forward from 2016/17.
3. S106 contributions to cover the cost of employing the Employment, Skills and Training Co-ordinator plus £7,000 of non recurring contributions from local businesses towards community grants in 2017/18 only.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. The increase relates to the part time post of Employment, Skills and Training Co-ordinator.

Movement in budget and staff from last year

The overall number of posts and the associated establishment budget for this portfolio has fluctuated slightly over the last year; but not to any significant extent. Contractual pay increases for 2018/19 have been offset by a reduction in the overall headcount due to the expiry of a fixed term contract.

Overall the 2018/19 budget for net direct expenditure across the whole group is broadly the same as the start of year position for the current year. The actual net direct expenditure incurred during 2017/18 was higher, due to unforeseen costs which arose during the year; costs associated with the Strategic Growth Plan and Delivery DPD, the allocation of external capacity funding to specific projects, and one off expenditure brought forward from the previous year.

Portfolio Priorities

Priorities for 2018/19 for the group include:

- 1. Large scale strategic projects.** A number of these are currently at inception stage, and will be more fully developed as we progress through 2018/19; including Junction 20a and a garden village.
- 2. Deliver “Building Blaby, Shaping Futures” – the Council’s Economic Development Strategy.** The Economic Development Strategy was refreshed and the new strategy adopted in September 2016. Progress has already been made against the action plan, and this will continue throughout 2018/19.
- 3. “Love Blaby Lottery”** - the lottery will be launched towards the end of 2017/18, and considerable effort will be made during next year to sign-up as many good causes and players as possible.
- 4. High profile enforcement action.** Ongoing action is expected for a number of current high profile cases; and the team will continue their pro-active approach across the District.
- 5. Adopt the Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD).** Significant work has already been undertaken on the next stage of the Local Plan; the Delivery DPD. This is the document which identifies and allocates new sites for housing, employment, ‘Gypsy and Travellers’ accommodation and other land uses in the District in accordance with the Core Strategy. It will also include further Development Management policies required to supplement the Core Strategy.
- 6. Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan –** work on this is progressing well, with public consultation due to commence in January 2018.
- 7. Delivery of the Lubbethorpe Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE).** The new community is going from strength to strength. The M1 bridge has been completed and opened, works continue to deliver the road infrastructure, and the first of many houses have been constructed. During 2018/19 work will start on the first local centre and primary school.

8. To facilitate, develop and enable effective partnership working to ensure the best possible outcomes for our residents.

Services

The Vision for the Planning and Economic Development Group is:

“To have a pro-active, customer centred and comprehensive planning service that delivers the Council’s development and economic aspirations and ambitions for the District, and enhances the Council’s reputation”.

This is delivered through the following core functions:

Development Strategy

The purpose of the Development Strategy Service is to ensure that the district has a robust and up-to-date strategic framework for Planning, Economic Development and Housing and to enable the delivery of these strategies.

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

Planning Delivery

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

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

Planning Enforcement

This budget includes the costs of Enforcement Officers, who monitor development across the district and enforce planning controls.

Management & Administration

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

Partnerships

This budget includes the cost of the manager and officers who work in partnership with the voluntary and community sector to deliver the best outcomes for our residents and good causes.

The team are also managing the roll-out of the lottery, the Youth Council, and are developing a new approach to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Key Points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p>The department is performing well, staff are highly motivated, and it is expected that this will continue despite workload pressures.</p> <p><u>Development Strategy</u> The team will continue to focus on strategic planning and the Local Plan</p> <p>Subject to Council decision, work will commence next year on a new Local Plan; which will require additional resource. This requirement is currently under consideration and a report will be brought before Council in a few months.</p> <p>The focus on economic development will continue to be widened out across the organisation.</p> <p><u>Planning Delivery</u> The workload of the team has recently increased significantly, as an unprecedented number of planning applications continue to be received. During 2018/19 the team will focus in ensuring the continued delivery of an excellent service in this demanding environment.</p> <p><u>Enforcement</u> The enforcement team will continue it's proactive monitoring approach next year.</p> <p><u>Management & Administration</u> The focus for 2018/19 will be for a management function which enables innovation whilst leading and supporting; and enables staff to develop and grow.</p> <p><u>Partnerships</u> The focus for 2018/19 will be on developing the Blaby Lottery and Corporate Social Responsibility; whilst still supporting our VCS and good causes.</p>
<p>Income generation</p>	<p>The fees and charges for all aspects of the service will be kept under review to ensure that these maximise income without impacting on the quality of communications and applications submitted and increasing costs elsewhere in the delivery of the services.</p> <p>Income generation across the group is restricted to fees for documents; and national set planning application fees. The Government has confirmed that it will allow local authorities to increase planning application fees by 20% from 17th January 2018 and arrangements have been made for these to be implemented</p>

	<p>from that date. This increased income is ring-fenced to expenditure on planning staffing only. A separate report will be brought before Cabinet setting out how the additional income will be utilised; as at the time of writing this document the plans are still under consideration.</p> <p>The group will seek to maximise income into the district through the delivery of economic development support and large scale project management; which will bring in NNDR, New Homes Bonus and LLEP investment.</p> <p>Savings will be sought wherever possible.</p> <p><u>Partnerships</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a menu of business support for the community grants programme to ensure we can take full advantage of their corporate social responsibility obligations. • Launch the Local Authority Lottery.
Capital plans for the portfolio	<p><u>Partnerships</u></p> <p>Continue to provide a capital grants programme (£54,500) for community groups. Looking at the process for making groups more sustainable and involve Corporate Social Responsibility to bring maximum benefits for all the community.</p>

Key Performance Indicators

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18*
Number of planning applications received	922	1080	1018	1091	1132	537**
Planning application fee income	£396,596	£711,229	£574,632	£676,273	£470,671	£396,255
Number of planning applications determined	651	962	1064	1010	1048	477
% of applications delegated	93.88	90.28	89.65	94.06	93.73	93.29
% of major applications determined in 13 weeks	21.43	75.67	84.62	94.44	100	95.23
E2E (householders)	47.21	50.28	38.13	44.03	33.55	43.68
E2E (minors)	108.6	89.14	80.52	65.85	53.07	59.85
E2E (others)	91.38	49.07	46.20	55.98	48.02	41.46
Housing Land Supply	Currently at 5.30 years					

*year to date

**1st and 2nd quarter only

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - PARTNERSHIPS	2016/17 RESULTS	2017/18 YEAR TO DATE	COMMENTS
Number of Community Groups supported by the grants programme	51	32	One funding round remaining in 2017/18.
Number of Voluntary and Community Sector events	4	11	83% are classified as unsustainable being subject led and often driven by values and beliefs. Common challenges exist around funding, accommodation, transport and numbers of volunteers and these are addressed at the themed forum meetings
Employment, Skills and Training - Lubbersthorpe apprenticeships/Jobs	Not in post	9	3 apprenticeships from Blaby Colleges and 9 new jobs created to date.
Youth Number of Council members	19	17	Numbers have remained fairly constant. Recruitment drives are planned for 2018
Number of Good Neighbour Schemes	4	0	Number of schemes progressing to being operational has dried up and we are looking at new ways to develop new schemes in the future.
Love Blaby Lottery Community Lottery		22	Number of groups signed up to the scheme

Customers

- The Group will continue to make significant contributions towards the corporate channel shift focus into 2017/18.
- The Planning Delivery and Enforcement services in particular have heavy interaction with residents and we will continue to monitor customer feedback to ensure that all interactions with customers and stakeholders to these services are conducted appropriately and professionally. Complaints remain at a low level.
- There are a number of significant public consultations planned for 2018/19 including the Strategic Growth Plan and potentially options for a new Local Plan..
- Blaby Together will continue to focus on the Blaby Plan Priorities
- The Youth Council will continue to be a voice for their respective age group
- Agewise continue to work with the Council and provide a voice for the ageing population
- The team will continue to support our Parish Councils and what is important to them through the Parish Liaison/Annual Seminar meetings and continue to take direction for the Local Council Working Group.

- Academies are a key partner in our community. Work will continue to ensure our youth have a voice and opportunities are taken to encourage work experience and work readiness.

Risks

- The increased level of major applications will continue to place significant demands on the service.
- Failure to progress the Joint Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire could leave the District vulnerable to unacceptable levels of future development.
- High number of appeals will place further pressures on the Development Services Team.
- Inability to progress with the delivery of a clear and robust policy framework would put delivery of sustainable development at risk.
- Delivery of Lubbethorpe against the current proposed timetable is essential – failure to do so could affect the 5 year housing land supply, and in turn the council's ability to defend against undesirable development.
- Significant reliance on partners and the wider economy to effectively implement the Economic Development Strategy.
- Failure to deliver an effective enforcement service could result in reputational damage.
- Financial support for the Grants Programme.
- Loss of external support and expertise to support Good Neighbour Schemes and the Community Network Blaby District.