

**Our Portfolio Priorities for 2019 /20 are as follows:**

For **Revenues & Benefits** we need to continue the work to integrate roles within the combined team, implement the Full Service Universal Credit delivery and implement and embed the changes to both Council Tax Support and changes to discretionary areas of Council Tax effective from April 2019. We will have to agree with the Customer Services Team and implement the Customer Services Model.

For the **Community Services** Team, to produce the Early Help and Prevention Strategy, deliver training and awareness sessions on Friends Against Scams and Cyber Crime and refresh the Community Safety Partnership Action Plan and deliver Housing Skills 4 Life and other community support services.

In **Housing Services**, priorities include procuring and implementing another Choice Based Lettings software system incorporating the software to manage the Homelessness Reduction Act. We need to take an active role in the delivery of the County wide funded Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers and Preventing Rough Sleeping projects and ensure all staff receive adequate training on the Homelessness Reduction Act. We must ensure we maximise our affordable housing delivery and increase Private Sector Housing provision and review the Housing/Homelessness Strategies and the Supplementary Planning Document and provide further Member training.

For **Lightbulb**, we must ensure parity of service for homeowners and social/private tenants by delivering the service through Lightbulb instead of the current service delivery model. We need to fully implement and deliver the revised Homes Support Grant and mainstream the Hospital Enablement Team and merge and manage the County's Assistive In-Reach Team based in the Bradgate Unit and procure a Framework Agreement for Builders which will improve process flow.

**Our main Challenges / Opportunities for 2019/20 will be:**

- Funding for the Lightbulb Service is currently being considered by partners following the refreshed Business Case being provided with options for spend going forward
- The restructure of the Revenues and Benefits Team may cause loss of experienced officers during the process
- Vulnerable people may be at increased risk of cyber crime and fraud through the implementation of digital/electronic services.
- Universal Credit may impact on residents and the Council services, such as rent arrears, their ability to access and maintain their accounts digitally.
- Reductions in external funding may result in the loss of officers or services and unconfirmed funding may result in skills loss as officers look for work elsewhere.
- Lack of affordable housing will increase homelessness as well as the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act may increase homelessness.
- The increase in homelessness cases will impact on the availability of temporary accommodation and the complexity of cases.
- Failure to procure a robust IT system for housing services may result in social rented properties not being advertised and customers being unable to bid for properties and will result in capacity issues within the Housing Services Team

- Lack of land availability or suitability for Registered Providers to acquire will result in a drop in new affordable housing units and available public subsidy being repositioned elsewhere.

**Portfolio Holder: Councillor Lee Breckon**

**Senior Officer: Community Services Group Manager**

**Portfolio Total**

	<b>2018/19 Approved Budget</b>	<b>2018/19 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2019/20 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>Variance [C] - [A]</b>	<b>Variance [C] - [B]</b>
	<b>[A]</b>	<b>[B]</b>	<b>[C]</b>		
<b>1. Establishment Costs</b>	<b>£2,361,569</b>	<b>£2,510,983</b>	<b>£2,337,207</b>	<b>-£24,362</b> -1.03%	<b>-£173,776</b> -6.92%
<b>2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>£14,930,886</b>	<b>£15,372,663</b>	<b>£14,935,052</b>	<b>£4,166</b> 0.03%	<b>-£437,611</b> -2.85%
<b>3. Direct Income</b>	<b>-£16,017,845</b>	<b>-£16,090,027</b>	<b>-£15,740,442</b>	<b>£277,403</b> -1.73%	<b>£349,585</b> -2.17%
<b>4. Net Direct Expenditure</b>	<b>£1,274,610</b>	<b>£1,793,619</b>	<b>£1,531,817</b>	<b>£257,207</b> 20.18%	<b>-£261,802</b> -14.60%
<b>5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)</b>	<b>71.97</b>	<b>76.55</b>	<b>68.95</b>	<b>-3.02</b> -4.20%	<b>-7.60</b> -9.93%

## Revenues & Benefits

	2018/19 Approved Budget	2018/19 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£818,198	£826,075	£833,978	£15,780 1.93%	£7,904 0.96%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£14,666,983	£14,784,876	£14,631,519	-£35,464 -0.24%	-£153,357 -1.04%
3. Direct Income	-£15,176,211	-£15,037,999	-£14,943,835	£232,376 -1.53%	£94,164 -0.63%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£308,970	£572,952	£521,662	£212,692 68.84%	-£51,290 -8.95%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	28.19	28.19	28.19	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

## Reasons for Variances

1. The 2019/20 Establishment budget takes account of the new pay spine effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The revised estimate makes provision for agency staffing costs to cover a short term vacancy.
2. Gross Direct Expenditure mainly comprises the amount of estimated rent allowance that is due to be paid out by the authority to assist local residents in staying in their homes because they are on a low income, or in receipt of certain benefits. The revised estimate includes non-recurring budget provision brought forward from 2017/18.
3. The Direct Income figures include all government grants, one off costs, new burdens, rewards and subsidy.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change.

## Community Services

	2018/19 Approved Budget	2018/19 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£479,684	£434,409	£394,077	-£85,607 -17.85%	-£40,332 -9.28%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£62,547	£122,783	£65,788	£3,242 5.18%	-£56,995 -46.42%
3. Direct Income	-£111,000	-£96,357	-£23,785	£87,215 -78.57%	£72,572 -75.32%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£431,231	£460,835	£436,080	£4,850 1.12%	-£24,755 -5.37%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	13.54	9.67	9.67	-3.87 -28.58%	0.00 0.00%

## Reasons for Variances

1. The 2019/20 Establishment budget takes account of the new pay spine effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The budget also allows for the implications of the recently implemented Community Services restructure, and allows for the transfer of two Supporting Leicestershire Families workers to Leicestershire County Council.
2. Gross direct expenditure for the 2018/19 revised estimate includes externally funded costs relating to Residents Support projects. These costs have not been included in the proposed budget for 2019/20 as external funding is as yet unconfirmed.
3. Direct income has reduced following the transfer of the Supporting Leicestershire Families workers to the County Council, and the removal of any unconfirmed external funding in relation to Resident Support and Children's Workers
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. Reflects the future staffing position following the recent restructure, and the removal of two SLF Family Worker posts.

## Housing Services

	2018/19 Approved Budget	2018/19 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£291,097	£307,387	£321,792	£30,695 10.54%	£14,406 4.69%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£108,404	£160,725	£157,875	£49,471 45.64%	-£2,850 -1.77%
3. Direct Income	-£71,782	-£82,841	-£104,336	-£32,554 45.35%	-£21,495 25.95%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£327,719	£385,271	£375,331	£47,612 14.53%	-£9,940 -2.58%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	9.00	10.50	10.50	1.50 16.67%	0.00 0.00%

## Reasons for Variances

1. The 2019/20 Establishment budget takes account of the new pay spine effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. Also reflects an increase of 1.5 FTE Housing Options Officers which are being funded through the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. The above variance is mitigated due to one full time Housing Assistants post being temporarily vacant.
2. Other gross direct expenditure for 2018/19 and 2019/20 includes budget provision for 1.5 additional posts which are backed by the government grant provided to support the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018.
3. This represents income from Housing Benefit for households placed in temporary accommodation as well as Government grant provided for implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act as above, represented by Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and New Burdens Grant.
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. Additional 1.5 FTE backed by grant funding.

## Lightbulb

	2018/19 Approved Budget	2018/19 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£670,995	£843,190	£679,470	£8,475 1.26%	-£163,720 -19.42%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£90,165	£301,491	£77,082	-£13,083 -14.51%	-£224,409 -74.43%
3. Direct Income	-£658,852	-£872,830	-£668,486	-£9,634 1.46%	£204,344 -23.41%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£102,308	£271,851	£88,066	-£14,242 -13.92%	-£183,785 -67.61%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	19.74	26.69	19.09	-0.65 -3.29%	-7.60 -28.48%

## Reasons for Variances

1. The 2019/20 Establishment budget takes account of the new pay spine effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions. The 2018/19 revised estimate includes the Housing Enabler Team, which is 100% externally funded. However, only those posts within the Housing Enabler Team for which external funding has been confirmed are currently included.
2. Much of the 2018/19 Revised estimate relates to expenditure in respect of the Housing Enabler Team. This has been removed from 2019/20 pending confirmation of external funding.
3. This includes income from Leicestershire County Council and the districts in respect of the Lightbulb Central Hub and Locality teams. No external funding has been allowed for in 2019/20 in respect of the Housing Enabler Team..
4. This represents the net impact of the variances listed above.
5. The reduction in headcount is largely due to the removal of externally funded posts within the Housing Enabler Team, for which funding for 2019/20 is as yet unconfirmed..

## Management & Administration

	2018/19 Approved Budget	2018/19 Revised Estimate	2019/20 Proposed Budget	Variance [C] - [A]	Variance [C] - [B]
	[A]	[B]	[C]		
1. Establishment Costs	£101,595	£99,923	£107,890	£6,295 6.20%	£7,967 7.97%
2. Other Gross Direct Expenditure	£2,788	£2,788	£2,788	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
3. Direct Income	£0	£0	£0	£0 0.00%	£0 0.00%
4. Net Direct Expenditure	£104,383	£102,711	£110,678	£6,295 6.03%	£7,967 7.76%
5. Overall No. of Posts (FTE)	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.00 0.00%	0.00 0.00%

## Reasons for Variances

1. The 2019/20 Establishment budget takes account of the new pay spine effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, contractual increments where applicable, and increases to employer's national insurance and pension contributions.
2. No change.
3. No income in respect of this cost centre.
4. Net impact of the variances listed above.
5. No change.



## **Movement in budget and staff from last year**

### **Revenues & Benefits**

The 2019/20 direct income does not include any new burdens funding or one off cost contributions made by either the DWP or other organisations for implementation of changes or software change costs for Universal Credit or any other initiative

### **Community Services**

2019/20 income only includes external funding where that funding stream has been confirmed. Similarly, staffing costs do not include externally funded posts for which funding is unconfirmed (0.5 FTE Children's Worker funded by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council) The variance in income and expenditure compared to last year is due to the effects of the Community Services restructure having a full year effect on 2019/20 budgets and external funding being unconfirmed.

### **Housing Services**

The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) has seen a requirement to increase the number of posts from 9 to 10.5. The additional posts have been funded mainly through Government Grant funding awarded for the implementation of the HRA. It is proposed that these posts will be extended beyond their current end dates.

### **Lightbulb**

The funding for staffing comes from Leicestershire County Council and all those district and borough councils for which we are running Lightbulb. In terms of the central hub team this is a shared cost with all 8 partners making contributions based upon an assumed caseload. A small contingency budget remains out of the Transformational Challenge Award Grant, and this will be used to support the delivery of Lightbulb across Leicestershire.

The Hospital Housing team is funded through Leicestershire and Leicester City Better Care Funds and a contribution from Leicestershire Partnership Trust (LPT). The County element, the City and LPT funding ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Work is in progress to secure funding for 2019/20 and onwards.

## Portfolio Priorities

### Services

#### Revenues & Benefits

The team priorities for 2019/20 are:

- To continue the work to integrate roles within the combined team including Team leader level
- To consider the timing of the next review phase for the team
- To implement the further (delayed) Full Service Universal Credit delivery
- To implement and embed the changes to both Council Tax Support and changes to discretionary areas of Council Tax effective from April 2019
- To agree with the Customer Services Team and implement the Customer Services Model

#### Community Services Team

Team priorities are:

- To produce the Early Help and Prevention Strategy
- To deliver training and awareness sessions on Friends Against Scams and Cyber Crime
- To deliver Housing Skills 4 Life and other community support services
- To refresh the Community Safety Partnership Action Plan

#### Housing Services:

Team priorities are:

- To procure and implement another Choice Based Lettings software system incorporating the software to manage the Homelessness Reduction Act
- To take an active role in the delivery of the County wide funded Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers and Preventing Rough Sleeping projects
- To ensure all staff receive adequate training on the Homelessness Reduction Act
- To ensure maximisation of affordable housing delivery
- To increase Private Sector Housing provision
- To provide further Member Training on the Housing changes
- To review the Housing/Homelessness Strategies and the Supplementary Planning Document

#### Lightbulb

Lightbulb priorities for 2019/20 are:

- To ensure parity of service for homeowners and social/private tenants by delivering the service through Lightbulb instead of split as is the current service delivery model
- Implement the revised Homes Support Grant

- Mainstream the Hospital Enablement Team and merge and manage the County's Assistive In Reach Team based in the Bradgate Unit.
- Procure a Framework Agreement for Builders which will improve process flow

### Key points

<p>Doing things differently – plans for the coming year</p>	<p><u>Revenues &amp; Benefits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further integration of roles within the team</li> <li>• Revise the service to take account of the impacts of Universal Credit as it continues to roll out</li> <li>• Review Staffing structure</li> <li>• Benchmark service elements with relevant neighbouring Local Authorities to achieve best practice</li> </ul> <p><u>Housing Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review staffing structure</li> <li>• To continue to influence housing requirements on major planning applications</li> <li>• To enable new affordable housing</li> <li>• To manage the implications of the HRA</li> <li>• To acquire, monitor and manage leased properties for temporary accommodation</li> </ul> <p><u>Community Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the Early Help and Prevention Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• Develop and deliver community support services such as Friends against Scams, Housing Skills 4 Life, schools and youth work and Feeling Safe, Recovery Toolkit and Freedom programmes</li> <li>• Implement the Community Safety Strategy Action Plan</li> </ul> <p><u>Lightbulb</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver County's Major Adaptations Service</li> <li>• Amalgamate the Hospital Enablement Team with County's Assistive In Reach Team</li> <li>• Implement a Framework for Builders</li> </ul>
<p>Income generation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue to maximise income generation from housing benefit overpayments recovered.</li> </ul>
<p>Capital plans for the portfolio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contract for provision of the Revenues &amp; Benefits system, Northgate, expires in February 2020. Whilst there is no pressing need to replace the current software, the Council needs to ensure that it complies with procurement rules. A</li> </ul>

	<p>market testing exercise will be undertaken to establish the best way forward but a provisional sum of £250,000 has been included in the Capital Programme to cover the potential replacement cost.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase a document retention product with full workflow capabilities for the Revenues &amp; Benefits system, subject to the market testing exercise above.</li> <li>• Purchase new Choice Based Lettings software</li> </ul>
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### **Key Performance Indicators**

<b>PERFORMANCE INDICATOR</b>	<b>2017/18 RESULTS</b>	<b>2018/19 YEAR TO DATE</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Number of cases where homelessness has been prevented	330	245	The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) places a duty on the Council to work with applicants for longer in order to help prevent them from becoming homeless. The figure currently remains consistent with previous years.
Number of homelessness applications taken	47	87	The total number of applications no longer applies as the HRA splits cases into 'prevention' and 'relief'. This 2018/19 figure represents the number of homeless cases that fall into the relief category.
Number of Affordable Houses	132	43	The affordable housing figures to date this year are lower than last year. This is due to a delay in completions being received. There are a significant number of completion due between now and the end of the financial year.
End to end times for completion of DFGs (time taken from receipt of recommendation to approval of grant – average days)	16.5 weeks	Average 10 weeks	This is below the target agreed by the Management Board of 20 weeks, and is an improvement on last year's figure/
Demand for DFGs (number of recommendations received)	150	100	The number of DFG recommendations has decreased which is believed to be attributed to the increase in preventative cases negating the need for DFG work

Time taken to complete DFGs (from initial enquiry by customer to completion of work, broken down by stages)	26 weeks	14 weeks	This shows a 54% improvement year on year
Number of hospital admissions/readmissions avoided as a result of Lightbulb intervention	Need Care track to assess	Need Care track to assess	<p>UHL service three months post intervention analysis on 357 patients saw:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 57% reduction in A&amp;E attendances</li> <li>- 54% reduction in A&amp;E admissions</li> <li>- 27% increase in no activity</li> <li>- 84% reduction in NHS costs for this cohort of patients 3 months post intervention – saving £222,000, scaled up this could mean a potential £550,000 saved over 12 months</li> </ul> <p>115 patients at the Bradgate Unit analysed saw:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>920</b> delayed bed days saved</li> <li>• Of 40 service users who continued to receive support in the community following discharge only one was readmitted</li> <li>• Over 12 months the projected housing DTOC costs would be £175,000 compared to £650,000; a potential reduction of £475,000</li> <li>• Referrals to the Bradgate Unit have risen by 67% in last 6 months. In contrast resolution times have reduced by 60% meaning despite the rise in referral patients are receiving a speedier service reducing the chance of delays</li> </ul>
Number of holistic housing needs assessment carried out (through Lightbulb Programme) and	1532	2497	This has increased by 38% and is believed to have positively impacted on the decrease of DFG recommendations

outcome			
Average number of days taken to process housing & council tax support claims	21.14 days	16.68 days	The current out turn figures exceed the national Great Britain averages and is an improvement on last year
Percentage of benefit claims which were paid correctly	95.74%	86.69%	Internal monitoring identified poor performance which has since been rectified, which has enabled the team to achieve a 99.9% external performance measure for HB Subsidy Claim
Number of ASB cases reported in Blaby	1083	571	The trend continues downward for the number of ASB cases reported for the second year. This year's to date figure is a 21% decrease on the same period as 2017/18. It is predicted that the end of year figure will maintain this level of decreased ASB activity. This is in line with County, regional and national trends.
Support services (Resident Support/Substance Use/Children's Worker/Domestic Abuse)– number of people supported/outcomes	301	184	These figures are YTD to end October 2018. Total number of referrals into support services is predicted to be higher than that in 2017/18. However, whilst Domestic Abuse and Resident Support referrals remain high, Children's workers have seen a reduction in referrals in Qtr 1 + 2. This is mainly due to the loss of the locality hub which has led to fewer referrals from early help services. This is being addressed and is likely to resolve by the end of Q4. Resident support have made changes to the way they report outcomes and as well as monitoring the number of referrals and the type of work being done, we are now able to report on the "cash value" of the support provided. In Q1 and 2 Support Workers added £65, 308 to residents through dealing with debt and arrears, claiming benefits owed, and applying for grants .

## **Customers**

- Lightbulb measures service outcomes with every service user. The biggest impact recorded was against the quality of life and mental health outcomes, followed by home warmth and managing in the home.
- 96% of Lightbulb service users answered yes to being asked if the service achieved everything that they wanted.
- Revenue and Benefits are using software to enable and maximise digital access for residents wanting to maintain contact with the Council using this method
- Revenue and Benefits continue to manage the impact of Universal Credit on residents.
- Community Services will carry out the annual Community Safety Partnership survey asking residents for their views on how safe the district is and what their community safety priorities are.
- Housing services have carried out a further review of the housing register following changes to the housing allocations policy and the implementation of a new CBL system. This will be carried out again due to the failure of the system and the need to purchase a more robust software package

## **Risks**

- Funding for the Lightbulb Service is currently being considered by partners following the refreshed Business Case being provided with options for spend going forward.
- Demand for Lightbulb preventative work may increase as a result of Lightbulb Programme's proactive/early identification of need.
- Any reduction in funding for the Hospital Housing team from both the city and county will impact on the team establishment and the number of patients the service can help.
- The restructure of the Revenues and Benefits Team may cause loss of experienced officers during the process.
- Vulnerable people may be at increased risk of cyber crime and fraud through the implementation of digital/electronic services.
- Universal Credit may impact on residents and the Council services, such as rent arrears, their ability to access and maintain their accounts digitally.
- Reductions in external funding may result in the loss of officers or services.
- Unconfirmed funding may result in skills loss as officers look for work elsewhere..
- Lack of affordable housing will increase homelessness.
- The implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act may increase homelessness.
- The increase in homelessness cases will impact on the availability of temporary accommodation and the complexity of cases.
- Failure to procure a robust IT system for housing services may result in social rented properties not being advertised and customers being unable to bid for properties.
- The above will result in capacity issues within the Housing Services Team
- Lack of land availability or suitability for Registered Providers to acquire will result in a drop in new affordable housing units and available public subsidy being repositioned elsewhere.