



Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

TO COUNCILLOR:

G A Boulter (Chairman)
L A Bentley (Vice-Chairman)
T S Biring
J W Boyce
M O Carrara

Mrs E M Connell
Mrs S A Dickinson
Mrs L Eaton
C S Gore
Mrs S Z Haq

P A Hings
K J Loydall
Mrs S B Morris
J Vickerstaff

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the **RESIDENTS' SERVICES COMMITTEE** to be held in the Council Offices, Station Road, Wigston, Leicestershire LE18 2DR on **TUESDAY, 15 JUNE 2010 COMMENCING at 7.00 pm** for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda below.

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Wigston
7 June 2010

Chief Executive

AGENDA

Page No's

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting (previously circulated)
3. Questions submitted by Electors in accordance with Council Rules
4. Petitions submitted in accordance with Council Rules
5. Reports of Interim Director of Resources (copies attached)
 - a) Budget Outturn - 2009-2010 1 - 10
 - b) Service Development Plan Committee Update 11 - 12
 - c) Commercial Recycling 13 - 14
 - d) In-house Waste Reduction Standard 15 - 19
 - e) Refuse and Recycling Update 20 - 22
6. Reports of Director of Community Services (copies attached)
 - a) Carbon Management Plan 23 - 26

b) Customer Services Update	27 - 29
c) Social Housing Fraud Initiative	30 - 31
d) Choice Based Lettings	32 - 56
e) Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households	57 - 59
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Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee

15th June 2010

Budget Outturn Report 2009/10

Report of: Interim Director of Resources Report Number: 5 (a)
 Author: Principal Accountant

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

This report provides Members with details of the financial outturn for Resident Services Committee for 2009/10. The attachments give details of the Revenue outturn for both the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account, and for Capital Expenditure.

Recommendations:

- (1) That Members note the report.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports report

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: His Report

Monitoring Officer: Supports report

Appendices Attached: Final Accounts Reports.

Impact Assessments:

The Council's outturn has an impact on all services delivered by the Council

Commentary:

1. This report provides details of the financial outturn for the Resident Services Committee for the year 2009/10. Total expenditure for the year amounted to £5,006,395, a decrease of £517,315 against the approved budget. Further details are provided in the attached Committee Summary and major variance analysis. There are 2 principal factors that Members need to be aware of. Firstly the VAT refund of £440k is reflected in these accounts. When the overall closedown position is submitted to Resources and Recreation Committee it will be seen that this amount will be credited to a Reserve. The accounts also reflect changes in the valuation of assets (depreciation) that have arisen from the revaluation of assets that apply from 31st March 2010. This is a bookkeeping entry and is not a cash loss to the Council. Again this will be shown in the overall Statement of Accounts that will be presented to Resources and Regeneration Committee on 29th June.
2. Approval will be sought from Resources and Recreation Committee to carry unspent budgets forward in relation to the Framework Knitters Grant (£10,000), and the HRA

Stock Condition Survey (£20,000), and De Montford University Study (£3,000)

3. Also attached to the report are details of the capital expenditure for the year and the final position on the Housing Revenue Account. The Housing Revenue Account has achieved an underspend of £113,945 but this is due to not requiring the budgeted £140,000 contribution to the Capital Programme. The additional spend is due to additional expenditure on housing repairs.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report: Accountancy Working Papers

RESIDENTS SERVICES COMMITTEE - GENERAL FUND
NET EXPENDITURE AS AT 31 MARCH 2010

Cost Centre	Service Head	Revised Budget 2009/10 £	Actual £	Variance £
14001	Environmental Health Admin/Enforcement	267,330	244,027	(23,303)
14002	Health Education Training	290	(75)	(365)
14003	Energy Conservation Act 95	5,410	2,880	(2,530)
14004	Environmental Protection	70,750	64,437	(6,313)
14005	Infectious Diseases	2,190	1,817	(374)
14006	Pest Control Service	64,500	60,731	(3,769)
14007	Dog Control Service	32,370	28,202	(4,168)
14008	Private Housing	327,780	201,255	(126,525)
14101	Community Development	138,320	161,771	23,451
14102	Health Promotion	9,630	2,899	(6,731)
14103	Grants	86,900	81,956	(4,944)
14104	Recreation and Leisure Development	68,320	98,201	29,881
14105	Arts & Heritage	20,780	14,361	(6,419)
14106	Multicultural	10,960	5,804	(5,156)
14201	Homelessness	110,670	129,164	18,494
14202	Housing Advances	890	990	100
14203	Day Centres	34,860	40,004	5,144
14204	Improvements For People With Disabilities	3,090	1,583	(1,507)
14205	Strategic Housing	1,800	0	(1,800)
20201	Brocks Hill Country Park	287,740	205,922	(81,818)
20202	Biodiversity	53,540	49,800	(3,740)
20203	Sustainable Development	0	449	449
20901	Conservation	5,960	7,774	1,814
	Page total carried forward	1,604,080	1,403,951	(200,129)

RESIDENTS SERVICES SERVICES COMMITTEE - GENERAL FUND
NET EXPENDITURE AS AT 31 MARCH 2010

Cost Centre	Service Head	Revised Budget 2009/10 £	Actual £	Variance £
	Page total brought forward	1,604,080	1,403,951	(200,129)
20001	Allotments	14,610	9,804	(4,806)
20002	Sports Grounds	285,710	271,270	(14,441)
20003	Parks & Open Spaces	224,910	211,660	(13,250)
20004	Wigston Fields (The Poplars)	37,010	28,088	(8,922)
20005	Sheila Mitchell Pavilion	17,940	55,655	37,715
20006	Golf Course	98,240	111,640	13,400
20007	Swimming Pools	584,210	156,181	(428,029)
20008	Leisure Centre	247,060	201,467	(45,593)
20009	Walter Charles Centre	(20)	28,882	28,902
20101	Closed Churchyards	7,590	6,999	(591)
20102	Cemeteries	82,050	35,072	(46,978)
20301	Land Drainage	2,260	1,477	(783)
20401	Public Conveniences	75,640	73,759	(1,881)
20501	Car Parks	142,860	346,254	203,394
20601	Borough Engineering	204,740	182,729	(22,011)
20701	Public Cleansing	589,850	568,085	(21,765)
20801	Refuse Collection	607,170	609,030	1,860
20802	Recycling Collection	705,440	705,924	484
20803	Recycling Disposal	(7,640)	(1,529)	6,111
	SERVICES COMMITTEE TOTAL	5,523,710	5,006,395	(517,315)

Residents Services Committee Revenue Outturn Position 2009/10

List of Major Budget Variances

Cost Centre	Expense Head	Revised Budget 2009/10	Actual	Variance	Comments
		£	£	£	
Environmental Health	Welfare Funeral	0	1,154	1,154	Statutory duty on the Authority
Environmental Health	Direct Support Costs	259,600	239,791	(19,809)	Cost less than anticipated
Energy Conservation Act 95	Printing and Stationery	200	0	(200)	No spend against this Budget
Energy Conservation Act 95	Grant/Loan Repayment	250	0	(250)	No spend against this Budget
Energy Conservation Act 95	Direct Support Costs	4,960	2,880	(2,080)	Cost less than anticipated
Environmental Protection	Analysts Fees	3,500	1,892	(1,608)	Work completed sooner than expected
Environmental Protection	Direct Support Costs	64,580	60,680	(3,900)	Cost less than anticipated
Pest Control	New Equipment	300	35	(265)	Less Equipment needed than anticipated
Pest Control	Use of Hired Plant	380	1,107	727	Cost of Hired van to cover breakdown
Pest Control	Central Support	1,850	720	(1,130)	Cost less than anticipated
Pest Control	Direct Support Costs	61,420	56,984	(4,436)	Cost less than anticipated
Pest Control	Depot Recharge	1,360	2,159	799	Extra work required on van after breakdown
Dog Control	Direct Support Costs	27,690	22,600	(5,090)	Cost less than anticipated
Dog Control	Fees/Charges	(2,500)	(2,102)	398	Kennelling cost income less than anticipated
Private Housing	Direct Support Costs	53,110	45,123	(7,987)	Cost less than anticipated
Private Housing	Housing Grants	280,000	165,562	(114,438)	Underspend on Grants carried forward to 2010-11
Community Development	Senior Citizens	2,500	0	(2,500)	No spend against this Budget
Community Development	Grant loan Repayment	0	1,311	1,311	No budget but spend against this budget
Community Development	Direct Support Costs	13,360	34,655	21,295	Reapportionment of Service Heads time
Health Promotion	Direct Support Costs	4,450	337	(4,113)	Cost less than anticipated
Grants	Core Funding	71,400	75,400	4,000	Community Hubs Contributions paid
Grants	Framework Knitters Grant	10,000	0	(10,000)	No spend against this Budget
Recreation and Leisure	Letterbox	0	13,704	13,704	Letterbox costs incurred in year
Recreation and Leisure	Direct Support Costs	17,810	37,420	19,610	Reapportionment of Service Heads time
Arts and Heritage	Direct Support Costs	4,450	482	(3,968)	Reapportionment of Service Heads time
Arts and Heritage	Arts Diary	1,550	0	(1,550)	First Contact Training invoice not received
Multicultural	Central Support Costs	5,060	2,108	(2,952)	Reapportionment of officer time
Multicultural	Direct Support Costs	4,450	3,236	(1,214)	Reapportionment of Service Heads time
Homelessness	Emergency Accomodation	5,000	6,084	1,084	Cost more than anticipated
Homelessness	Rent Rebate	(21,670)	(12,150)	9,520	Less Subsidy than originally expected
Homelessness	Rent Rebate	(3,000)	(1,303)	1,697	Less income from tenants paying part rent than anticipated
Day Centres	Other External Contractors	0	4,500	4,500	Repair work done on Basset Centre
Improvements for People with Disabilities	Direct Support Costs	2,640	1,151	(1,489)	Cost less than anticipated

Residents Services Committee Revenue Outturn Position 2009/10

List of Major Budget Variances

Cost Centre	Expense Head	Revised Budget 2009/10	Actual	Variance	Comments
		£	£	£	
Strategic Housing	Other External Contractors	1,800	0	(1,800)	BME (Black Minority and Ethnic) Housing Study carried forward from 08/09
Brockshill	Staffing Costs	141,550	89,783	(51,767)	Vacant posts
Brockshill	External Contributions	(65,430)	(89,894)	(24,464)	More income than anticipated
Biodiversity	Direct Support Costs	0	4,436	4,436	Reapportionment of Officer time
Biodiversity	Oadby Grange	8,500	3,010	(5,490)	Less work carried out than expected
Biodiversity	Educational Grant Fund	2,000	69	(1,931)	Applications for fund less than expected
Biodiversity	Clifton Bridge Project	500	0	(500)	No work completed as difficult to get to land
Conservation	Direct Support Costs	2,150	3,950	1,800	Reapportionment of Officer time
Allotments	Fences and Hedges	450	0	(450)	Budget not used
Allotments	Tipping Charges	800	0	(800)	Budget not used
Allotments	Grounds Maintenance	7,820	7,132	(688)	Trading account under spent
Allotments	Direct Support Costs	10,290	7,756	(2,534)	Reapportionment of officers time
Sports Grounds	Salaries	2,460	3,485	1,025	Balanced by under spend on Wigston Fields.
Sports Grounds	Electricity	6,490	8,891	2,401	Reduced usage
Sports Grounds	Gas	7,040	3,080	(3,960)	Reduced usage
Sports Grounds	Cleaning Contract	9,380	8,549	(832)	Charge lower than expected
Sports Grounds	Water	6,320	4,836	(1,484)	Reduced usage
Sports Grounds	Grounds Maintenance	118,860	108,497	(10,363)	Savings made in grounds maintenance on tipping charges and equipment and materials
Sports Grounds	Pavilion and Pitch Bookings	(26,250)	(27,505)	(1,255)	Better take up of pitch hire
Parks and Open Spaces	Grounds Maintenance	171,850	156,827	(15,023)	Savings made in grounds maintenance on tipping charges and equipment and materials
Wigston Fields	Salaries - Cleaners	1,400	0	(1,400)	Site closed for year.
Wigston Fields	Legionella Testing	740	0	(740)	Site closed for year.
Wigston Fields	Depreciation and Impairment	25,000	12,425	(12,575)	Changes in valuation
Sheila Mitchell Pavilion	Depreciation and Impairment	34,020	73,079	39,059	Changes in valuation
Golf Course	Hired Staff	9,950	8,472	(1,478)	Due to resignation of golf professional.
Golf Course	Electricity	12,100	8,936	(3,165)	Usage lower than anticipated
Golf Course	Equipment and Furniture	3,920	2,847	(1,073)	Requirements overestimated
Golf Course	Green Fees	(174,000)	(152,514)	21,486	Income down from reduced usage
Swimming Pools	Depreciation and Impairment	184,660	197,812	13,152	Changes in valuation
Swimming Pools	VAT Refund from HM Revenues and Customs	0	(441,000)	(441,000)	VAT Refund from HM Revenues and Customs

Residents Services Committee Revenue Outturn Position 2009/10

List of Major Budget Variances

Cost Centre	Expense Head	Revised Budget 2009/10	Actual	Variance	Comments
		£	£	£	
Leisure Centre	Depreciation and Impairment	221,750	232,067	10,317	Changes in valuation
Leisure Centre	Profit Share	0	(56,481)	(56,481)	Unforeseen Profit Share
Walter Charles Centre	Direct Support Costs	450	9,209	8,759	New roof and refurbishment.
Walter Charles Centre	Depreciation and Impairment	3,290	24,391	21,101	Changes in Valuation
Cemeteries	Electricity	4,290	2,535	(1,755)	Lower usage than expected
Cemeteries	Grounds Maintenance	98,320	66,154	(32,166)	Savings made in grounds maintenance on tipping charges and equipment and materials
Cemeteries	Fees and Charges	(73,500)	(85,327)	(11,827)	Income higher than expected
Car Parks	Electricity	3,480	2,280	(1,200)	Usage lower than anticipated
Car Parks	Depreciation and Impairment	37,460	241,786	204,326	Revaluation of assets
Borough Engineer	Grass Cutting Above County Standard	3,960	0	(3,960)	Additional cuts not requested
Borough Engineer	Direct Support Costs	44,130	22,176	(21,954)	Reapportionment of officers time
Borough Engineer	Depreciation and Impairment	39,860	45,188	5,328	New assets bought in year
Public Cleansing	Transport Charge	16,610	21,517	4,907	New vehicles bought latter in year than expected
Public Cleansing	Public Cleansing Contract	537,580	509,371	(28,209)	Efficiency savings made to reduce costs
Public Cleansing	Depot Recharge	3,390	6,478	3,088	Increased depreciation charges on Depot
Recycling - Return to Hub	Hired Staff	5,110	3,535	(1,575)	Requirements lower than expected
Recycling - Return to Hub	Structural Maintenance	6,480	9,277	2,797	Concrete panels, electrics, lights.
Recycling - Return to Hub	Fire Alarm and Suppression System	4,680	0	(4,680)	Alarm Not installed
Recycling - Return to Hub	Sales - Card	(52,480)	(60,768)	(8,288)	Estimated percentage split of card and plastics not accurate. Increased rate / tonne received by end of the year.
Recycling - Return to Hub	Sales - Plastics	(34,720)	(19,495)	15,225	Estimated percentage split of card and plastics not accurate.
Total Major Variances				(506,839)	
Other Variance				(10,476)	
Net Variance				(517,315)	

**RESIDENTS SERVICES COMMITTEE - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT
NET EXPENDITURE AS AT 31 MARCH 2010**

Cost Centre	Service Head	Revised Estimate £	Actual £	Variance £	Comments
12001	Housing Revenue Account	(1,736,200)	(1,878,106)	(141,906)	Provision for bad debts -£3,500 Depreciation -£137,000 Void Properties £13,000
12003	Estates Management	827,410	660,452	(166,958)	External Contractors -£19,000 Support Costs -£135,000 Tennant Involvement -£8,000
	Older Persons Services and Community Care :				
11501	Churchill Close	27,260	20,390	(6,870)	Gas -£5,000, Legionella Test -£2,900 , Supporting People Grant +£2,700
11502	Marriott House	27,340	23,937	(3,403)	Salaries -£1,700 Gas -£2,140 Supporting People Grant +£1,900 Water -£700
11503	William Peardon Court (Kings Drive)	32,670	27,127	(5,543)	Salaries +£1,800 Gas -£2,700 Supporting People Grant +£2,100 Electricity Refund -£7,000
11504	Communal Services	133,010	130,849	(2,161)	Central Control System -£900 Grounds Maintenance -£500 Electricity £-350
11505	Housing Support Officer	4,180	10,284	6,104	Direct Support Costs +£5500 Supporting People Grant -£2,200 Salaries +£1,000
	Caretakers Services :				
12501	Elizabeth Court	25,490	22,607	(2,883)	Staff Costs -£1,400 Support Costs £800
12502	Bennett Way	18,950	14,527	(4,423)	Electricity -£3,600
12503	Boulter Crescent	28,130	27,699	(431)	
12504	Burgess St, Maromme Sq, Junction Rd	25,770	25,181	(589)	
	TOTAL SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT	(585,990)	(915,051)	(329,061)	
1****	Repairs & Maintenance	1,073,260	1,225,196	151,936	Responsive Repairs Void Expenditure +£130,000 Support Service Costs +£59,000 Planned Maintenance -£30,000
	NET COSTS OF SERVICES	487,270	310,145	(177,125)	
64501	Capital Charges	(20,100)	(18,456)	1,644	Interest on Balances -£1,600
	NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE	467,170	291,689	(175,481)	
64502	Appropriations	(284,240)	(222,704)	61,536	Depreciation +£137,000 Revenue Contribution to Capital -£140,000
	DEFICIT / (SURPLUS) FOR THE YEAR	182,930	68,985	(113,945)	

Housing Revenue Account Reserves					
	Balance brought forward	519,879	518,135		
	Deficit/(Surplus) in Year	182,930	68,985		
	Balance carried forward	336,949	449,150		

RESIDENTS SERVICES COMMITTEE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2009-10

Project Code Reference	Scheme	Budgets B/F	2009/10 Budget	Total Budget	2009/10 Expenditure	Variance (under)/over	Comment
		£	£	£	£	£	
	Housing Revenue Account						
50003	Central Heating		150,000	150,000	152,297	2,297	Expenditure net of £16,000 external funding
50004	Kitchens & Bathrooms		710,000	710,000	594,029	(115,971)	Savings made on contracts
50007	Car Hardstandings		20,000	20,000	30,870	10,870	Increased to meet demand
50016	Decent Homes Work		20,000	20,000		(20,000)	Decent homes achieved through other programs
50017	Major Adaptations		40,000	40,000	80,415	40,415	Increased to meet demand
	Total - HRA	0	940,000	940,000	857,611	(82,389)	
	General Fund - Residents Services						
52001	Brocks Hill Path Upgrade & Repair	11,000		11,000	9,127	(1,873)	
52002	Disabled Facility Grants		275,000	275,000	317,399	42,399	Funded by underspend on Private Sector Renewal Grants
52006	Brocks Hill Natural Play Area	4,123	7,000	11,123		(11,123)	c-f 2010-11
52007	Private Sector Renewal Grants		323,000	323,000	192,184	(130,816)	Help Fund Disabled Facilities and reminder c/f 2010-11
52008	Brocks Hill Fenced Picnic Area	8,000		8,000	5,158	(2,842)	
52010	Disabled Access Improvements	19,000	20,000	39,000	5,880	(33,120)	£32,126 c-f 2010-11
52011	Private Housing Condition Survey	20,000		20,000	17,305	(2,695)	
52013	Toy Library	33,300		33,300	12,817	(20,483)	
52039	Brocks Hill CCTV	23,577	7,000	30,577		(30,577)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54001	Car Park CCTV		11,000	11,000		(11,000)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54024	Uplands Park Teen Play Area	72,470		72,470		(72,470)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54030	Pavilion Infrastructure	10,886		10,886	7,678	(3,208)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54033	Bus Shelters		10,000	10,000	10,287	287	
54034	Car Park Improvements		10,000	10,000	9,900	(100)	
54036	Park Footpaths Improvements		25,000	25,000	13,142	(11,858)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54045	Litter Bin Replacement Programme		15,000	15,000	14,916	(84)	
54048	Cemeteries - Memorial Safety	20,300	10,000	30,300		(30,300)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54054	Notice & Information Boards	11,940	12,000	23,940	11,288	(12,652)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54056	WC, Wigston Road Allotments		8,000	8,000		(8,000)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54077	Cemeteries - Grave Shoring	2,010		2,010	(170)	(2,180)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54078	Depot & Pavilion Security Upgrade	19,000		19,000		(19,000)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54084	Street Name Plate Renewals		25,000	25,000	20,744	(4,256)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54085	Brocks Hill Office Accommodation	17,500		17,500		(17,500)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54086	Fludes Lane Woodland	5,900		5,900		(5,900)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54087	Oadby Grange Country Park	9,800		9,800		(9,800)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54091	Play Area Refurbishment Programme	5,100	60,000	65,100	2,948	(62,152)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54092	Uplands Development	48,600	35,000	83,600	51,100	(32,500)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54097	Walter Charles Community Centre	25,430		25,430	26,043	613	
54098	Vehicle Workshop Asbestos Removal		8,000	8,000	8,680	680	
54099	Bobcat 2571				18,200	18,200	
54524	Iliffe Park Play Area				50,000	50,000	Funded by Playbuilder Grant
	Total - Residents Services General Fund	367,936	861,000	1,228,936	804,627	(424,309)	
	Forum Allocations						

RESIDENTS SERVICES COMMITTEE CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2009-10

Project Code Reference	Scheme	Budgets B/F	2009/10 Budget	Total Budget	2009/10 Expenditure	Variance (under)/over	Comment
		£	£	£	£	£	
54526	Wigston Environmental improvements	6,252		6,252	3,807	(2,445)	
54529	Room of Remembrance		1,000	1,000	1,000		
52087	CCTV camera Bell Street		6,000	6,000	6,000		
	Bell Street - Additional planters		5,000	5,000		(5,000)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
54526	South Wigston Environmental improvements	5,000		5,000	3,807	(1,193)	
	Blaby Road planters, baskets		10,000	10,000		(10,000)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
52037	Oadby Brocks Hill Springer	900		900	792	(108)	
54517	Information boards-Fludes Lane & Coombe Park	3,000		3,000	1,500	(1,500)	
54521	Rosemead Seesaw	4,500		4,500	2,092	(2,408)	
54522	Uplands Park play area	20,000		20,000	20,000		
54523	Coombe Park play equipment	4,500		4,500	4,426	(74)	
54524	Illiffe Park play equipment	20,000		20,000	19,941	(59)	
54526	Environmental improvements	7,927		7,927	7,015	(912)	
52087	Mobile CCTV camera		11,000	11,000	11,000		
54528	Coombe Park Bridge		3,000	3,000	1,150	(1,850)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
	Coombe Pk lockable gates		1,398	1,398		(1,398)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
	Coombe Pk litter bins		700	700		(700)	Carried Forward to 2010-11
	Total For Forums	72,079	38,098	110,177	82,530	(27,647)	
	TOTAL RESIDENTS SERVICES	440,015	1,839,098	2,279,113	1,744,768	(534,345)	



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee

15th June 2010

Service Development Plan Committee Update

Report of: Chief Executive

Report Number: 5

Author: Policy and Performance Officer

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

This report is to provide an update on progress in meeting the targets specified in the Service Development Plans reporting to Residents' Services Committee for the year 2010 -11.

Recommendations:

1. That the progress is noted and Members comments reported to the respective section heads.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Own Report

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: Supports Report

Monitoring Officer: Supports Report

Appendices Attached: None

Impact Assessments:

Health:) Significant due to the wide range of SDP targets across diverse sections

Environment:) Significant due to the wide range of SDP targets across diverse sections

Community Safety:) Significant due to the wide range of SDP targets across diverse sections

Human Rights:) No significant impact.

Equal Opportunities:) All Council sections seek equality of access and provision of service on the basis of need.

Risk Assessment:) Each service has identified risks associated with each action in their relevant Service Delivery Plans.

Commentary:

The new reporting template is recommended in **Service Delivery Plan Committee Update Template Appendix A** and is “SMART” - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Resourced and Time-bound.

As part of the Annual Audit and Inspection letter for 2008/09, the Council was criticised for having *“ambitions for 2007/08 (which) were broad and lacked clearly defined specific priorities or outcomes that the public would experience or recognise. Delivery of ambitions still relied on lists of actions. Most, but not all, actions were completed.”* This new SMART template will improve this.

The relevant Committees will receive the full service delivery plans detailing all the Service actions relevant to that committee once a year. Thereafter, progress against these actions will be completed by Service Heads. Only actions that are off target and marked as RED will be reported to committees. Each RED action will have an accompanying report from the Service Head that will detail what the action is, why progress has not reached expectations, the corrective action to be taken and any financial implications. The Service Head will accompany the report to the relevant committee.

For this committee, no actions are currently off target.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee 15th June 2010

Commercial Recycling

Report of: Interim Director of Resources

Report Number:

Author: Jez Crooks, Acting Head of Client Services (Technical)

NON EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press and public.

Summary:

This report seeks to permission to commence a commercial recycling operation taking advantage of the return-to-hub efficiencies and method of operation, subject to a detailed business case being agreed by Management Team.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Members approve the commencement of a commercial recycling operation, should there be a proven business case .

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports Report

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: His Report

Monitoring Officer: Supports Report

Impact Assessments:

Health: No significant impact.

Environment: The collection of recyclable waste is supportive of a clean, safe and sustainable environment.

Community Safety: No significant impact.

Equal Opportunities: All Council sections seek equality of access and provision of service on the basis of need.

Human Rights: No significant impact.

Value for Money: This service is intended to provide additional income to the Council for the benefit of residents.

Commentary:

1. In April 2005 the Council sold its Trade recycling operation. The freeing up of vehicles contributed to the borough wide fortnightly collection of garden waste within existing budgets. The contract prohibited the Council from undertaking trade collections of waste for five years. This restriction finished in April 2010.
2. With efficiencies provided by the return-to-hub method of working in July 2009 it is now possible to collect trade commercial recycling without additional resource.
3. There are some restrictions on commercial waste associated to the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) which can limit the additional tonnages that commercial waste presents to the Disposal Authority (Leicestershire County Council). Approval has been provided by Leicestershire County Council to collect the biodegradable commercial fractions such as card and paper. The other fractions such as metals and plastics will be considered at a later date.
4. The recent tender for card and paper included rates for commercial papers, which are of higher values than household papers. An advantageous rate was secured for this material and for cardboard. These rates, and the spare resource provided by the return-to-hub method of working, could be used to provide an income for the council from the collection and sale of commercial waste.
5. Additional income would offset costs of the existing recycling services for residents.
6. The picking line, and additional on-site storage provided by associated improvements to the Oadby Depot, provides the ability to commence a commercial recycling operation for card and paper from July 2010.
7. Whilst the Council is often requested by commercial business within the borough to collect its recycling waste, this has not been possible until now and the size of the market is unknown. With no additional outlay, other than promotional material which can be funded from existing budgets connected to the recycling disposal operation, the Council can commence an operation and test the market without financial burden.
8. No assurances can be made on annual income though a preliminary target of £30,000 has been set. A business case is in the process of being produced which will be submitted to Management Team for decision.
9. The present rates are secured for one year and the profitability of any commercial operation would need to be reviewed in one years time.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

Operational Recycling Efficiencies – Residents’ Services Committee 16th June 2009

Refuse and Recycling Collection Service Development – Residents’ Services Committee 12th January 2010 - Residents’ Services Committee 9th March 2010



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee 15th June 2010

In House Waste Reduction Standard

Report of: Interim Director of Resources

Report Number:

Author: Jez Crooks, Acting Head of Client Services (Technical)

NON EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press and public.

Summary:

In a bid for member Councils of the Leicestershire Waste Partnership to lead by example it has created an In-House waste Reduction Standard to which all Leicestershire councils are requested to adopt.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Members adopt the In-House waste Reduction Standard.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports Report

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: His Report

Monitoring Officer: Supports Report

Impact Assessments:

Health: No significant impact.

Environment: An efficient waste and recycling collection service is supportive of a clean, safe and sustainable environment.

Community Safety: No significant impact.

Equal Opportunities: All Council sections seek equality of access and provision of service on the basis of need.

Human Rights: No significant impact.

Value for Money: The adoption of this standard should be cost effective.

Commentary:

1. The Leicestershire Waste Partnership is formed of Leicestershire County Council and the seven districts making up Leicestershire. All Councils are equal partners in the decision making process.
2. The partnership formulated the In-House Waste Reduction Standard to ensure that the Councils lead by example.
3. The standard requires commitment throughout the council but all resourcing can be carried out within existing budgets.
4. The standard is contained within appendix 1).
5. The objectives of this strategy are compatible with the objectives of the Council's carbon management plan.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:
In-House waste Reduction Standard Appendix 1)

Leicestershire Waste Partnership In-House Waste Reduction Standard

Introduction

The LWP In-house Waste Reduction Standard has been developed in response to the commitment within the Waste Strategy for partners to set an example by preventing, reusing, recycling and composting their own waste and using their buying power to positively encourage sustainable resource use (LWS pp 8 & 39). Furthermore, the Waste Prevention & Reuse Plan requires partners to establish local performance indicators for their performance on waste reduction / recycling at Council sites and undertake a review of partner Purchasing Policies and Practices with a view to identifying how they could be improved so they reduce the amount of waste produced within the authority.

The Council is developing policies, strategies and action plans to meet wider environmental, climate change or carbon objectives and targets. Waste prevention and recycling have the potential to contribute to the achievement of such objectives, therefore Council shall incorporate this In-House Waste Reduction Standard into this activity.

Level 1: Policy Statement

To achieve Level 1 of the Standard the authority must establish the standard and resource foundations that will enable the authority to reduce the amount of waste that it produces. It includes the adoption of an In-House Waste Reduction Standard, the commitment to develop and implement an action plan, the identification of a senior manager to lead on the issue and the earmarking of the necessary resources. Achievement of this level of the Standard will be demonstrated by:

- Formulation and adoption of an In-House Waste Reduction Standard either.
- Corporate commitment to developing and implementing an In-House Waste Reduction Action Plan.
- Identification of a senior named individual to lead on taking responsibility for implementing the In-House Waste Reduction Policy and the development of an In-House Waste Reduction Action Plan.
- Earmarking of the necessary resources (staff and financial) to implement the In-House Waste Reduction Policy.
- Establishment of an agreed timescale for when authority will be in a position to progress to Levels 2 – 4 of the Standard

Level 2: Baseline and Plan

To achieve Level 2 of the Standard the authority must have achieved Level 1 of the Standard. In addition, the authority must develop and agree an In-house Waste Reduction Plan with suitable resources, establish a baseline and set waste reduction targets. Achievement of this level of the Standard will be demonstrated by:

- Development and agreement of an In-House Waste Reduction Action Plan.
- Establishment of a suitably staffed and resourced structure to oversee the implementation of the In-House Waste Reduction Policy and Action Plan.
- Completion of a mapping exercise to identify the channels of responsibility for all aspects of the management of the authority's internal waste (including procurement, cleaning, collection, disposal, budgets, record keeping, data monitoring, analysis and reporting etc).
- Completion of a waste sort / assessment and the establishment of the baseline of the existing levels and types of waste production, recycling, composting and waste prevention activity.
- Compliance with all relevant legislation and in particular the compliance issues raised in the Waste Review Report.
- Agreement of the waste reduction targets for the authority.
- Completion of a review of the agreed timescale for when authority will be in a position to progress to Levels 3 – 4 of the Standard.

Level 3: Implementation

To achieve Level 3 of the Standard the authority must have achieved Level 2 of the Standard. This level focuses on the authority implementing its agreed Waste Reduction Action Plan. Even though the detail will vary from authority to authority there will be a number of common elements such as communications, waste champions, procurement reviews and the establishment of monitoring and reporting mechanisms. Achievement of this level of the Standard will be demonstrated by:

- Introduction of any waste collection infrastructure (recycling bins etc), the provision of staff awareness and training and improvements to waste management responsibility.
- Development and implementation of a Communications Plan for members, staff, suppliers and the public.
- Completion of a review of procurement policies and practices to assess how they could be improved to make more waste friendly.
- Establishment of the necessary monitoring and reporting mechanisms for measuring performance against the agreed targets.

- Appointment and training of “Waste / Environmental Champions” to advocate and provide advice to colleagues on how they can reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.
- Completion of a review of the agreed timescale for when authority will be in a position to progress to Level 4 of the Standard.

Level 4: Monitoring and Review

To achieve Level 4 of the Standard the authority must have achieved Level 3 of the Standard. In addition, the authority must demonstrate the implementation of the Waste Reduction Action Plan and the successful application of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms for measuring performance against the agreed targets for at least a period of 12 months. Achievement of this level of the Standard will be demonstrated by:

- Availability of at least 12 months of complete data for the agreement waste Reduction targets.
- Evidence that the authority has taken steps to reduce waste through its procurement policies, processes and practices; through making its procurement policies more waste friendly; changing how it procures and what it procures so it reduces waste or makes it easier to reuse or recycle any resulting waste.
- Evidence that the necessary data has been gathered, entered, collated and analysed within the monitoring mechanisms.
- Evidence that the data has been reported to key staff, management and members.
- Evidence that the analysis of the data has been used to make improvements in the management and / or monitoring of the authorities in-house waste.
- Changes in staff awareness and attitudes to waste and its management resulting in the better management of in-house waste.
- Provision of in-house waste Reduction performance results to the public via authority website or other authority communications media.



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee 15th June 2010

Refuse and Recycling Update

Report of: Interim Director of Resources

Report Number:

Author: Jez Crooks, Acting Head of Client Services (Technical)

NON EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press and public.

Summary:

This report is an update on the improvements within the Refuse and Recycling Collection service and to clarify the times waste may be deposited on the highway for collection.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Members note paragraph 16) and stipulate 7pm the day before collection as the earliest time waste can be deposited on the footway for collection.
- 2) That Members note the report.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports Report

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: His Report

Monitoring Officer: Supports Report

Impact Assessments:

Health: No significant impact.

Environment: An efficient waste and recycling collection service is supportive of a clean, safe and sustainable environment.

Community Safety: No significant impact.

Equal Opportunities: All Council sections seek equality of access and provision of service on the basis of need.

Human Rights: No significant impact.

Value for Money: The investment in this service should be cost effective.

Commentary:

Sale of Recycling

1. At June 16th 2009 Residents' Services Committee approval was granted for a year trial to provide income from the disposal of green and brown bag recyclate from the Oadby Depot. The prior arrangement with Leicestershire County Council brought in no income from these materials and cost the Council approximately £85,000 in gate fees. It was anticipated that after overheads an annual surplus of £150,000 would be achievable after the initiative had been fully developed and performance to date is in line with this, based on 2008/09 tonnages.
2. At January 12th 2010 Residents' Services Committee approval was granted for £150,000 funding for the installation of a recycling picking line and associated works to increase recycling income.
3. Tenders were put out simultaneously for the sale of glass, paper and card recycling and for the picking line. This was done so as to provide Tenderer's with an opportunity to offer added value. Two Tenderer's sought to make added value offers.
4. Newport Paper were the successful Tenderer for card and paper materials and the picking line. They provided the highest material rates and the lowest priced picking line solution. In addition Newport Paper are offering a weeks free consultancy on the running of the picking line and continued support through the year working in partnership with the Council. Newport Paper are also keen to help promote the Council's recycling activities and have offered to attend two promotional events during the year.
5. Newport Paper commenced collecting materials from the 1st June 2010. The picking line is to be installed in late June, this is one month behind the original programme.
6. The glass contract has been award to Reresco. Combined with the commencing of collecting of glass from the Oadby Depot from July 2010 this will provide an estimated additional income of £8,000 per annum.

Kerbside Glass Collection Rounds

7. With a commitment to move to a borough wide kerbside glass collection service the existing service is to be extended into streets within each of the three towns to an estimated 1,500 properties. Information on the roll out of this facility across the Borough will be given verbally at the meeting.
8. New vehicles, presently within the vehicle replacement programme, are to be trialled in autumn 2010 to assess their viability in collecting kerbside glass along with other waste streams.

Collection of Additional Waste Streams

9. The picking line, and return-to-hub method of working, provides the Council with the opportunity to collect additional waste streams such as Textiles, Tetrapak, film and aluminium foil. The viability, and best form of collecting and handling these recycling streams, will be assessed following the introduction of the picking line.

Promoting Recycling

10. Approximately 70% of households take advantage of the Councils kerbside recycling collection services. Increasing recycling will improve the Council's recycling rate and income. Research by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) shows the reason that most people who do not recycle say would make them recycle is that it benefits them financially. The second being the environmental benefits.
11. With the picking line generating income and facilitating the collection of additional recycling materials it provides an opportunity for the Council to promote and invigorate

recycling within the borough on both financial and environmental footing. In Autumn 2010 a major promotional exercise will be undertaken focussing on the Council's new recycling operations with the aim of increasing recycling.

12. The layout of the recycling operation at the Oadby Depot is to be done in a manner that permits safe tours of the operation with the aim of raising awareness and interest in recycling. Schools and resident groups will be invited to tour the facility. Brocks Hill is seen as a venue for completing the tour with video presentations, recycling and environmental displays and promotional items.

Depositing of Waste Upon the Highways.

13. Under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act the local council may dictate the position, contents and manner that residents place out their waste for collection.
14. The Council requests that residents place waste out at the edge of curtilage. Where this is not convenient this may be placed out on the footway.
15. The Council views waste placed out on the footway several days in advance of collection as a nuisance or in extreme cases a fly tip. Where this is a persistent problem letters are issued to request the waste is put out no earlier than 10pm the day before collection, if the request is ignored fixed penalty notices are issued.
16. The Council does not guarantee collection of waste put out after 7am. Moving the earliest put-out time to 7pm the day before collection, rather than 10pm, would allow a 12 hour period for residents to put-out waste which may better suit the needs of residents.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

Operational Recycling Efficiencies – Residents' Services Committee 16th June 2009

Refuse and Recycling Collection Service Development – Residents' Services Committee 12th January 2010 - Residents' Services Committee 9th March 2010



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

RESIDENTS' SERVICES COMMITTEE.

15 June 2010

Carbon Management Plan

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Martin Cregg, Director of Community Services

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

To seek members approval for the Authority's Carbon Management Plan to deliver the commitment made by the Council in 2007 in signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to approve the Authority's Carbon Management Plan.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service:	Supports the report
Proper Officer for Financial Affairs:	Supports the report
Monitoring Officer:	Supports the report

Appendices Attached:

Impact Assessments:

Health:	A reduction in air quality and increased ultra violet radiation can lead to serious health implications.
Environment:	Significant impact covered within the objectives of the Carbon Management Plan
Community Safety:	Flooding outside of the borough could lead to residents being placed in peril and a frustration of emergency services attending incidents within the borough.
Equal Opportunities:	All Council sections seek equality of access and provision of service on the basis of need.
Risk Assessment:	The overriding risk at this stage is failing to meet the legislative measures. The proposals set out in the plan will help to minimise this risk

Commentary:

Background

In signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in January 2007 the Council agreed the following statement

“We commit... to publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own authority’s operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchase of goods and services”

The Carbon Management Plan that has been both sent electronically to Members and left on deposit in the Members Room in Bushloe House sets out the Council’s aspirational plans to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from our operations. This applies following our completion of the Carbon Trust’s Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and the draft plan being approved by the Carbon Trust. Upon approval by Members the Plan becomes the central element of our commitment to the Council’s carbon management programme. It explains how through investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy, aligning our policies and fostering a culture of energy saving, we will aspire to meet our target of reducing our direct emissions by 4% by 2011 and 15% by 2014. The plan will reduce our energy related costs, mitigate the financial risk of rising energy prices and position ourselves on local authority climate change action.

The Plan provides the Council with a low carbon vision for 2014:

“To reduce energy consumption and increase efficiency, to reduce our carbon emissions, associated costs, and to act as an exemplar for the wider community”

1. Context

Central Government passed the Climate Change Act in November 2008, setting a target for reduction of carbon emissions by 80% by 2050, from 1990 levels. Local authorities are placed in the key position to lead communities to meet this UK target. We took part in the seventh phase of the Carbon Trust’s Local Authority Carbon Management Programme. This aims to provide a comprehensive programme to measure and manage the greenhouse gas emissions produced by local authority activity and set out a systematic approach to reducing them. The plan details the sources of the Council’s emissions (from energy in buildings, business travel and contracted services) and establishes a baseline against which progress can be measured. It sets out the Council’s approach towards carbon management and identifies key actions for us to take to meet its reduced emissions target by 2014 and beyond. Some measures have already been identified and are in the process of being undertaken, some of which are not wholly carbon driven but will contribute to the total reduction, whereas others require more detailed study and cost benefit analysis before proceeding particularly given the economic climate in which the Authority now operates in.

The emissions baseline for Oadby & Wigston Borough Council is based on the scope set out in the National Indicators. Under NI 185 all carbon dioxide emissions from the duties and powers of an authority are included in the baseline, inclusive of all authority owned operations provided by an external body (i.e. company, agency or contractor). The scope is defined as follows:

"The indicator is to include all CO₂ emissions from the delivery of local authority functions...It covers all an authority's own operations and outsourced services...It relates to the energy used in buildings and transport for delivering the functions of a local authority, but not the embedded emissions in the goods procured by the authority."

The scope includes:

- Council owned buildings energy use including those managed by others
- Council owned fleet fuel use
- Fleet fuel use for outsourced council functions
- Council owned business travel
- Business travel for outsourced council functions
- Water Usage within Council owned buildings energy use including those managed by others (existing and new)

- Waste collected and sent to landfill
- Leisure Centres, pools data has been updated

2. Content of the Plan

The Plan covers the following aspects but principally the steps that will have to be taken in delivering actual projects to contribute to the low carbon vision and targets and the change in organisational culture and awareness in working practices.

Carbon Management Strategy

Context and drivers for Carbon Management

National and local drivers to take action on Climate Change

Targets and objectives

Emissions Baseline and Projections

Carbon Management Projects

Existing projects

Planned / funded projects

Near term projects

Medium to long term projects

Projected achievement towards target

Carbon Management Plan Financing

Actions to Embed Carbon Management in Oadby & Wigston

Corporate Strategy

Programme Management

Responsibility

Data Management

Communication and Training

Finance and Investment

Policy Alignment

Engagement of Suppliers – working with suppliers to reduce carbon footprint

Programme Management of the CM Programme

The Programme Board – strategic ownership and oversight

The Carbon Management Team – delivering the projects

Succession planning for key roles

Ongoing stakeholder management

Annual progress review

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

Oadby & Wigston Borough Council Draft Carbon Management Plan



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee

15 June 2010

Customer Services Update

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Daren Nowlan, Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services

NOT EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

This report updates the Residents' Services Committee on performance and service delivery in Customer Services.

Recommendations:

1. Members note the contents of this report.
2. Members approve the continuation of the Saturday opening arrangement (initially provided as a pilot) on permanent basis

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports report
 Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: Supports report
 Monitoring Officer: Supports report

Appendices Attached: None

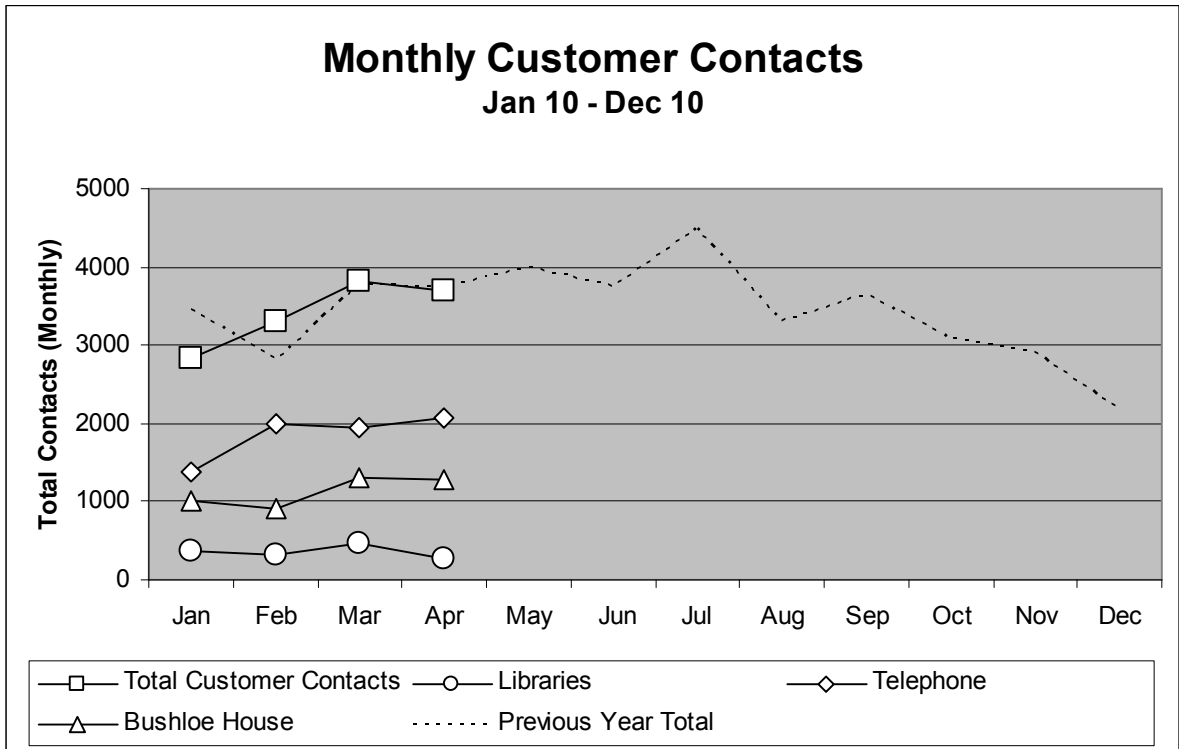
Impact Assessments:

Health: No impact
 Environment: No impact
 Community Safety: No impact
 Human Rights: No impact
 Equal Opportunities: No impact
 Risk Assessment: No impact
 Value for Money: No impact

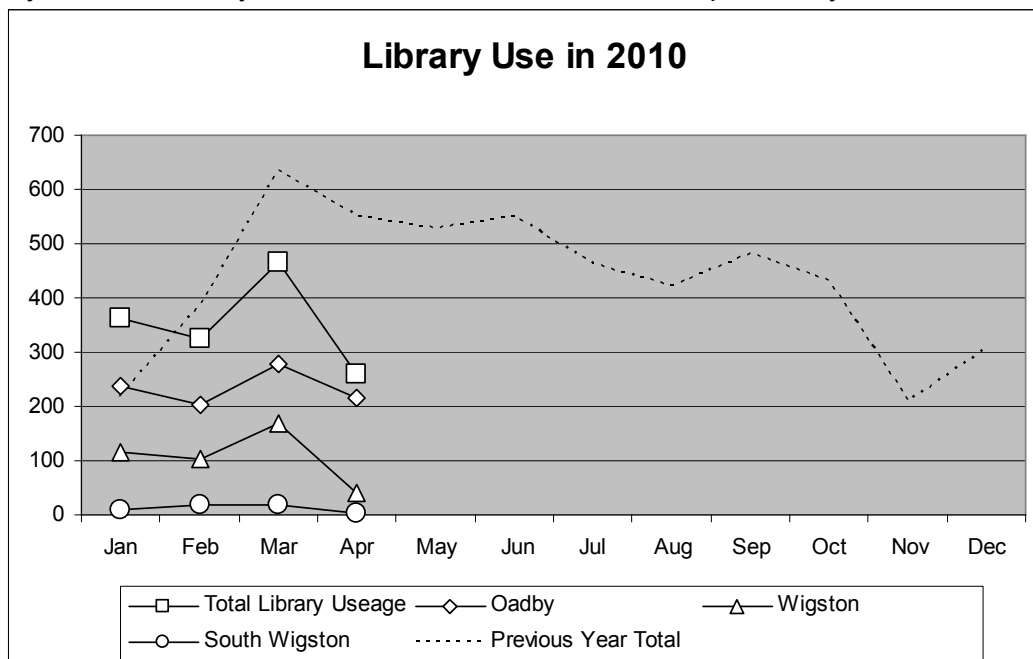
Commentary:

1. Customer Services

1.1. **Workload** – Workloads over the last quarter have increased by around 30% in customer services with the bulk of this being in contacts over the telephone and face to face. However, this increase is almost perfectly in line with workloads for the same times last year. As we are now operating with reduced staff, this does represent an increase in operational efficiency. The large recent increases in customer demand are associated with the elections, increased workload in benefits and annual council tax billing.



1.2. **Libraries** – As expected with the introduction of the new opening hours at the libraries the number of callers dropped, this has been balanced by an increased up take of services at Bushloe House and over the telephone. There was also a sharp increase in face to face use in March at the libraries which occurred due to council tax annual billing but overall library use in February and March 2010 was down on the previous year.





Borough of Oadby & Wigston

RESIDENTS' SERVICES COMMITTEE

15 June 2010

Social Housing Fraud Initiative

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Simon Folwell, Head of Housing Services

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

To seek members approval to utilise Government funding, secured by the Council, for a project to identify fraud within our tenancies.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to approve the use of £10,000 gained from the Communities and Local Government Department, for a 6 month social housing fraud project in partnership with Hinckley and Bosworth District Council, which will be hosted by OWBC.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service:
 Proper Officer for Financial Affairs:
 Monitoring Officer:

Appendices Attached:

Impact Assessments:

Health: No direct impact
 Environment: No direct impact
 Community Safety: No direct impact
 Human Rights: No direct impact
 Equal Opportunities: No direct impact
 Risk Assessment: The main risk is failing to utilise the funding that has been received. This report seeks to address this risk.

Commentary:

1. The Housing Section has secured funding of £10,000, as part of the Government's Social Housing Fraud Initiative, which is being promoted by the Department of Communities and Local Government. The main purpose of the initiative is to identify those council and housing association tenancies where the property is sublet to someone other than the actual tenant, or the tenant principally lives at another property. The aim is to get these properties back, so that they can be relet. Legal action may also be taken against perpetrators.
2. The Housing Department at Hinckley and Bosworth Council has also been successful in securing funding and would like to work jointly to implement the project. By working in

partnership, there are gains to both parties, particularly in terms of not duplicating work, on-costs and sharing the time and effort required to set up the project.

3. In light of the above, a proposal has been developed to pool the funding between the authorities and jointly employ a project officer on a fixed term temporary contract. Neither Housing teams have the capacity to undertake the extensive work that is required within existing staffing resources. With this in mind, a suitably qualified and experienced candidate has been identified. This person has many years experience of managing housing tenancies, including dealing with housing benefit fraud and identifying fraudulent council housing tenancies. It is proposed that OWBC is the host (and thereby controlling) Authority for the project.
4. The project is proposed to run as a 'one-off', for a 6 month period and will be undertaken in two distinct phases. The first phase (approximately 4 weeks) will be the project set-up and implementation, which will involve devising the working arrangements and procedures, along with establishing contacts and networks (e.g. with Housing Benefit teams). The second phase of the project will move to actual fieldwork, in terms of identifying tenancies and undertaking visits, checks and follow up action. A risk based approach will be used to identify those tenancies where, from the information we hold, it appears that there is a greater likelihood of tenancy fraud (e.g. no recent contact by the tenant or requests for repairs in the last 12 months). The Government has issued detailed guidance on identifying social housing fraud, which will be used to direct the project.
5. The project will also involve and link with local registered social landlords (RSLs), to ensure that a co-ordinated approach is taken. Some RSLs have received funding in their own right, whereas others have indicated their willingness to support initiatives in the localities where they have properties.
6. The total budget for the project (working jointly with Hinckley and Bosworth DC) will be £20,000. £14,000 of this amount will be used for staffing costs, with the remainder for expenses, such as promotion and advertising, office equipment and stationery and travel.
7. The ring fenced funding that has been secured offers an opportunity to help ensure that social housing within the locality is being put to its best use. Whilst it is expected that the levels of fraud detected will be very low, every property that is returned to us will be of the real benefit to a household on our waiting list. The proposal to work in partnership with a neighbouring authority also provides the opportunity to secure greater value for money, in terms of shared resources, capacity and expertise.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report: None



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

RESIDENTS' SERVICES COMMITTEE

15 June 2010

Choice Based Lettings

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Simon Folwell, Head of Housing Services

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

To advise members of the latest progress with choice based lettings and seek approval to proceed with a proposed scheme.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to:

1. Agree to the purchase of the Abris Nova HX web-based software system.
2. Approve the draft Allocations Scheme (including the banding system), as a draft for consultation.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to finalise any changes to the Allocations Scheme, which result from consultation.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports Report

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: Supports Report

Monitoring Officer: Supports Report

Appendices Attached: Appendix 1 – Banding system, Appendix 2 – Draft Allocations Scheme

Impact Assessments:

Health: No direct impact

Environment: No direct impact

Community Safety: No direct impact

Human Rights: No direct impact

Equal Opportunities: A key part of choice based lettings will be to ensure that support is provided for those households who may be vulnerable or less likely to understand how the system operates.

Risk Assessment: The overriding risk at this stage is failing to have a scheme in operation by the government's deadline of 2010. The proposals set out in this report will help to minimise this risk

Commentary:

Background

1. Choice based lettings (CBL) is the term given to a range of methods for letting social housing. Traditionally, it has been the role of the Council to match households to properties when they come empty, based on the need of the household and their preference in terms of location. With choice based lettings, vacancies are advertised, normally either in a newsletter, on a website and in customer service centres. The onus is then on the applicant to bid for the property (in much the same way as applying for a privately rented property). The household that is successful will be the one identified by the Council as having the highest priority or greatest need.
2. The Government's deadline is for all local authorities to have adopted a choice based approach to lettings by the end 2010.
3. Members agreed at the meeting of Residents Services Committee in August 2009 to work in partnership with other districts within Leicestershire, to develop proposals for jointly implementing a choice based lettings scheme. Since this time, a successful bid had been made for funding from the Communities and Local Government Department – (CLG) - £177,000 for the partnership as a whole. A project manager has been appointed (this post being hosted by Charnwood BC), which has provided the capacity to co-ordinate and progress the proposals.
4. The project has moved forward at a pace during the last three months, with detailed proposals having been developed as to how a joint system could operate. This has included detailed negotiations between the districts and a leading software supplier for CBL systems. Set out below are the details of these proposals and the implications for the Authority.

Key stages and elements of the proposed CBL system

5. CBL represents a significant change to the way that lettings for social housing are undertaken. The key stages are set out in the following table:

<i>Register</i>	People will still need to register to join the scheme, in much the same way they do at present, to go onto the Housing Register. This can be done by applying on-line or completing an application form. From the information given when registering, an assessment can be made of a household's priority for housing (using a banding system - further details of which are given below).
<i>Advertise</i>	Vacant properties are advertised every fortnight. These will be on a dedicated website, in a newsletter and in 'property shop' style adverts, which will be available at customer service centres.
<i>Bid</i>	Those registered with the scheme can bid for properties for which they wish to be considered. This can be done on-line, by phone (including text) or in person. The computer system automatically identifies the household's position in comparison to other bids. Up to 3 bids can be made in any one advertising cycle. Bids can be made and change throughout the cycle.
<i>Outcome</i>	At the end of the advertising cycle, properties are offered to those households that are in the highest band and have been waiting the longest. Feedback information is published for every successful letting, showing the band and registration date of the household that has been offered the property. This information is helpful to help those registered to think about what to bid for in the future.

6. Each district, while using the common software system, will manage the lettings within their own area. This will include maintaining the records for the people and properties within the district, which means that there is no requirement for a centralised processing or admin team. Each district will also have its own 'personalised' website as part of the system, which will feed into the common back office database.
7. A key requirement of the CLG in providing funding for a Leicestershire scheme is that people have a greater opportunity to apply for properties in districts other than those where they live. In practical terms, this means that at least 10% of properties must be advertised as available to anyone registered with the scheme in Leicestershire. While this is a significant change to our current policy, officers do not consider this to present major difficulties or unfairness to people with a local connection to the Borough. This is on the basis that in reality, few people who require social housing want or need to move around the County. In addition, we already see people from out of the area taking up council housing within the Borough – typically older people requiring care/support or for properties that are in lower demand.
8. The proposed IT system (Nova HX) is supplied by a company called Abritas. This system is key to being able to operate CBL both within and between each district. The key functions of the systems are to:
 - retain the details of the people who have registered for the scheme
 - hold the details of properties being advertised
 - collate the bids that are made by those registered, and organise them in priority order, according to the banding system and waiting time.
 - provide an individual website for each Authority, through which the above transactions can be actioned.

This system has been procured with the help of the Welland Procurement Unit, and is being supplied through the Northern Housing Consortium (a purchasing partnership), all of which has ensured that the procurement is cost effective. By acquiring the system jointly, the costs to each district are at least half of what they would have been if systems had been bought individually.

Banding and Allocation Systems

9. A points system is used at present to prioritise applicants for housing, with the highest pointed application receiving an offer when vacancies arise.. The range of points is relatively complex, in order to attempt to capture the numerous reasons for needing to move. If an applicant's circumstances change, points can go down as well as up, and an applicant's position in the housing queue can change if a higher pointed application is received. All this means that applicants find the current system difficult to understand, and allocations that are made are not transparent.
10. Taking into account the Government's statutory guidance for allocation systems, 'banding system' are seen as the most appropriate way of prioritising housing applications. With banding systems, households with similar levels of need are grouped together into a band, and then cases are prioritised on the basis of the time spent waiting with that band. This approach is now being used by the majority of social landlords and is far more understandable and straightforward to people who apply.
11. The proposed banding system for Oadby and Wigston will have four broad bands of need, ranging from 'low' through to 'priority'. There are criteria within each band, which capture the main housing circumstances peopleface and reasons for why they may require re-housing. Details of the banding system, as currently drafted, are set out in Appendix 1.
12. The banding system will form part of the Council's overall Allocations Scheme. The Allocations Scheme brings together all the different aspects of the Council's arrangements for allocating and letting Council properties. Most importantly, it identifies how bids made will be shortlisted, i.e. bids are sorted into band order, then filtered for those households with a local connection to the Borough and then by length of time

spent within the band. A copy of the draft Allocations Scheme is set out in Appendix 2.

Resource Implications

13. The costs for the project are as follows:

Item	2010/11	2011/12 and onwards
Implementation costs	£7,195	£0
Software licences / renewals	£6,895	£6,895
Newsletter and printing costs	£1,000	£3,000
Total	£15,090	£9,895

A budget has been established for 2010/11, which will be sufficient to meet the costs. However, the on-going costs for future years will be additional, with no budget provision yet in place

14. Members will appreciate that the move to CBL will impact heavily on staff time. One key task will be completion of new registration forms by all existing housing applicants, which will also need assessing and entering into the new system. One advantage of CBL is that it will be more process driven and streamlined than existing. As such, there is scope to work with the Customers Services Team to be involved in operating the system on a day to day basis.

Next Steps

15. In order to move forward, the following steps need to be taken:

- authorise the purchase of the Arbritas Nova HA system for choice based lettings
- confirm that the draft allocation scheme is acceptable. This is required in order to move forward with developing the IT specification with Abritas.
- continue to consult residents and stakeholders about the proposed CBL system and develop/amend the Allocations scheme in light of responses. The timescales for the project do not allow the time to refer changes back to committee, before moving to the next stage. It is for this reason that Members are asked to authorise the Chair to agree any further changes and for these to be reported back to a future meeting.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Housing Section

Banding Scheme – *Draft (May 2010)*

The housing needs of each household that applies to the scheme will be considered and assessed. All home seekers who are eligible to join the housing register/scheme will be placed in one of four priority bands. The four bands are as follows:

- Low Housing Need (Band 1)
- Medium Housing Need (Band 2)
- High Housing Need (Band 3)
- Priority Housing Need (Band 4)

The specific criteria for each band are listed on the following pages.

Band 1: LOW HOUSING NEED

Applications will be accepted but placed in the lowest band if the home seeker:

- does not have a qualifying local connection to any of the districts within the Leicestershire sub-region
- has the financial resources available to meet their housing costs. This would include households whose income or savings were over the current approved levels or with sufficient equity in their property to purchase suitable accommodation (see definition of affordability in section 7)
- is the owner or joint owner of a residential property with no welfare or medical need. This may include home seekers with statutory property rights under the Family Law Act 1996
- owes a housing related debt to any of the partner Councils or another social landlord and there is no satisfactory arrangement to repay the debt or where regular payments have not been maintained for at least twelve weeks. Housing related debts include rent arrears on a current or former property and sundry debts such as court costs, rechargeable repairs, repayments required on rent deposit schemes or other homelessness prevention measures. Outstanding debts with private sector landlords may also be included, unless there is evidence of genuine hardship.
- is guilty of behaviour which affects their suitability to be a tenant. The behaviour is serious enough that enforcement action would normally have been taken but does not warrant exclusion from the housing register. This relates not only to the home seeker but also other members of their household.
- is a transfer applicant who is only eligible for a move to the same size of property and who does not have a welfare, medical or other exceptional need to move. This is termed a 'like for like' transfer
- is a joint tenant of a Housing Association property where the other party does not wish to move.
- only wishes to be considered for low cost home ownership schemes.

Home seekers who have deliberately worsened their circumstances to gain an unfair advantage over other Home Seekers on the housing register will normally remain in Band 1 for a period of 12 months. The application will then be reassessed.

Band 2: MEDIUM HOUSING NEED

Preference will be given to home seekers who fall into one of the following categories: -

1. Homeless households - this could include :

- Homeless households who are deemed eligible for assistance but do not qualify for a full housing duty because they do not have a priority need, or they made themselves intentionally homeless.
- A home seeker who has been assessed as being threatened with homelessness in more than 28 days (but less than 56 days), is considered to be in priority need and has been through homeless prevention options with the Council and all other options have been exhausted.

2. Poor housing conditions – households living in insanitary, overcrowded or unsatisfactory housing conditions - this could include

1. Households lacking adequate toilet, bathing or cooking facilities.
2. Households lacking 2 or more bedrooms.
3. A property that although not unfit for habitation is in a serious state of disrepair and poses a high health and safety risk to the applicant. This could include properties where there is inadequate lighting, heating and ventilation or where there is ineffective drainage for waste and surface water. This will be assessed in partnership with the Environmental Health Department (EHD). The EHD will consider using the powers available to secure that the property is made fit.
4. In exceptional circumstances other poor housing conditions will be considered. These will be considered where there is evidence that the housing conditions are having a detrimental effect upon the welfare or health of the household.

3. Medical needs – households with a medical, disability and mobility problem - this could include:

1. Verified high medical need where a move will improve or prevent the deterioration of a condition. This will apply when a home seeker's condition is currently directly affected by their accommodation and a move is needed to have a positive effect on their condition, or whereas as a result of their condition their current accommodation is not suitable to their needs. An investigation will be carried out.
2. Level access accommodation is required and there is no prospect of adaptations to the home seeker's current property within 12 months. Suitable proof will be required, i.e. confirmation from a local occupational therapist and landlord. The home seeker may be referred to local agencies for assistance with adaptations.

4. Welfare need to move - this could include:

1. Home seekers suffering from harassment or neighbour nuisance, such as verbal abuse or damage to the property. The problems will have been reported to the landlord and/or the Police for action but a satisfactory conclusion not found. The harassment is not at a level whereby the home seeker has an emergency need to move.
2. The need to be near relatives to give or receive support. This would only apply where NOT moving would cause emotional, physical or financial hardship to either party.
3. The need to move closer to specialist educational or other organisation, agency or institution. This would only apply where NOT moving would cause emotional, physical or financial hardship to either party.
4. Has found permanent employment in the district and needs to move closer to work, or will otherwise lose their employment. An investigation will be undertaken; this will involve contacting the applicant's new employer.

5. Short term accommodation - this would include

1. Currently rent accommodation privately either on assured shorthold tenancies, or as a lodger or reside with family, relatives or friends
2. Households accommodated for a limited period on non-secure tenancies or on licence agreements in hostels or other supported accommodation.
3. Rough sleepers and those of no fixed abode who have not presented as homeless.
4. Owner of residential property where a member of the household has a medical, social or economic reason to move. This would include applicants unable to maintain their current property but with insufficient equity to purchase suitable accommodation, elderly people living in isolation and/or requiring an element of care.
5. Transfer home seekers seeking different size accommodation.
6. Transfer home seekers seeking a like for like transfer who have a medical, mobility or social need to move.

Band 3: HIGH HOUSING NEED

A home seeker who has been assessed as having two or more needs from sections 1 – 4 of Band 2: Medium Housing Need.

The two needs must be from different sections.

Sections 1 – 4 includes the following

1. Homeless households
2. Poor housing conditions
3. Medical need to move
4. Welfare need to move

A home seeker will not be placed in Band 3 if the 2 or more needs are from the same section.

A home seeker who is living in supported accommodation for the homeless and the Council has a formal move on agreement with the housing provider.

A home seeker will currently residing in supported accommodation funded through supporting people with Leicestershire and their key worker has agreed that independent accommodation would now be appropriate

Home seekers in a High Housing Need band category can remain in this category for up to 6 months. If no suitable properties come available during the period, or the home seeker has not been successful in their search for accommodation their application will be reviewed. In exceptional circumstances applicants can be granted an extension to the 6 months. The length of the extension will be determined by the Housing Needs Manager.

Home seekers in the High Need category retain the right to respond to properties of their choice. Applicants will be expected to consider all suitable properties. Failure to respond to suitable properties or refusal of an offer off suitable accommodation will be taken in to account if the application is reviewed at the end of the 6 month period.

Band 4: PRIORITY HOUSING NEED

Home seekers who have been assessed as having an emergency need to move will be placed in the priority need band. Home seekers can remain in this category for a period of up to 12 weeks. If no suitable properties have become available during the 12 week period, or the home seeker has not been successful in their search their accommodation their application will be reviewed. In exceptional circumstances applicants can be granted a further 12 weeks in the priority need category.

Home seekers in a priority need category retain the right to respond to properties of their choice. Applicants will be expected to consider all suitable properties. Failure to respond to suitable properties or refusal of an offer of suitable accommodation may result in priority not being renewed at the end of the 12 week period.

The registration date of home seekers placed in the priority category will not be the date they joined the housing register, it will be as follows

1. Homeless households – their registration date will be the date they presented as homeless
2. All of priority households – their registration date will be the date a decision on priority was made.

Priority need to move will be recognised in the case of:-

Homeless Households - including:

Households to whom the Council has a statutory duty to secure accommodation as described by Part VII Housing Act 1996 and amended by the Homelessness Act 2002

Households threatened with homelessness within the next 28 days and where, in the judgement of the local authority, they are likely to become homeless

Households provided with temporary assistance through homelessness prevention measures

Welfare need - circumstances could include (this is not an exhaustive list)

1. Home seekers who are subject to severe harassment, threats of violence or actual violence or threats of physical, emotional or sexual abuse.
2. Home seekers living in a property where the conditions are classified as unsafe or risk of imminent harm which cannot be remedied within a reasonable time (not resulting from damage caused but the applicant).
3. Home seekers living in a property that is statutorily overcrowded
4. Care leavers and other vulnerable home seekers whose social or economic circumstances are such that they have difficulty in securing settled accommodation. The home seeker will be through their housing options with the Council and all other options will have been exhausted.

Medical need - circumstances could include (this is not an exhaustive list)

A home seeker with a progressive or chronic medical condition combined with other difficulties such as the need for adapted accommodation or the inability to be discharged from hospital to their current accommodation.

Multiplicity of needs - Would include a number of factors which when assessed in isolation would not indicate an emergency need to move but when viewed as a whole would.

Management need - circumstances could include (this is not an exhaustive list)

- i. Tenants needing an emergency transfer because their current property is in need of urgent repair (includes demolition)
- ii. Home seekers succeeding to a tenancy that is not suitable to their needs
- iii. Home seekers who have no right in law to remain in their current RSL accommodation, i.e. they have no right of succession.
- iv. Tenants occupying a wheelchair adapted property they no longer need but which could be used by somebody else.

Displaced agricultural workers who qualify for assistance under the Rent (Ag) Act 1976

Transfer home seekers who are under occupying a home which is in high demand from other Home-seekers and where there may be assistance available from a local Tenants Incentive Scheme.

Moving between housing need categories

A home seeker's housing need category will change if their level of need changes

When a home seeker moves up to a higher housing need category their registration date will change to the date they moved in to the higher category. Home seekers moving to the priority category because the Council has a full homelessness duty to them will have their registration date changed to the date they presented as homeless.

Home seekers who move to a lower category will retain their current registration or the date they were previously in that category.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Housing Section

Allocations Scheme – *Draft (May 2010)*

This document explains how Oadby and Wigston Borough Council allocate the properties that it manages. This includes details of:

- how the choice based lettings scheme operate**
- the eligibility rules for the scheme**
- how priority is given to different households**

Part 1: Statement of Choice and Objectives of the Scheme

Part 2: The Housing Register

Part 3: Local Connection

Part 4: CBL Scheme in Operation

Part 5: The Banding System

Part 6: Property Size and Type

Part 7: Affordability Calculations

Part 8: Property Types and Eligibility

Part 9: General Matters

PART 1

Statement on Choice

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council operate a choice-based lettings system. The Borough Council participates in a sub-regional choice-based lettings scheme for Leicestershire.

The Borough Council seeks to give every eligible applicant (home seeker) choice in relation to accommodation. The Allocations Scheme does ensure that those home seekers who are in urgent housing need are given reasonable preference within the choice-based lettings scheme.

Objectives of the choice based lettings scheme

- To meet the legal requirements for the allocation of affordable housing under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002).
- To ensure appropriate levels of priority are afforded to home seekers.
- To ensure priority status on the scheme for home seekers with an urgent housing need.
- To offer as much choice to applicants as is reasonably possible.
- To let properties in a fair and transparent way.
- To support and assist vulnerable home seekers so that they are able to actively participate in the choice based lettings scheme.
- To provide feedback to home seekers about homes let through the choice based lettings scheme.
- To encourage and support sustainable communities and social inclusion.
- To ensure home seekers are treated fairly, individually and in accordance with the commitment to Equality and Diversity.
- To make best use of affordable housing, to meet the needs of the local community.
- To ensure that properties are let as quickly as possible.

PART 2

The Housing Register

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council maintain a register of home seekers who are interested in being accommodated by the Council or housing associations operating in the borough of Oadby and Wigston. Properties that become available to let will normally only be allocated to home seekers on the housing register.

Joining the housing register

Any person over the age of 18 can apply to join the housing register. This applies whether they are currently living within the borough of Oadby and Wigston or outside of the district. There are special provisions for 16 and 17 year olds (see below). Every home seeker must complete an Oadby and Wigston Borough Council registration form. The information given on the form must be correct.

The Council reserves the right to disqualify any home seeker from joining the register, withdraw any offer of a tenancy or recover possession of an existing tenancy if they have knowingly given false information.

Home seekers will be asked to provide proof to support their application; for example, they may be asked to provide proof of income, benefits, access rights to children or levels of capital. The Council will make any other enquiries as they deem necessary in order to assess the application. This may involve contacting previous landlords, health or medical advisors, police, etc.

Home seekers will be asked to provide a mailing address to which all correspondence can be sent. The address can be the home seekers home address or an alternative such as a family member or friend.

The housing register is open to transfer Home-seekers, who are defined as:

- Any existing social housing tenant seeking to move to another social housing tenancy anywhere in the Leicestershire Sub-region will be defined as a transfer applicant.
- Where a district housing register has set targets or quotas for transfer moves, they may restrict bidding on certain vacancies to Home-seekers defined in this way.
- This benefit will not apply to social housing tenant's resident outside the Sub-region, even if they have a local connection within the Sub-region.
- Transfer applicants who are on Starter Tenancies or Probationary Tenancies with their social housing landlord, may be permitted to register for a transfer and, if successful in bidding for a new property, complete their probationary period at that address.

Review of the housing register

The Council will undertake an annual review of the housing register. Home seekers will be contacted and asked to confirm whether they want to remain on the register and whether their circumstances have changed. Home seekers will be expected to respond to the review within 28 days. Failure to respond will result in a letter being sent advising the home seeker that their registration will be cancelled within 14 days unless there is a response.

Home seekers can ask for their application to be reinstated if they believe that it has been cancelled incorrectly or unreasonably. An example of where an application could be reinstated is where a home seeker has been in hospital for the duration of the review and does not have a mailing contact who could have responded on their behalf. A request to

reinstate an application should be made in writing to the Housing Needs Manager. If the home seeker does not agree with the decision of the Housing Needs Manager they have the right to request a review of this decision.

Exclusions to the housing register

Home seekers are not eligible to join the register if they, or a member of their household, are;

1) Subject to immigration controls under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, unless they:

- Already hold a secure tenancy allocated to them by a Council.
- Already hold an assured tenancy allocated to them by a housing association.
- Are in a class prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State, these classes include those with:
 1. Refugee status
 2. Exceptional leave to remain in the UK
 3. Indefinite leave to remain in the UK 5 63
 4. Persons subject to immigration control who are nationals of a country that has ratified the European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance (ECSMA) or the European Social Charter Any application identified as falling under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 will be assessed in accordance with the Act.

The Council reserves the right to seek independent advice and assistance to resolve the issue of eligibility.

2) Guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable as a tenant. When making this decision we will consider:

- What action a landlord, would have taken against the perpetrator of the unacceptable behaviour. The behaviour must be serious enough that a registered social landlord would have been entitled to a possession order under schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1985 or schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1988. As an example, cases relating to noise problems, domestic violence, racial harassment, intimidation and drug dealing would probably lead to a possession order. Rent arrears often only lead to a suspended possession order.
- Whether the behaviour is serious enough to make the home seeker unsuitable as a tenant. As an example, accrual of rent arrears which have resulted from factors outside of the home seekers control, e.g. delays in housing benefit payments or liability for a partner's debts are not serious enough to make the home seeker unsuitable as a tenant.
- When the unacceptable behaviour took place. Consideration will be given to the length of time that has elapsed and whether there has been any change in circumstances.

The Council will exclude a home seeker from the register if all 3 conditions are satisfied. When making this decision the Council will consider whether it is reasonable to exclude the home seeker. We will take into account all relevant factors such as health, dependants or other factors.

Home seekers will be informed in writing of the reason why their application has been rejected. They will have the opportunity to appeal against this decision if they feel it is incorrect (see section 3) If a home seeker who has been refused entry onto the housing register because of unacceptable behaviour considers that their unacceptable behaviour should no longer be held against them they should complete a new registration form.

The home seeker will need to show that there has been a sufficient lapse of time, in the opinion of the Council, since the previous application was submitted or that his/her circumstances or behaviour have changed.

If at any time the Council obtains evidence that a home seeker already accepted onto the housing register is ineligible then the home seeker will be advised that their application will be cancelled. Home seekers will have the opportunity to use the appeals procedure if they are able to show this decision is incorrect. (see below).

Home seekers under the age of 18

Home seekers aged 16 and 17 can apply to join the housing register. Home seekers under the age of 18 must provide details of a guarantor.

The guarantor must be a responsible person such as a parent or other close member, or a representative from a support agency, such as Social Services.

Home seekers aged 16 and 17 will be assessed in the same way as all other home seekers joining the housing register.

Only those with a guarantor in place will be made an offer of accommodation. When an application is received from a lone parent under the age of 18 the Council will seek to carry out a joint assessment of needs and support with Social Services. The assessment will only be undertaken after the home seeker has given their consent.

Appeals Process

If a home seeker does not agree with a decision made by the Council in respect of their application or in respect of any decision that affects their housing application they have the right to appeal.

Circumstances in which an appeal is likely to be submitted include:

- Where a home seeker has been excluded from the housing register.
- Where a home seeker believes that their application has been assessed incorrectly and placed in the wrong housing need category.
- Where a home seekers application has been cancelled and their request to have the application reinstated has been refused.
- Home seekers who want to be considered for a property type that they are not eligible for.

If a home seeker has successfully matched for a property but has been refused the offer of accommodation by one of the Housing Association partners they should ask the Housing Association to review their decision. Each partner operates its own appeals process.

A member of the Housing Section will be able to provide the home seeker with a copy of the relevant appeals procedure.

Home seekers wanting to request a review of the decision will need to submit a written request. The appeal will normally need to be submitted within 21 days of the original decision letter, the appeal should be addressed to: - *(to be added)*

The officer considering the appeal will not have been involved in the original decision.

PART 3

Local Connection

Priority will be given to applicants who have one or other type of local connection as defined below. A district connection is established by way one or more of the following:

- They currently reside on a permanent basis within the district.
- They have lived in the district for at least 6 months in the last 12 months, or for at least 3 out of the last 5 years.
- They or a member of their household is employed on a permanent basis or a temporary contract running for a minimum of 12 months, within the district (confirmation would be required from the employer).
- They have parents, brothers, sisters, or adult children (those over 18 years) who have been living within the district for at least 5 years.
- Other special circumstances may exist, and all applications will be considered on their individual circumstances.

The following exceptions to the rule of establishing local connection will normally apply:

- Time spent in any prison or secure unit.
- Time spent in hospital.
- Time spent in any institution such as refuge or rehabilitation.

Part 4 – CBL Scheme in Operation

Property adverts may be restricted to receiving bids from certain types of applicant, where this is in line with local lettings policies.

For example property adverts may be restricted to Home seekers:

- By applicant type (Transfer, General or Homeless).
- By support needs (e.g. Sheltered and Extra-care).
- By Banding.
- By age.
- By household type and size (see the eligibility table in section 7).

Home-seekers will be allowed three bids per advertising cycle. Home-seekers can cancel bids and place them on other advertised properties at any time during the bidding period. Home-seekers will be informed of their position in the short-list at the time of bidding.

Home seekers bidding for properties will be short-listed in the following order:

- By Band.
- By local connection qualification
- By Date (Date of registration or more recent date of change of priority).

Applicants who make seven refusals in a row will have their application suspended pending an interview to review their application.

Pooling Rules.

The partners agree that a minimum of 10% of their general needs housing vacancies will be pooled sub-regionally, taken as an average over the course of a full year. There should be a representative spread of property sizes.

The partners also agree to pool sub-regionally a minimum of 10% of their sheltered housing.

All specialists housing for people with physical disabilities will be added to the sub-regional pool.

Property vacancies in the sub-regional pool will be open to all Home-seekers in the sub-region, subject to any restrictions stated in the advert. In normal circumstances equal priority will be given to Home-seekers in the same band and with a connection to any part of the Sub-region. However, where this supported by a local lettings policy, preference may be given in some circumstances to Home-seekers with a district connection to the host area. For example, larger properties, wheelchair adapted properties and some village properties, which are in short supply locally.

Applicants with a Connection to More than One District

Applicants with multiple connections should have the same priority for property vacancies in any of the areas to which they are connected.

Only one housing register application need be made. The applicant must choose which district register to apply to. The application form will identify those district areas where the applicant claims an additional local connection. The housing register administrator will verify with the other districts that the applicant has a valid connection. The register will hold a record of each connection. The applicant will be able to see and bid for all the locally advertised properties in each district as well as the sub-regional selection.

The host housing register administrator will determine the priority banding and all other relevant factors for the applicant.

Part 5

The Banding System

This is listed in Appendix 1, for the purposes of this Committee report.

Part 6

Property Size and Type

Defining bedroom requirements

The following rules will be used to determine the size of accommodation needed by a household.

A separate bedroom is needed for each of the following:

- Every adult couple or single parent.
- Any other adult aged 16 years or over.
- Any two children aged under 10 years regardless of sex.
- Any two children aged under 16 years of the same sex.
- Any other child.

In assessing any bedroom shortage in a household's existing accommodation, the best fit according to these rules will be taken, if that is different to the pattern of occupation of the existing accommodation.

Rooms that are in use for other purposes but could be used as bedrooms will also be included in the calculation.

The minimum size for a room to qualify as a bedroom is 6.5 mtr².

A single parent household is entitled to the same size accommodation as a two parent household with the same number of children.

Households that include a pregnant woman are assessed as if the baby has already been born (i.e. the baby is counted as a child), where the expected date of delivery is within six months. The system should be set to automatically add a child to the household at the expected date of delivery.

Where there is evidence of a need for a member of the household to have a separate bedroom (for example, for medical reasons, or because of behavioural issues), then an additional bedroom need can be allowed.

A child must spend a minimum 4 nights per week with the home seeker in order for them to be classed as a permanent resident. Exceptions will be considered, for example in circumstances where the child resides away from the home seeker on a temporary basis but their permanent home is with the home seeker.

Where a parent has access to their children but does not provide the main family home, an additional bedroom need may be awarded to allow the children to sleep over. In order to qualify the parent would need to be providing at least two nights of secondary care on a regular basis.

Where an applicant has care or support needs that require overnight assistance on a permanent or casual basis, then the need for an additional bedroom can be awarded to permit this. This can include prospective foster carers, on evidence that a foster care allowance has been granted.

Home seekers awarded priority on the basis of having a bedroom shortage may be overlooked if they bid successfully on a like-for-like property.

Large families (i.e. those with five or more children) may be given additional priority over smaller households for properties with four or more bedrooms.

Home seekers will be allowed to bid for the size and type of property as shown in Appendix 2. In some circumstances the opportunity may be given to bid for larger properties where they are in low demand.

Other factors

The definition of an elderly couple is where at least one of the partners is above the age threshold. In general there will be no lower age limit on any partner, except when this is specified in the property advert.

A family with a disability is defined as a household where at least one of the members has a mobility need and they have been assessed as requiring a property with adaptations matching the A/B key category (see section 8)

Part 7 –

Affordability Calculations

Applicants will be placed in the lowest band if they are assessed as able to meet their own housing needs in the market.

The following guidance will be applied in assessing whether a household has sufficient means:

- The household is able to buy an averagely priced home in the local housing market, large enough to meet the needs of the family. The assessment will be a combined assessment of the level of equity that exists in any property owned by household members, the levels of savings and other available assets and the income needed to finance a mortgage to cover the remaining cost.
- The household income is sufficient to afford averagely priced privately rented accommodation of a suitable size and type in the local housing market, without recourse to housing benefits

The following limitations apply:

- Households will not be expected to use more than a third of their disposable income on the cost of providing housing.
- Only savings above the prevailing limit for housing benefit will be taken into account.
- If the household has specialist needs that cannot be met within the local housing market then the rules will not be applied.
- If a household has support needs, the assessment will also take account of this in assessing the cost of meeting the household's needs in the local housing market.

Part 8 – Property Types and Eligibility

Size and Type of Property Home-Seekers May Normally Make Bids For										
General Needs Housing	Single Person	Single person with access*	Elderly Single Person **	Elderly Couple **	Couple	1 child family	2 child family	3 child family	4 + child family	All Adult household
Studio flat	√		√							
1 bedroom flat	√	√	√	√	√					
1 bedroom house	√	√	√	√	√					
1 bedroom bungalow			√	√	√					
2 bedroom flat	(√)	√			√	√	√			√
2 bedroom house						√	√			
2 bedroom bungalow			√	√	√	√				
3 bedroom house ****							√	√	√	
3 bedroom flat/maisonette							√	√	√	√
3 bedroom parlour house							√	√	√	
4 bedroom house									√	

DESIGNATED FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE AND OTHERS WITH ASSESSED SUPPORT NEEDS***				
Studio Flat	√		√	
One bedroom flat	√		√	√
One bedroom bungalow	√		√	√
Two bedroom flat	√		√	√
Two bedroom bungalow	√		√	√

* Single person with children who do not live with them on a permanent basis

** Age rules may vary between landlord organisations. Age restrictions will be shown on property advert.

*** Attached to or within the grounds of a sheltered housing scheme. Some are scattered bungalows with alarm systems fitted (Hinckley and Bosworth)

**** In some circumstances larger sized houses may be opened up to families with a two bedroom requirement

() In some locations two bedroom flats are opened up for single people

Part 9 – General Matters

Legal Background

This Allocations Scheme has taken into account all legal requirements outlined in the Housing Act 1996, Part VI and amendments made under the Homelessness Act 2002.

Equal Opportunities

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council promote equal opportunities in the services it provides. Our aim is to implement and maintain services which ensure that no potential or current home seeker is treated less favourably on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, colour, disability, age or sexual orientation nor is disadvantaged by the application of a rule, condition, or requirement, which has a discriminatory effect which cannot be justified by law.

Help and assistance is available to ensure that all households are able to access our allocations scheme. Information can be translated or made available in large print or on audio tapes.

The Council seeks to ensure that all applicants are placed on an equal footing by ensuring that individuals who may have difficulty in participating in the scheme receive the help and assistance they require. Those who do not have a family member, friend or advocate who can do this on their behalf will be assisted by a Housing Advisor. If you need the help and assistance of a Housing Advisor contact Oadby and Wigston Borough Council Housing Section at the address below or by ringing (*to be added*).

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council operates in accordance with its equal opportunities policy. A copy of the policy is available from the Council Offices.

Data Protection

Home seekers have the right to information on all decisions made about the facts of their application. This includes all information used in considering housing need priorities. Information held by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council about home seekers will only be used in connection with their application for housing and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. In normal circumstances, this information is only to be disclosed to partner Housing Associations or other landlords who may be able to offer accommodation. This means that the information and the fact that a customer has applied for housing, will not normally be passed onto any third parties without the customer's prior written consent, or in exceptional circumstances where disclosure without consent is warranted. These circumstances are defined as follows:

- Where there are over-riding legal, social or public interest considerations, e.g. there is a risk of serious harm to the person themselves or others if the information is not disclosed.
- Where information is required by the police as part of a criminal investigation.
- Where information is required by an authority for the assessment or collection of any tax or duty of a similar nature.
- Where, because the Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it handles, it may need to use the information provided by customers, to prevent and detect fraud. The information may also be shared for the same purposes with other organisations that handle public funds.
- The information may also be used for statistical purposes, which means we may pass this information, in confidence, to the relevant government department.



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

RESIDENTS' SERVICES COMMITTEE

15 June 2010

Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Households

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Simon Folwell, Head of Housing Services

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

To seek Members' views on the options presented by the need to renew the lease for Greystone House, which is used to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households.

Recommendations:

Members are requested to consider the proposal by officers to end the lease for Greystone House and make use of up to 4 flats within the Council's own stock as temporary accommodation.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service:

Proper Officer for Financial Affairs:

Monitoring Officer:

Appendices Attached: Appendix 1 – Cost Implications

Impact Assessments:

Health: It is well established that good housing conditions can have a positive impact of the health and wellbeing of individuals

Environment: No direct impact

Community Safety: No direct impact

Human Rights: No direct impact

Equal Opportunities: No direct impact

Risk Assessment: Contained within the report below.

Commentary:

1. The Council currently leases an 8 bedroom property at Canal Street in South Wigston – Greystone House. This property is used to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households (almost exclusively families). The current 5 year lease is due to end in December this year and in preparation for this, officers have been reviewing the options that are available.

2. The annual lease for the property is £36,000. The accommodation is of basic standard and somewhat dated, although it complies with all required standards. Use of the rooms has decreased significantly over the last year, largely as a result of the preventative approach being taken with homelessness (along with greater use of nearby specialist accommodation for homeless people, such as Kennedy House at Tigers Close in South Wigston). Occupancy rates over the last 6 months have averaged at less than 30%. At the end of May, only 2 rooms were taken.
3. Officers have been exploring the alternative of using a small number of flats within the Council's own housing stock as temporary accommodation. This appears to offer a number of clear advantages to the current leasing arrangements, including a significant future cost saving and an improvement in standards of the accommodation being offered.
4. The proposal would involve identifying and taking out of use up to 4 existing flats. These flats would then need to be fitted out with beds, furniture and kitchen equipment, so as to be usable immediately by a family if and when required. Staff within the Housing Team would be responsible for managing these properties and ensure that they are always ready and available for use when not occupied. The total number of flats could increase or decrease, as demand changes over time.
5. Using our own flats would help to improve the standard of accommodation being offered. Firstly, families would have private facilities and self contained accommodation, instead of the shared kitchen and bathrooms that are provided at Greystone House. Secondly, there would be the benefit of more space and not being in accommodation that labelled as a hostel.
6. The cost implications of this alternative option are set out in Appendix 1. This shows that the forecast cost of the proposal will be £12,500 in 2010/11, and £22,750 in future financial years (not including inflation). When comparing these costs to the annual total running costs for Greystone House, there is scope for a small saving in 2010/11 (£2,000) and a substantial recurrent saving in future financial years – approximately £18,500.
7. Whilst there are clear advantages to this proposal, there are also some potential drawbacks:
 - Although numbers of households requiring temporary accommodation has been falling in recent years, there can be no guarantee that this trend will continue in the future. No longer having Greystone House as an available resource will mean the loss of this safety net.
 - The opportunity cost of the proposal is that up to 4 flats will effectively be removed from the Council's housing stock and not be available for long term renting by people on the waiting list. It has to be said that the demand for 1 and 2 bedroom flats continues to be very high.
8. In addition to Greystone House, the Housing Section do already have one flat in Oadby, which is used as temporary accommodation; the intention would be to continue with this arrangement. Use is also made of bed and breakfast accommodation on an exceptional basis, typically where it is not appropriate to place a person in shared accommodation with families. The budget provision for this has been reduced in 2010/11 to £5,000. This facility will continue to be needed.
9. On balance, officers are of the view that ending the lease for Greystone House and making use of properties within our own stock represents better value for money, both in terms of cost, quality and flexibility.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

Cost implications of using 4 HRA flats for temporary accommodation

Estimated Cost	2010/11*	Future financial years
Annual rent payable to the HRA	£3,000	£12,000
Furnishings	£6,000	-
Equipment (Bedding and kitchen utensils)	£500	-
Annual Allowance for renewal of furniture	-	£750
Annual Allowance for replacement of equipment	£200	£500
Gas and electricity	£800	£2,600
Council Tax	£1000	£4,000
Maintenance and repair costs	£500	£1,500
Water	£500	£1,400
Totals	£12,500	£22,750

* Based on an assumed start date of Dec 2010

Potential Cost savings:

2010/11

Lease payment of Greystone House – up to 31/12/10	£27,000
Set up and running costs for 4 flats	£12,500
<i>Estimated Total Costs in 2010/11</i>	<i>£39,500</i>
Existing Budget provision for 2010/11	£41,500
Potential saving	£2,000

2011/12 and Onwards

Set up and running costs for 4 flats	£22,750
<i>Estimated Total Costs for 2011/12</i>	<i>£22,750</i>
Existing Budget provision for 2010/11	£41,500
Potential saving	£18,750



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

RESIDENTS' SERVICES COMMITTEE

15 June 2010

Housing Revenue Account – Changes to the national system

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Simon Folwell, Head of Housing Services

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

To advise members of the latest stages in the government's proposals to reform the national Housing Revenue Account system.

Recommendations:

That the Chair of the Committee be authorised to agree the response to the Government, in light of the 'HRA offer' that has been made as part of the current consultation exercise.

To request that a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Committee, with an update as to the impact of the latest proposals.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service:	Supports Report
Proper Officer for Financial Affairs:	Supports Report
Monitoring Officer:	Supports Report

Appendices Attached:

Impact Assessments:

Health:	No direct impact
Environment:	No direct impact
Community Safety:	No direct impact
Human Rights:	No direct impact
Equal Opportunities:	No direct impact
Risk Assessment:	The main risk is failing to consider the offer that has been made. This report seeks to address this risk.

Commentary:

- Members have previously been advised of the changes proposed by the Government to reform the existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) system. Under this system, the Government calculates the amount of subsidy that stock retaining authorities should receive, based on notional figures and rental levels. For many authorities, this results in a 'negative subsidy' (i.e. a payment to be made to the Government), on the basis that income exceeds costs. The payments made to the Government are then pooled centrally and redistributed to those authorities where costs exceed income.

2. It has long been recognised that the HRA system is very complicated and seen as highly unfair to those authorities who, through good management, maintain a sound financial position but are effectively penalised by having to pay a substantial amount in negative subsidy. The amounts involved are substantial – for this Council alone, £898,180 was paid in 09/10 and it will exceed £900,000 in the current financial year.
3. The Government's proposal is to disband the current system. To do this, individual authorities will be required to take on a lump sum of debt, effectively buying themselves out of the existing system. For this Council, the amount is proposed to be £18.8 million (as compared to a current assumed debt of £3 million).
4. Analysis of the impact for the Authority is currently being undertaken by an external specialist. This is focusing on identifying the potential impact on the Council's HRA Business Plan and in particular, whether it will be beneficial in the longer term (given that the Business Plan has a life of 30 years). One distinct advantage will be the freedom created by no longer being constrained by a national system. At present, the Government annually determines the levels of allowances that are to be used for the forthcoming year, which is entirely outside our control. Under the proposed new arrangements, the Authority would be in control of its own asset planning, which in turn gives far more flexibility.
5. It has to be recognised that the proposals for the HRA were devised by the former administration and as a result of the recent change in Government, may be subject to change or review. This is particularly true given the period of austerity which the public sector now faces. However, it should also be noted to date, the new Government has made indications that it is supportive of the changes previously tabled, but has not as yet had the opportunity to make any firm commitments. In the meantime, the formal consultation process continues, and authorities have until the 6 July to indicate whether or not they are interested in pursuing the 'HRA offer'.
6. Given that the full assessment of the impact of the offer will not be known until late June, Members are requested to authorise the Chair of the Committee overseeing and approving the consultation response, with a subsequent update report being made to the next meeting of the Committee.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report: None



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee

15 June 2010

Contaminated Land Investigation Update

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Head of Environmental Health

NON-EXEMPT

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

This report updates Members on the progress of work on the investigation of land formerly occupied by the Great Wigston Gas Company.

Recommendations:

1. That Members note the current stage of the investigation.
2. That Members support the decision of the Interim Section 151 Officer to fund the cost of the work not covered by the government grant.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All Saints

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service:	Supports Report
Proper Officer for Financial Affairs:	This matter has been reflected in the Council's Strategic Risk Register because the possible revenue and capital costs could be significant for the Council.
Monitoring Officer:	Supports Report

Appendices Attached: None

Impact Assessments:

Health:	There is potential risk to health and the environment from land in the borough which may be contaminated from a previous land use.
Environment:	Included in Health above
Community Safety:	None
Human Rights:	None
Equal Opportunities:	None
Risk Assessment:	A risk based system is being applied to the investigation of the land that is the subject of this report.

Commentary:

1. Members will recall that a bid has been made to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to fund works of further investigation into the distribution and concentration of contaminants across the site. The purpose of this is to provide more information to enable appropriate remediation choices to be made.
2. Defra has now confirmed that the bid has been successful insofar as we have been awarded approximately 75% of the amount we asked for (£27,840 out of £36,720).
3. The Interim Section 151 officer has identified that the remaining £8,880 can be funded from an Environmental Health reserve.
4. The final contractual details are being agreed with the contractor, Atkins Limited, a company experienced in working with councils at this stage of a contaminated land investigation.
5. An initial meeting is being planned with Atkins, to take place later in June. Officers will ensure that one of the outcomes of this is a timetable of the works Atkins are proposing. The timetable will culminate in a report from Atkins that will recommend the next steps the Council should take with investigation.
6. Residents have been notified that Defra are continuing to support our investigation and that plans are being made with the contractor. The next contact with residents will be after the initial meeting with Atkins, when we can pass on information about what will be happening and by when.
7. Any further progress that has been made by 15 June will be reported to Members at the committee meeting.

Background Papers referred to in compiling this report:

None



Borough of Oadby & Wigston

Residents' Services Committee

15 June 2010

Disabled Facilities Grants in Oadby and Wigston

Report of: Director of Community Services Report Number:
 Author: Stephen Bruce, Head of Environmental Health

Non-Exempt

This report is likely to be considered while the meeting is open to press & public

Summary:

This report provides Members with an update of the situation that was reported to the previous Residents' Services Committee, regarding the demand and provision of Disabled Facilities Grants to disabled residents in the borough.

Recommendations:

1. That the Head of Environmental Health continues to work on options to reduce waiting times.
2. That options are developed in the light of the conclusions of the Leicestershire Disabled Adaptations Review (referred to in the report) and then brought back to Residents' Services Committee for consideration by Members.

Level of delegation: Committee

Wards affected: All

Comments of Statutory Officers:

Head of Paid Service: Supports the report
 Proper Officer for Financial Affairs: Supports the report
 Monitoring Officer: Supports the report

Impact Assessments:

Health: Work funded by a disabled facilities grant is intended to help the well being of disabled residents and their carers.
 Environment: None
 Human Rights: None
 Equal Opportunities: None
 Risk Assessment: High risk that failure to provide an effective disabled facilities grants service will result in a challenge to the authority for failing to providing a mandatory service. Any changes to the service will seek to maximise value for money.

Commentary:

1. In March, Members received a report identifying a shortfall in the funding of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), together with a number of options that officers could explore to work towards addressing this and reducing the risk of it occurring again.
2. Since that report, we now know that our allocation of government funding to support our DFG programme is £134k, only an 11% increase from last year. This disappointing increase in funding from the previous government will not impact on the backlog of cases.
3. Also, officers had intended to report to this meeting the conclusions of the Leicestershire Disabled Adaptations Project, which was due to publish its findings by the end of March. However, in order to take into consideration observations made by the Audit Commission, the project board has delayed its report and has now given a date of the end of June.
4. In order to maximise the budget that is currently available for DFGs, officers will utilise as much as possible of the allocation that the authority has received from GOEM for the provision of decent homes. However this will be limited to cases where the property does not reach the decent homes standard and the DFG work will move it towards that standard. On the basis of last year's programme, officers estimate this could be an additional £65k, giving a total budget of £440k for DFGs in 2010/11.
5. However from the figures presented in March and based on the rate at which enquiries were received in 2009/10, there remains a shortfall of some £350k, which it was hoped would be reduced by more realistic funding being allocated by the government..
6. In addition officers are working on the following to reduce the length of the waiting list –
 - (a) Contacting each case on the list, to ask for confirmation that they have not carried out the work themselves and that they do still wish to go ahead with a DFG. In the normal course of the service, there is a small drop out rate and this exercise will identify at an early stage those who can be taken from the waiting list.
 - (b) Considering the viability and implications of reducing the waiting list in the shortest possible time, by processing groups of similar cases together, rather than dealing with cases in the current way of 'first come, first served'.
 - (c) Benchmarking with other local authorities in Leicestershire to identify what sources of additional money others have found to service DFG demand
 - (d) Identifying possible third party sources of funding for which a case might be eligible,
 - (e) Actively exploring all possible alternative options, including different methods of funding.

Background papers referred to in compiling this report : None