



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING

Scrutiny Commission 8 December 2016
Council (Budget) 23 February 2017

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

CAPACITY PRESSURES

Report of Deputy Chief Executive Community Direction

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request additional capacity in areas of the Council as detailed below.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are recommended:

- 2.1 To endorse recruitment to the following posts on two year fixed term contracts and to acknowledge the risk to funding for the Domestic Abuse Children's Worker:
- 2.1.1 Private Sector Housing Enforcement Officer
 - 2.1.2 Private Sector Housing Environmental Health Officer (18.5 hours)
 - 2.1.3 Assistant Town Centre Manager (1.5 posts)
 - 2.1.4 Environmental Enforcement Officer
 - 2.1.5 ASB Officer
 - 2.1.6 Housing Support Officer (1.5 posts)
 - 2.1.7 Domestic Abuse Children's Worker (0.6 post subject to PCC external funding bid)
 - 2.1.8 To delete the Private Sector Leasing post.
 - 2.1.9 To agree that the proposals are included in the 2017/18 budget which will be approved by Council on 23rd February 2017.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 Pressures from increases in demand and responsibilities have been experienced in certain sections in the council. In addition, a request has been made for additional capacity within the Town Centre management team. Detailed below is a summary of capacity requests, including why the request has been received, the risk of not increasing capacity, the link to the draft revised corporate priorities and the cost. A summary of requests is as follows:

Post	GF Cost	HRA Cost	Rationale and lead manager
Private Sector Enforcement Officer	£29,515		Increased demand and complexity of cases. To meet statutory responsibilities. Sharon Stacey
Private Sector Housing Environmental Health Officer	£22,315		Increased demand and complexity of cases. To meet statutory responsibilities. Sharon Stacey
Assistant Town Centre Manager 1.5 posts	£45,000 (subject to JE)		To increase the visibility and presence in our town centres and increase support to OWBC. Sharon Stacey
Environmental Enforcement Officer	£22,739 (subject to JE)		Increase demand and to increase enforcement levels. Rob Parkinson
Anti Social Behaviour Officer	£6,358	£25,432	Increased demand and complexity of cases. To meet statutory responsibilities. Sharon Stacey
Housing Support Officer 1.5		£31,860	Increased demand and complexity of cases. To meet statutory responsibilities. Sharon Stacey
Domestic Abuse children's worker	£23,000 if PCC funding is not awarded.		Post currently externally funded and at risk if PCC funding isn't awarded. Sharon Stacey
Total	£125,927 £148,927 (including children's worker.	£57,292	

Income/savings to contribute to the costs (General Fund)

Deletion of PSL post	£11,591
Contribution from OWBC for Assistant TC manager 0.5 post	£15,000
Total income/saving	£26,591

3.2 Private Sector Housing enforcement

3.2.1 Request

Private Sector Housing Enforcement Officer 37 hours
Private Sector Housing Environmental Health Officer 18.5 hours

3.2.2 Reason for request

The private rented sector as a market has increased significantly during the past 5 years with the 2011 census stating that the private rented housing sector for HBBC area accommodates 10.4% of the population and is now the second largest sector

after owner occupation. The Private Sector Housing Team (PSHT) has seen a 48% increase in service requests in the past year – from 156 cases completed between 1/6/14 – 31/5/15 to 297 cases completed between 1/6/15 and 31/5/16. An additional 126 cases were completed between May 31st 2016 and 1st November 2016. There are currently 179 live requests for service, 25 of which are complex due to vulnerability. This, coupled with increasing complexity of the cases presented, requires additional resource to meet demand. There is also an increasing need for formal enforcement action to remove category 1 hazards in homes occupied by vulnerable households.

Additional statutory duties have also commenced impacting on capacity:

- The Deregulation Act (October 1st 2015) introduced new measures to provide tenants with protection from retaliatory eviction, where an improvement notice has been served or emergency remedial action has been taken by the council. For tenants, whose tenancy started after 1st October 2015, Landlords will no longer be able to evict a tenant who has made a legitimate complaint about the condition of their rented property. The new protection came into force from 1 October 2015 and applies in instances where the council has confirmed that a repair needs to be carried out to protect health and safety. The landlord will be unable to evict the tenant for six months. This has led to an increase in demand for formal action; an increase which will continue, as all tenancies will benefit from the new legislation by October 2018. If PSHT are unable to meet this demand, then complaints are very likely, as failure to respond in a timely fashion will significantly affect the tenants' rights to be protected from retaliatory eviction.
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015. These regulations came into force in October 2015 and, under the new regulations, landlords are required to install working alarms on every floor of their properties. Carbon monoxide alarms are also mandatory in every room where a solid fuel heating system is installed. Government funded alarms were distributed by the Council as a pre-enactment launch. Alarms will have to be tested at the beginning of each tenancy and landlords who fail to comply with the new regulations may be subject to a civil penalty, enforced by the PSHT. Since coming into force, this additional burden has impacted on the team, with 196 properties receiving intervention and 9 properties requiring formal enforcement notice.
- Local letting and managing agents also became subject to greater scrutiny by the redress scheme. Agents are now required to publicise a full breakdown of their fees, state whether or not they are a member of a client money protection scheme and of which redress scheme they are a member. This is all enforced by the PSHT, which includes identifying and checking all letting and managing agents against the three redress scheme registers, serving a notice of intent to act, if an agent isn't registered, and, if the agent isn't compliant, serving a final notice with fine and subsequently debt recovery. Since coming into force, four agents have been served with formal notices.
- There will be additional burdens on the PSHT following the enactment of the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which includes additional duties to control 'rogue landlords'. Further guidance is expected, which will detail how this will impact on the council.

As a temporary measure, a 12 month Private Sector Enforcement Officer is in post to assist with the increase in demand and new responsibilities. This will be extended, in effect, if the proposed staffing is agreed.

3.2.3 Risk if additional capacity not provided

Without the additional capacity, statutory duties will not be met and vulnerable people will continue to reside in poor quality housing, of which the council will be aware, but unable to address within a reasonable timescale. Complaints could increase if our failure to act results in detrimental action against tenants by landlords. The additional capacity would ensure that service requests received are dealt with in a timely manner, thereby ensuring properties are free from category one hazards, would meet the additional demands of recently introduced legislation within reasonable timescales, continue proactive work around empty homes and take advantage of external funding opportunities.

3.2.4 Link to new draft corporate priorities

- People
 - supporting people who are most in need from vulnerability, age or protected characteristics.
- Place
 - creating a clean, attractive and safe place to live and work,
 - promoting the delivery of decent, affordable housing,
 - keeping our environment clean and green.
- Prosperity
 - reducing poverty.

3.2.5 Cost

Post	Cost
Private Sector Enforcement Officer	£29,515
Private Sector Housing Environmental Health Officer 18.5	£22,315
Total	£51,830

3.3 Town Centre Management

3.3.1 Request

Assistant Town Centre Manager 37 hours and 18.5 hours

3.3.2 Reason for additional capacity requirement

Following the significant capital investment into Hinckley Town Centre, there is a requirement to positively increase the Council's visibility and presence in the town centre. This would predominately focus around enhancing the operational activity and liaison arrangements with local businesses from the Town Centre Manager, working in partnership with the Hinckley BID.

In addition to the above, to deliver on the commitments within the Council's adopted 'Town Centre Vision', a new wider rural focus would also be developed, in particular providing operational support to Earl Shilton, Barwell and Market Bosworth town centres. Multiple medium/long term investment streams are aligned to these town centres via emerging and committed S106 Developer contributions. The operational

support proposed would compliment these streams as well as help deliver short term wins.

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (OWBC) is seeking to increase capacity to support town centre management across its two main centres. This presents an opportunity for the Councils to work collaboratively to enhance capacity and resilience as well as shared costs of increasing capacity.

In summary the additional posts would:

- Increase the council's visibility and presence in the town centre and ability to support the BID.
- Enhance the operational activity and liaison arrangements with local businesses.
- Provide a wider rural focus by providing operational support to Earl Shilton, Barwell and Market Bosworth in line with the adopted Town Centre Vision.
- Provide enhanced business continuity and improve resilience.
- Increase capacity to Oadby and Wigston BC.

3.3.3 Risk if additional capacity not provided

Increased activity and development will not take place to the same level. This could result in missed opportunities for increasing footfall, attracting investment and supporting businesses to develop and enhance our town centres.

3.3.4 Link to new corporate priorities

Place – creating a clean, attractive and safe place to live.

Prosperity – encouraging investment in economic growth, skills and regeneration.

3.3.5 Costs

Assistant Town Centre Manager (1.5)	£45,000 (subject to JE)
Income contribution	
Contribution from OWBC for 0.5 post	£15,000

3.4 **Environmental Enforcement**

3.4.1 Request

Environmental Enforcement Officer

3.4.2 Reason for additional capacity requirement

The Clean Neighbourhood Strategy was adopted in 2013 and identifies our vision as “Hinckley and Bosworth is a place with clean, tidy and litter free neighbourhoods where everyone takes responsibility for their waste and the surrounding environment”

There has been an overall 12% increase in service requests in the last two years (21% increase in fly tipping and 99% increase in abandoned vehicle requests). The amount of litter / waste collected by the street cleaners has increased from 1102 tonnes in 2014/15 to 1171 tonnes in 2015/16.

The increased supervisory role of the Neighbourhood Officers has reduced the capacity to enforce and educate residents on environmental crime. There are also

low levels of enforcement around littering, dog fouling and fly tipping, with only 33 paid FPN's and 1 prosecution in 2015/16.

Introduction of public space protection orders will place additional demands on Neighbourhood Officers.

The new post would concentrate on enforcement, education and community engagement. The service of Fixed Penalty notices will generate income to reduce the net cost of the service. This has not been included in the costing of the post due to uncertainty of levels of issue and payment.

3.4.3 Risk if additional capacity not provided

Enforcement, education and community engagement will be limited to the current levels, with the consequent failure to effectively enforce, resulting in increased littering, dog fouling, fly tipping etc.

3.4.4 Link to new corporate priorities

Place – creating a clean, attractive and safe place to live and work, keeping our environment clean and green.

3.4.5 Cost

Environmental Enforcement Officer	£22,739
-----------------------------------	---------

3.5 **Anti Social Behaviour**

3.5.1 Request

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Officer 37 hours

3.5.2 Reason

Between 2014/15 and 2015/16 there was a 28% increase in ASB cases managed by the team (from 333 to 461 cases) Alongside this is an increasing complexity of cases, which take up more officer time.

The structure in place through Endeavour enables access and review of police and council data, in order to highlight emerging trends and to inform multi agency responses. This increased knowledge has brought with it an increase in work load, since officers are now aware of incidents which require attention and possible response, of which they would not normally be aware if reliant on people reporting directly. This is often in relation to criminal activity taking place in council property where we can then, possibly, take tenancy action.

3.5.3 The ASB team (2 full time and 2 part time officers) is currently dealing with 72 cases of anti social behaviour. In addition officers assist with other partnership cases which may have a police lead. The team should also focus on work around diversion from ASB and educating people about its consequences, particularly with young people; but the capacity to do this preventative work is much reduced because of front line pressures. The additional capacity would ensure that some of the most vulnerable people in our communities are protected from harm. Additional resilience in the team would enable a more effective, interventionist approach which is currently hampered due to staffing levels and ensure consistency across the Borough. At present anti

social behaviour cases requiring legal intervention are prioritised. Cases necessitating legal action are time-consuming and require an officer to prepare statements, documents and other information to present to court. This then creates a difficulty with other cases being managed and responded to as quickly and thoroughly as they should be. It is worth noting that cases which are prioritised as low often escalate to high risk cases if immediate intervention is not considered.

Changes in ASB legislation over the last two years have increased the powers and sanctions available to the council in tackling ASB. The ease of gaining sanctions, due to civil evidence thresholds being introduced, has brought with it great success in achieving legal sanctions to resolve ASB; however, this has increased officer workload still further.

3.5.4 Risk if additional capacity is not provided

Officer caseload will remain too high, resulting in delays in the management of high risk cases and low level ASB cases not being progressed in a timely way to prevent issues escalating. The council will not be able to manage the workload coming through the Endeavour intelligence gathering process. There is a risk to the council should anything go wrong with any of these cases. It should be emphasised that this risk will be reduced, but not eliminated by an additional officer. The team's ability to carry out education and prevention work will be severely limited.

3.5.5 Link to new corporate priorities

- People
 - helping them to stay healthy, active and protected from harm
 - helping them make a positive contribution to their community
 - supporting people who are most in need from vulnerability, age or protected characteristic.
- Place
 - Creating a clean, attractive and safe place to live and work

3.5.6 Cost

The post would be 80% funded from the HRA given the split of council and non council work.

Post	GF	HRA	Total
ASB Officer	£6,358	£25,432	£31,790

3.6 Housing Options

3.6.1 Request

Housing Support Officer 1.5 posts.

3.6.2 Reason for request

The role of the Housing Support officer is to administer the Housing Register, ensuring relevant proofs are received and applicants are correctly banded and to provide housing advice to customers, adding to the homelessness prevention work undertaken by the team. This function is critical to ensuring that the Borough Council meets its objectives in accordance with Part Vi of the Housing Act and properties are awarded in accordance of the Allocations Policy 2013. Due to the volume and

complexity of applications being received, there is a continual backlog of work which is unable to be completed in a timely manner. Systems and processes have been reviewed and changed to ensure any unnecessary actions, which may be adding to the timescales, are removed. There is on average a 8 week backlog against a service standard of registering applications within 10 days of receipt. Increasingly, priority cases, often linked to ASB case management and priority homelessness, are being prioritized (in order to minimize the risk with these cases) at the expense of general needs service delivery. By not responding to the lower priority applications in a timely manner, the housing needs of these applicants can escalate, which could have been prevented, if more timely interventions had been possible. The additional posts would enable the housing options service to be delivered in a more timely and efficient manner and to meet service standards. It would ensure that those cases requiring a priority response continue to be prioritised, but not at the expense of other customers as is currently the case.

3.6.3 Risk if additional capacity not approved

The backlog will continue, service standards won't be met, applicants may miss out on properties for they would be eligible to bid, due to not being registered, lower level needs will escalate, thus requiring more costly interventions, and complaints will continue to rise.

3.6.4 Link to new Corporate priorities

- People
 - Supporting people who are most in need from vulnerability, age or protected characteristics.
- Prosperity
 - Reducing poverty

Post	HRA
Housing Support officer 1.5 posts	£31,860

3.7 Domestic Abuse Children's worker.

3.7.1 Request

Domestic abuse children's worker x 0.6

3.7.2 Reason for Request

The Domestic Abuse Children's Worker delivers therapeutic work with children and young people (aged 0-19) who are affected by domestic abuse and aims to stem the cycle of abuse. Children and young people often blame themselves for situations that they may find themselves in and often feel powerless and helpless in trying to change some situations that are out of their control. This service gives the young person a voice and advocates for them, it has been statistically proven to improve their health and well-being. Often the trust that is built up with the young person leads to further disclosures from which we can make other referrals, such as safeguarding referrals, that can ensure their safety and well-being going forward. The service is seen as best practise in the county and has become a key part of the community safety team and the early help offer in the borough. In the first 6 months of this financial year the service has worked with 52 young people affected by domestic abuse and currently have a waiting list of 19 for the service. In addition to this the

service has done a number of pieces of work capturing the voice of vulnerable young people so that partnership locality groups can decide the best direction and referrals for the young person. The service has also developed and delivered a healthy relationship workshop with young people in schools across the borough so that young people can spot the signs early if they become involved in a potentially abusive relationship.

This post has been in place since 2014 and has been funded through the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Partnership Locality Funds. The intention is to apply again for external funding via the Police and Crime Commissioner funds for this post for 2017-18. The reason for this request is to gage whether support for this post would be forthcoming internally if external funding bids were unsuccessful.

3.7.3 Risk if additional capacity is not provided.

If external funding is unsuccessful and additional capacity is not approved then this service will cease. This will mean that there is no dedicated service locally that will work on a prevention and awareness basis with young people in our borough who have been or could be affected by domestic abuse. If this prevention work is not delivered there are risks for the young people’s health and well-being as well as an increased chance of them becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and poor school attendance. There will also be a reduction in the opportunity to intervene and take appropriate action to protect young people as this service has clearly provided opportunities to ensure young people are protected appropriately.

3.7.4 Link to new corporate priorities

- People
 - helping them to stay healthy, active and protected from harm
 - helping them make a positive contribution to their community
 - supporting people who are most in need from vulnerability, age or protected characteristic

3.7.5 Cost

If external funding was unsuccessful the below costs would be relevant:

Post	GF	HRA	Total
Domestic Abuse Children’s Worker (0.6)	£23,000	£0	£23,000

4. EXEMPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES

4.1 The report should be considered in open session.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [IB]

- 5.1 The estimated costs/savings of the proposals are summarised in the table below and represent the worse case scenario.

	GF	HRA	Total
Expenditure	£148,927	£57,292	£206,219
Savings/Contributions	(£26,591)	£0	(£26,591)
Net Cost	£122,336	£57,292	£179,628

- 5.2 If the PCC funding continues the cost to the General Fund would be reduced by the £23,000 contribution giving a net cost to the Council of £99,336 for the General Fund. The overall net cost will therefore reduce to £156,628.
- 5.3 If endorsed by the Executive the budgets will be reflected in the 2017/18 base budget which will be approved as part of the budget setting report approved by Council on 23rd February 2017.
- 5.4 For the General Fund the net cost for 2017/18 and 2018/19 will be funded from, additional underspends. Currently additional underspends of £160,000 have been identified in 2016/17. It is estimated that officers can achieve similar savings in 2017/18 and 2018/19. These additional savings will be built into the budget for 2017/18 and 2018/19 therefore ensuring that there is no net additional cost for two years chargeable to the General Fund.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (AR)

- 6.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Corporate Aims relevant to each request are set out in relation to each post in the appropriate section.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 Consultation will take place with Unison.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
The risks in each case are set out in the Summary table in 3.8	Agree and implement the recommendations in this report	As set out in section 3.8

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The posts identified all cover the whole of the Borough, with the exception of the Assistant Town Centre Managers, who will cover Hinckley, Earl Shilton, Barwell and Market Bosworth town centres.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
 - Environmental implications
 - ICT implications
 - Asset Management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human Resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data Protection implications
 - Voluntary Sector
 -
-

Background papers: None

Contact Officer: Sharon Stacey

Executive Member: Councillor C Boothby, Councillor M Nickerson, Councillor A Wright,
Councillor C Ladkin