

Leicester
City Council

MEETING OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMISSION

DATE: WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2016
TIME: 5:30 pm
**PLACE: Meeting Room G.02, Ground Floor, City Hall,
115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ**

Members of the Commission

Councillor Cutkelvin (Chair)
Councillor Gugnani (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Aldred, Dr Chowdhury, Fonseca, Halford and Hunter
(1 unallocated non-grouped place)

Members of the Commission are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

Elaine Baker

For Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

Alex Sargeson (Scrutiny Policy Officer)

Elaine Baker (Democratic Support Officer),

Tel: 0116 454 6355, e-mail: elaine.baker@leicester.gov.uk

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Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact:

Elaine Baker, Democratic Support Officer on 0116 454 6355.

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PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Appendix A

The Minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held on 24 August 2016 are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

4. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

To note progress on actions agreed at the previous meeting and not reported elsewhere on the agenda (if any).

5. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any petitions submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

6. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any questions, representations and statements of case submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

7. CONSIDERATION OF CHARGING FOR BULKY WASTE COLLECTIONS [Appendix B](#)

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submits a report, which asks the Commission for their views regarding the potential to charge for bulky waste collections.

8. CONSIDERATION OF CHARGING FOR DIY WASTE AT HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES [Appendix C](#)

The Director of Neighbourhood and Environmental Services submits a report, which asks the Commission for their views regarding the potential to charge for DIY waste deposited at the City's two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

9. WELFARE REFORM [Appendix D](#)

The Director of Finance submits a report, which provides the Commission with an update on the effect of welfare reform in Leicester during 2015/16, and to highlight the expected impact of changes to be introduced by April 2017.

10. CITIZENS ADVICE LEICESTERSHIRE CITY ADVICE SERVICES CONTRACT PERFORMANCE 2015-16 [Appendix E](#)

The Director of Finance submits a report, which provides an overview of the Social Welfare Law and Advice (SWLA) contract outcomes for the city, highlights key outcomes and identifies any risk or issues which may have arisen during 2015/16.

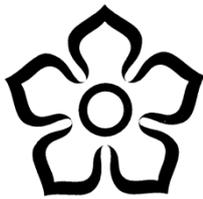
11. SPENDING REVIEWS

To receive a verbal update on spending reviews affecting services within this Commission's portfolio. Members are recommended to receive the update and comment as appropriate.

12. WORK PROGRAMME [Appendix F](#)

The current work programme for the Commission is attached. The Commission is asked to consider this and make comments and/or amendments as it considers necessary.

13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Appendix A

Minutes of the Meeting of the
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCRUTINY
COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 24 AUGUST 2016 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Cutkelvin (Chair)
Councillor Gugnani (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Aldred	Councillor Halford
Councillor Dr Chowdhury	Councillor Hunter
Councillor Fonseca	

In Attendance:

Councillor Clarke, Assistant City Mayor – Energy & Sustainability
Councillor Master, Assistant City Mayor – Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Sood, Assistant City Mayor - Communities & Equalities
Councillor Waddington, Assistant City Mayor - Jobs & Skills

* * * * *

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence, although Councillor Waddington, (Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Jobs and Skills), apologised that she would have to leave this meeting early.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dr Chowdhury declared an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 9, “Social Welfare Advice Procurement Options Paper 2017/22”, in that he worked in a voluntary organisation that provided welfare advice and had received a small grant to do so.

Councillor Fonseca also declared an Other Disclosable Interest in agenda item 9, “Social Welfare Advice Procurement Options Paper 2017/22”, in that a few years ago he had worked for three months as a volunteer with the Citizens

Advice service.

Councillor Aldred declared an Other Disclosable Interest in the general business of the meeting, in that she was a volunteer at Thurncourt Community Centre and was Secretary of the Community Association.

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, these interests were not considered so significant that they were likely to prejudice the Councillors' judgement of the public interest. They were not therefore required to withdraw from the meeting.

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Commission noted that minute 13, "Response to the Leicester Advice Sector: A Report Outlining the Risk and Demands in the City", stated that the Council had had a contract with the Social Welfare Advice Partnership (SWAP) for one year. This was inaccurate, as the Council did not have a contract with SWAP, but worked with the partnership to share good practice, including monitoring, in relation to advice provision.

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission held on 6 July 2016 be agreed as a correct record, subject to the second bullet point of minute 13, "Response to the Leicester Advice Sector: A Report Outlining the Risk and Demands in the City", being amended as follows (new wording shown in italics):

- ~~"The Council had had a contract for the provision of advice services~~ *worked with the SWAP for approximately one year to share good practice on, and monitor, advice provision"*

20. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AGREED AT THE LAST MEETING

The Commission noted that all actions agreed at its last meeting had been carried out.

21. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reminded Members that proposals for a revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme were being consulted on. The consultation was due to end on 28 September 2016.

A report on the outcome of the consultation would be made to the Commission before the Executive considered the proposals. A date for this had not been confirmed yet and it was possible that a Special Meeting would be arranged to consider the report.

22. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that no petitions had been received.

23. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that no questions, representations or statements of case had been received.

24. THE FURNITURE BANK SCHEME: EVALUATION AND FUTURE OPTIONS

The Director of Finance submitted a report providing the Commission with an overview of the historical context of The Furniture Bank pilot scheme and advising of future sustainable options for awarding furniture for vulnerable low-income households in crisis.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support introduced the report, reminding the Commission that the Furniture Bank scheme had been run as a pilot project for about 2 years. This had delivered 3,000 pieces of furniture to homes in the city and over the last year had avoided 77 tonnes of waste being sent to landfill.

However, the scheme was not sustainable in its pilot form, so the Leicestershire and Rutland Reuse Network (LRRN) had become the Council's new charitable partners. It was recognised that, in the current climate of making financial savings, support to households needed to be sustainable. This new venture therefore expanded on the current partnership arrangement. It also offered other charitable organisations in the city the opportunity to join the LRRN and help more households in need.

A dedicated webpage was being developed. This would list the current partners, (Sofa Loughborough, Work link project and React local), provide a contact telephone number and explain what sort of reusable pieces of furniture they accepted. It was anticipated that this website would be available from 23 September 2016.

Councillor Waddington, (Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Jobs and Skills), noted that various issues had arisen in the running of the pilot scheme. Having considered options for the future operation of the scheme, the Executive had agreed that the most suitable option was to work with the voluntary sector. It also was recognised that people would like to be able to see the furniture before selecting it.

Councillor Waddington also noted that voluntary organisations did not provide items that were provided new, (such as white goods). These were sourced through existing Council contracts.

The Commission welcomed the proposals, but queried whether the LRRN would be able to meet demand, particularly if this rose. In reply, Councillor Waddington confirmed that analysis of items provided under the pilot scheme and what was likely to be needed in the future showed that demand would be met with the improved collection service to be offered.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support confirmed this, explaining that previously there had only been a small team of people working on the pilot project. Staff absences had made it difficult to provide a full service at times, so little promotion of the scheme had been undertaken. It also had meant that it had only been possible to make approximately 30 collections of donated furniture per week.

Although it was anticipated that doing future collections of donated furniture through the Bulky Waste Collection service would be more productive, there would be a “soft” launch of this service, to enable the number of referrals received and the number of furniture donations made to be monitored. If the scheme was successful, a “hard” launch would be undertaken in 2017, probably involving sending information to households with Council Tax bills in the spring.

Currently, anyone referred to the scheme would be given a telephone number through which to contact the scheme. This number would go through to any of the participating charities, who would organise collection of the item needed and transfer it to the warehouse. As this was done by telephone, any of the participating charities could be a first point of contact, irrespective of their geographical location or core group of clients. The charity would then refer the case to the LRRN, who would deliver the item. In the future, donors would be asked to contact charities direct and anyone known to be in need of the items donated would be contacted by the charities.

Feedback from the pilot project showed that recipients would like to be able to see the items available and have an element of choice in what they received. There currently was no “showroom”, but the feasibility of providing one was being considered. At present, all available furniture was displayed on the LRRN website and choices were made from this.

In reply to questions, the Head of Revenues and Customer Support advised that:

- The revised scheme had been established through a procurement exercise. It therefore would operate under a contract with specific terms and conditions;
- The finding of volunteers for this scheme was not the Council’s responsibility. The LRRN had a pool of volunteers they used;
- Items classed as luxury goods could not be supplied through this scheme. This meant that televisions could not be provided;

- Successes of the pilot project included the provision of three fully furnished homes in December 2015 for refugees to the city. This was achieved through close partnership working with LOROS furniture shops and other sources within the Council, (such as using items from care homes that were closing down); and
- The contract under which the Council obtained new items was separate to that for the Furniture Bank. A year on year increase in the amount available for the purchase of these items had been included in that contract.

In reply to questions from Members, the Waste Management Service Development Manager confirmed that improvements had been made to the IT infrastructure, to reduce problems such as slow internet access. However, without significant financial investment in to the IT system, the scale of improvements possible was limited.

The Commission confirmed its support for this project and suggested that Option 3 in the report was preferable, having the most sustainable delivery plan. However, Members felt that some element of choice and/or ability to upgrade the furniture received would benefit the scheme and the way in which it was perceived.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted; and
- 2) That a report on the operation of the revised Furniture Bank scheme be submitted to this Commission in one year's time.

25. SOCIAL WELFARE ADVICE PROCUREMENT OPTIONS PAPER 2017/22

The Director of Finance submitted a report providing an overview of social welfare advice and outlining options for the future procurement of this.

The Head of Revenues and Customer Support introduced the report, reminding the Commission that a number of social welfare advice contracts were due for re-procurement in March 2017. This provided an opportunity to review and rationalise the Council's approach to procuring advice services.

The Social Welfare Advice contract awarded to Citizens Advice Leicestershire already had been extended by one year, so work was underway on plans to re-procure the provision from 2017 onwards. The Head of Revenues and Customer Support stressed that the Council did not have a duty to ensure an advice provision was available beyond statutory services such as homelessness and community care. However, in undertaking this exercise it was assumed that the current areas of advice would remain the same. In addition, other contracts which mainly included advice had been considered and provisionally included in this planning exercise, as set out in the report

It was proposed to procure good quality general and specialist advice, with some outreach provision, with the aim of removing contract specification duplication that would deliver efficiency savings to the Council. The advice contract would include welfare benefits, community care, debt, personal budgeting support, housing and employment. Contract specifications potentially would include a three tier model of provision and providers currently were being consulted on these tiers.

To help understand the sector, the Social Welfare Advice Project Manager currently was undertaking an engagement programme. This launched on 1 August 2016, with a well-attended event open to all organisations providing information, advice and guidance services, (regardless of whether they were funded by the Council), and other interested key stakeholders. This event had been facilitated by Voluntary Action LeicesterShire.

The key messages from the event were that advice needed to be affordable and accredited, a holistic service was needed that met client needs, outreach services should be placed where they were needed most, a co-ordinated referral system and client journey was needed and commitment to partnership and collaborative working was required from advice providers.

Meetings were now being held with organisations in the city to map demand and need and to explore what good advice outcomes looked like. It was anticipated that this work would be completed in late September 2016 and would inform the procurement recommendations put forward to the Executive in early October 2016. Following this, the invitation to tender was likely to be published in mid-February 2017, with the commissioned service starting in the summer of 2017.

The Social Welfare Advice Project Manager advised the Commission that the agencies she had met with had identified an element of double counting of service users, as some people visited various agencies to seek help, or stopped engaging with one agency and sought advice from another. Despite this, all agencies had indicated that demand for social welfare advice was high and agreed that they needed to work in partnership with others in order to provide the advice services being sought.

Councillor Waddington, (Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Jobs and Skills), stressed the intention to encourage agencies providing social welfare advice to work together. This would not preclude the identification of specialisms within individual organisations.

Councillor Waddington further stressed that the Executive had not made a decision yet on future arrangements for the provision of this advice and invited the Commission to comment on the options proposed.

The Commission expressed some concern that the contracts identified for possible inclusion in the scope of the new contract had significantly different rates. In reply, Councillor Waddington explained that this was largely due to these services having been procured by various parts of the Council. This had

meant that different organisations had been contracted to provide different levels of service.

The Social Welfare Advice Project Manager confirmed this, noting that the service required was not clearly defined in a significant proportion of the contracts. In addition, the contracts often did not contain sufficient provision for the monitoring of performance. For the purpose of this exercise, the value of each contract therefore had been calculated by dividing its value by the number of clients seen. This situation would be addressed in the new contract being considered.

In reply to Members' questions, it was noted that:

- It was intended that specialist services that would not be provided by all organisations would be specified within the contract. The market would then determine how best to provide these within the consortium model being proposed, if adopted;
- Experience showed that clients using advice organisations did not object to being referred to other organisations when specialist advice was needed;
- The current lack of uniformly robust outcome monitoring of advice contracts let by the Council meant that it was difficult to identify how organisations currently assessed the complexity of clients' cases. This would be addressed through the partnership approach being proposed; and
- The current review of Welfare Rights services would not affect the delivery of these services, so the services would remain unchanged.

Councillor Waddington suggested that, whichever option for re-procurement was adopted, a requirement needed to be included in the contract for the organisations providing the advice to have local knowledge and contacts. The Commission agreed that the value that would be added to the contract by this was very important.

Councillor Waddington left the meeting at this point (6.40 pm).

It also was agreed that it was important that the advice providers should be suitably qualified and appropriate, (for example, having community language skills). However, Councillor Sood, (Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Communities and Equalities), felt that the aim included in the report relating to managing language and defining what level language should be provided was confusing.

In reply, the Social Welfare Advice Project Manager advised that this aim had been included as many organisations had highlighted that people were arriving in the city from a range of new countries. This was seen by those organisations as a risk to the services they provided, as the language needs of the city could change more quickly than the organisations could respond to those changes. It was suggested that this aim could be reworded, to make the

meaning clearer.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be received and welcomed;
- 2) That the Executive be asked to note that this Commission recommends the adoption of Option 2 of those set out in the report for the re-procurement of Social Welfare Advice, subject to it being ensured that:
 - a) the procurement exercise is weighted towards ensuring that the organisations providing the advice services have local knowledge and contacts;
 - b) the organisations providing advice services under this contract meet the existing and emerging multi-cultural needs of the city, especially in relation to language;
 - c) all advice providers are suitably qualified and appropriate; and
 - d) a clear framework is introduced for the monitoring of the contract;
- 3) That the Director of Finance be asked to reword aim number 8 of the Statement of Aims for the 2016/17 Advice Procurement (relating to meeting multi-cultural needs of the city by being responsive to existing and emerging communities, including managing language as a risk) to make its intention clearer; and
- 4) That all Councillors be asked to encourage any agencies providing social welfare advice with which they have contact to contribute evidence for the re-procurement exercise currently being undertaken.

26. GETTING THE MOST OUT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES - SCOPING DOCUMENT FOR PROPOSED REVIEW

The Commission received a draft scoping document for a proposed review entitled "Getting the best out of our neighbourhood services".

It was noted that:

- This review was not restricted to the Council's Neighbourhood Services division. As such, there would be more than one Executive Lead and Divisional Director involved in this review;
- The review would contain a number of work streams. Members could either participate in the whole review, or just in particular work streams;

- Site visits would be made as part of this review, to which all Members of the Commission would be invited; and
- Some customers could be asked to act as witnesses in this review, such as representatives of those who had been affected by the Transforming Neighbourhood Services programme.

AGREED:

- 1) That the title of this review be amended to “Getting the best out of our neighbourhoods”;
- 2) That Customers be included as witnesses from whom evidence should be gathered as part of this review;
- 3) That the scrutiny Policy Officer be asked to work with the Chair of this Commission and relevant officers to develop the scoping document for the review “Getting the best out of our neighbourhoods”.

27. WORK PROGRAMME

AGREED:

That the Scrutiny Policy Officer be asked to amend the work programme to include:

- a) an item on the whether the meat purchased by the Council for school meals is just Halal meat, or whether a mixture of Halal and non-Halal meat is bought;
- b) a report on the operation of the revised Furniture Bank scheme to be submitted to this Commission in one year’s time, as a greed under minute 24, “The Furniture Bank Scheme: Evaluation and Future Options”, above.

28. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 6.53 pm



Consideration of Charging for Bulky Waste Collections

For consideration by:
Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement
Scrutiny Commission

Date: 5th October 2016

Lead director: John Leach

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Luke Crown, Service Development Manager (Waste Management)
- Author contact details: luke.crown@leicester.gov.uk Direct line 0116 454 6741

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To ask Members of the Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Community Involvement Commission for their views regarding the potential to charge for bulky waste.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The City Mayor and Executive have agreed a programme of spending reviews in order to help tackle the significant funding shortfall that Leicester City Council has been set by the Government to manage. This paper considers the opportunity to consider charging for bulky waste collections in order to help contribute to the Council's required savings.
- 2.2 The Council currently offers a bulky waste collection service that collects large items such as old sofas, fridges, furniture etc. The current service allows the following from each domestic property in the city:-
 - One free collection of up to 5 items of bulky waste, in every two month period; and
 - One free collection of up to 15 bundles or bags of garden waste, in every two month period.
- 2.3 A charge can be levied by the Council under the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 for this specific collection service.
- 2.4 It is intended to consult the public prior to a decision being made on this matter (subject also to discussions with Biffa Leicester) and Scrutiny's views are welcomed as part of this process.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Community Involvement Commission is invited to comment on the proposal to charge for bulky waste collections.

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

- 4.1 The Council provides a range of waste services to residents in Leicester, including refuse bin and recycling bag collections from all domestic properties. Other services provided include clinical waste collection, garden waste collection, recycling banks, two recycling centres and a bulky waste collection. These services are delivered through a 25 year PFI contract in partnership with Biffa

Leicester, which commenced in 2003.

4.2 The Council currently operates two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which allow householders to dispose of household waste. The HWRCs are at Freeman's Common and Gypsum Close. The HWRCs accept a wide range of materials from cardboard to furniture and garden waste to rubble.

Bulky waste: current service and operations

4.3 The bulky waste collection service collects large items such as old sofas, fridges, furniture etc. The current service allows the following from each domestic property in the city:-

- One free collection of up to 5 items of bulky waste, in every two month period; and
- One free collection of up to 15 bundles or bags of garden waste, in every two month period.

4.4 If householders need additional collections, or have more items on any one collection, a charge is incurred. This is currently £15 for up to 15 items and £50 for between 16-30 items.

4.5 For those residents who cannot place their items outside their property for collection, the Council provides an assisted collection service whereby the collection crew enter the property to remove the items. This service is provided on request or when the customer service agent determines an assisted collection is required i.e. if there is no able bodied person in the household to place the items outside of the front of the property for collection. There is no additional charge for an assisted collection.

4.6 The collected waste is unloaded at Freeman's Common HWRC and the various waste streams are separated on site. A residual element is taken onto the Ball Mill, although most is taken to landfill or recycled. Approximately 3,000 tonnes of bulky waste are collected each year. There is a relatively high environmental impact due to the number of vehicles, associated mileage and high tonnage.

4.7 In 2015/16 there were 35,024 bulky collections made by the Council's contractor Biffa Leicester. Of these, 76% (26,686 properties) were customers only using the service once in the year. In 2015/16 only 1.13% (396) of collections incurred a charge, generating income of £6,790.

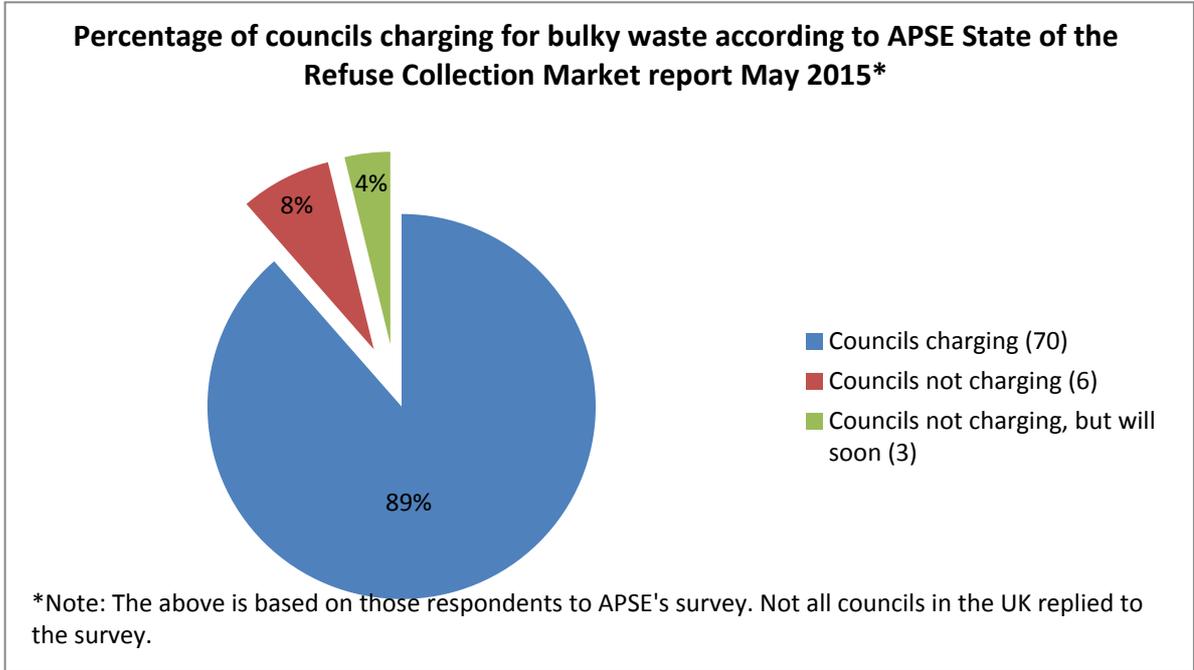
Potential service change and context

4.8 Research has been conducted to assess the number of other local authorities charging for bulky waste. A benchmarking exercise was undertaken analysing:-

- i. whether the councils charged or not for bulky waste collection; and
- ii. where they did charge, the scale of charges applied.

34 councils were analysed, of which 29 (85%) were charging – 9 of those had a concessionary element for customers in receipt of benefits. 5 offered 1 or more free collections before charging or were completely free.

4.9 According to the Association for Public Service Excellence 's (APSE) 'State of the Refuse Collection Market report May 2015", of approximately 100 councils responding to their survey, 89% of councils stated they charged for bulky waste collections.



4.10 Removing the free element of the bulky waste collection service could potentially raise between c.£50-£150k per annum depending on the pricing structure/option introduced and other potential savings such as landfill tax.

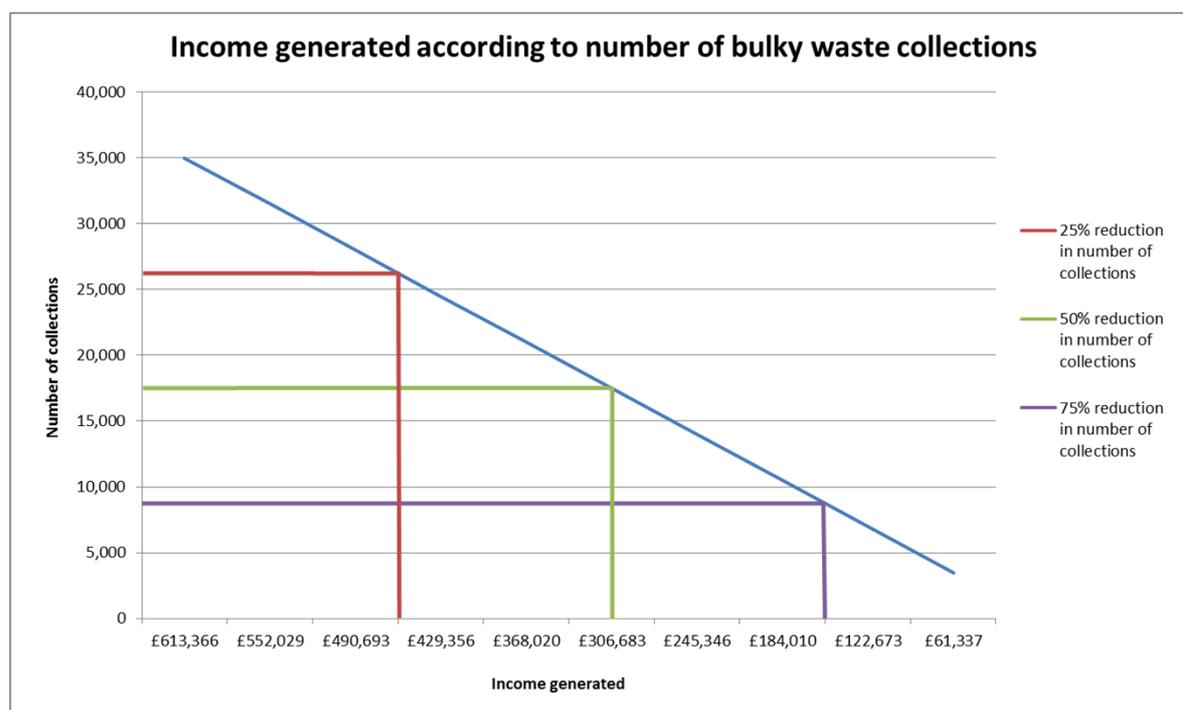
4.11 The proposal is that all free entitlements would cease and all customers would be charged for all bulky waste collections. The additional assisted collections service would continue at no extra cost, but customers offered the service would still need to pay the same collection charge as all other customers. Therefore, the service would be retained, but all collections would become chargeable.

4.12 Projected income is estimated to be as follows, but there are many factors that could alter this.

	75% reduction in collections
Income (£20 charge) per 5 item collection excluding LCC costs	£153,600*

* Costs incurred due to possible increased fly tipping have not been included. A reduction in the current number of collections could range between c.50-75%. Note: A number of councils were asked whether the number of collections decreases after the 1st year. Due to lack of data as a result of staff turnover at councils, this is unknown.

4.13 The graph below demonstrates how the number of collections affects the income received from a £20 charge.



4.14 Further potential savings may be achieved from a possible reduction in landfill tax, but it is not possible to determine what this would be as waste may be taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centres, which would still have to be paid for by the council. An efficiency saving could be achieved by Revenues and Customer Services' contact centre because the number of collections to be booked would decrease by potentially up to 75%. This would be an efficiency saving as opposed to a physical saving, of approximately £40k based on an estimated 75% drop in contact.

4.15 A range of charging models have been investigated, with and without concessions. Advice from Customer Services is that there are no services for which they take payments that offer concessions.

4.16 Modelling has shown that if the current allowance was reduced to 1 free collection per year, this would not result in sufficient revenue generation because currently 76% of customers only use the service once a year, therefore the majority of collections would be free. This would generate c.£20k per year based on a £20 charge.

4.17 There have been discussions with Revenues and Customer Services relating to the feasibility of introducing a concessionary element to bulky waste charging. Advice is that the Council is not permitted to use data collected for benefit purposes for other Council duties without the express written consent of each individual to access their information for this purpose - Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) data is limited by statute to the administration of Housing Benefit, Local Council Tax Reduction, Discretionary Housing Payments and Local

Welfare Provision only. Universal Credit is also limited in the same way. Therefore, the only way to introduce a concessionary element would be to require customers to submit paperwork showing the benefit(s) they are entitled to or to seek their explicit consent to access their information. This would be a very resource intensive process and would not be conducive to the aims of channel shift and the Customer Services Transformation Programme. It is therefore, considered unviable to offer a concessionary element as it would impact upon any potential savings due to the need for additional staffing resource. Appendix 1 (figure 4) highlights that 80 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) out of 150 (53%) had between 20-50% of customers using the bulky waste service who were in receipt of housing benefit. Figure 3 in appendix 1 shows the areas where the bulky waste service is used the most. Heaviest usage is broadly in the west and north west of the City.

4.18 There are potential benefits in terms of channel shift, as seen in other services areas where charging regimes have been introduced. For example, calls to the Registrars service were successfully reduced following the introduction of a tiered charging policy. Here the purchase of a copy certificate was more expensive when requested by phone (£17) rather than online (£13). In this case a 39% decrease in calls to the Customer Service Line was experienced, supporting the aims of cutting costs through Channel Shift. It is proposed that this success could be emulated for bulky waste charging, but offering a price of £20 per collection online versus a £24 price for collections booked over the phone. A policy such as this has been adopted by Birmingham City Council for their bulky waste collection service.

4.19 In another report also on this agenda a proposal is raised to consider charging for DIY waste deposits at the recycling centres. If DIY waste charging is introduced, items such as wooden fence panels would no longer be collected on the bulky waste service if it is decided to keep bulky collections free of charge. Garden waste is currently collected on the bulky waste service. It is proposed to continue the allowance of up to 15 bags of garden waste to be collected but for the charge of £20. The proposal for non-garden waste bulky items is £20 for up to 5 items.

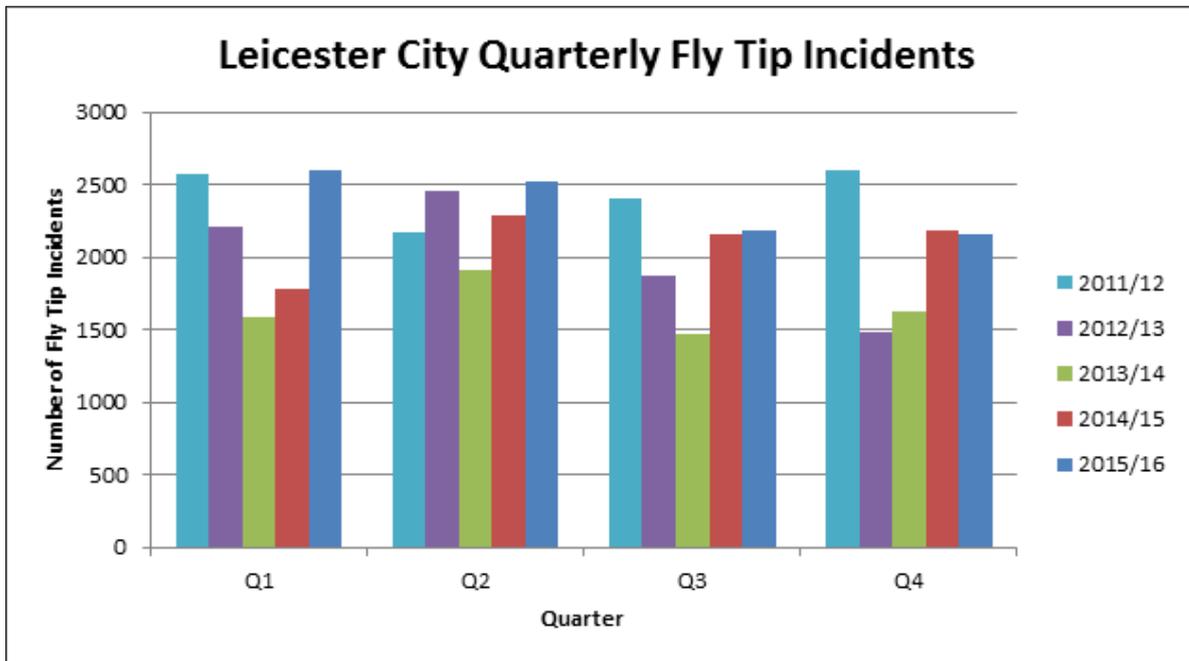
4.20 The table below details other services available that offer bulky waste collection. The key difference with these services is that they do not collect the range of items the council's bulky waste service does, nor do they allow up to 5 items or more to be collected. Shops also will only take old items if a new one is being purchased:

Shop/charity	Charge	Service	Items accepted
AO.com	From £19.99	Old item disposal when new item delivered	Large white goods
Currys	From £15		
John Lewis	£9 per item		
Argos	£9.99 per item		
Tesco	£9.99 per item		
Age UK	Free collection	Collection of good, reusable items only	Bulky items
LOROS	Free collection		Bulky items
British Heart Foundation	Free collection		Bulky items & white goods

4.21 If charging for bulky waste is not introduced, this would reduce the Council's opportunity to find savings within cleansing and waste services.

Fly tipping

4.22 Research has been conducted with other local authorities charging for bulky waste. Research indicates there is no clear correlation between introducing a charge and an increase or decrease in fly tipping incidences. In some local authority areas fly tipping has increased following introduction of a charge and in others it has decreased or stayed at a similar level. Figure 6 in appendix 1 demonstrates this variability.



4.23 In 2015/16 there were 9,449 fly tips in Leicester City, of which a large proportion (1,339) were in Stoneygate ward. The map in appendix 1 (figure 3) shows the number of fly tips in each ward, mapped against usage of the bulky waste service in 2015/16 at lower super output area (LSOA) level. The graph above shows the number of quarterly fly tip incidents in Leicester. Fly tipping has recently plateaued due to new initiatives to tackle the issue, such as focussing on the top 10 worst streets and ensuring the correct classification of side wastes at bring sites. The average cost of clearing a fly tip by Cleansing Services in Leicester City was £34 per incident in 2015/16. The total cost of clearing fly tipping was £322,239 in 2015/16. There is the potential for more backyard burning if a charge is introduced.

4.24 According to the Fly-tipping statistics for England, 2014/15 (DEFRA) release, incidents of fly-tipping had shown steady declines from 2007/08 until 2013/14 when there was an increase to 852 thousand incidents. The number of fly-tipping incidents increased again in 2014/15 to 900 thousand incidents. It advises that care should be taken when interpreting this increase as it may reflect improvements to the capture of fly-tipping incidents as well as genuine increases in the number of incidents. Some local authorities who had reported increases for

fly-tipping incidents explained the reasons for this were: the introduction of new technologies; such as on-line reporting and electronic applications, increased training for staff and a more pro-active approach to removing fly-tipping.

Communications

4.25 In conjunction with the changes to be made to 'The Furniture Bank' scheme, a 'hard stop' will be placed on the Customer Services Waste Management hotline. This will suggest donating items to charity for reuse in the first instance. Customers still wanting a bulky waste collection can then continue and pay for a collection. This approach will help maximise the number of items that are reused rather than recycled or disposed of via the bulky waste collection service and will be applied to all contact channels.

4.26 It is proposed that a communications and marketing plan would be developed to support the introduction of the changes. This would be done in collaboration with the Council's Communications Team.

Recycling rate impact

4.27 The introduction of charging for bulky waste could reduce the tonnage of waste going to landfill. However, an estimated reduction of 1.5% could be experienced on Biffa's contract recycling rate due to less overall material being collected. This could be more or less depending on the reduction of number of collections and wastes set out for collection.

Consultation

4.28 No consultation has been undertaken on the potential to introduce charging to date. However, it is proposed to undertake a public consultation exercise, recognising the challenges in doing this where feedback may centre on residents not wanting to pay a charge or stating that they wish to pay as small a charge as possible. The Council's Communications Team and the 'Fair and proportionate public consultation Officer's guide' have been consulted on how best to consult on the proposal, in order to make the consultation as meaningful as possible.

4.29 The legal implications to be considered are set out in 6.2.

4.30 Subject to the outcome of the consultation and the City Mayor's and Executive's final view on this matter, it is suggested that the new scheme could be introduced during Spring 2017.

5. Details of Scrutiny

This report is presented for the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission's (NSCIC) consideration.

6. Financial, legal and other implications considered by the Executive

6.1 Financial implications

The authority currently provides a bulk waste collection service to residents of Leicester and generates revenue of approximately £7k per annum. A new charging structure for bulk waste collections would increase the revenue generated by this service, however many variables could affect the revenue generated. Income could be up to £150k p.a. as shown in the report, depending on the charging structure implemented and the decrease in the number of collections made. There is however also the consideration of the costs of collecting any additional fly tipped waste to be considered, the costs of which are unknown.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance
Ext 37 4081

6.2 Legal implications

General:

As stated in the report the Council is entitled to charge for this service under the permitting regulations quoted. There is no restriction on what this charge can be and how it can be implemented.

Consultation:

Legal advice is that consultation should be undertaken and that not doing so could leave the Council open to challenge on the introduction of any charges.

There is no general duty to consult in public law. Consultation is therefore the exception rather than the general rule, however there is a risk that the Council could be found to have been required to consult as a result of the nature of the decision and impact upon the public as a result of the introduction of charging and the potential charge for waste deposits of DIY waste at recycling centres (as detailed within a further report). Given the figures within the report the implications will affect a large number of the public who currently use the service for free.

The Courts have generally determined that the more serious the impact of a decision is on affected individuals, the more important it is that the right decision is reached and that those affected feel that their concerns have been considered by the decision-maker. Broadly, therefore, the more serious the impact, the more likely it is that fairness requires the involvement of affected individuals in the decision-making process by some form of consultation.

Consultation must be meaningful and conducted appropriately to be free from challenge. There is no set way to carry out consultation or requirements, but principles established in case law.

Meaningful consultation could potentially be undertaken in relation to the options of which services to charge for, the level of charge and the possibilities of there being concessions. However there is a risk in that if consultation is not meaningful there could also be a challenge.

Usually the following must be taken in to consideration when formulating the consultation:

- Consultation must be made at a time when the proposals are at a formative stage. This means that we need to consult at a point where our mind is still open to change and the responses would therefore be able to influence our decision. It does not prevent us having a preferred option, or even a decision in principle, provided we genuinely haven't made a decision as to the way forward and there is the genuine potential for that preference to change as a result of the consultation.
- Sufficient reasons must be given to allow intelligent consideration and response.

This is in order to allow effective and informed responses. Consultees should also be made aware of:-

- The basis on which a proposal for consultation has been considered and will be considered afterwards;
- The criteria that will be applied by the Council when considering proposals; and
- The factors that will be decisive or of substantial importance at the end of the process.

- Adequate time must be given for a response –

There isn't a set meaning and time frames need to be decided upon taking in to account relevant considerations, including the:-

- Size of the group to be consulted.
 - Capabilities and resources of consultees.
 - Urgency involved.
 - Means of consultation.
 - Complexity of the issues
- The product of the consultation must be taken into account in the final decision. The responses must be fed into the decision-making process and in a transparent manner in accordance with any information given as to how this will happen. If this is not done it may leave a decision open to challenge on the basis the decision was taken without regard to the consultation and it was nothing more than the appearance to engage.

How we consult will generally be influenced by those we consult and their characteristics and the practical issues arising from those. The natural set of consultees will be those who are liable to be affected by the proposals if they are implemented, including individuals, groups, contractors and the public as a whole.

Emma Horton, Head of Law (Commercial, Property and Planning)
Ext 37 1426

6.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

The overall environmental implications of the report are unclear as there is a number of potential consequences of implementing a charge for bulky waste collection. Potential benefits include a reduction in waste being sent to landfill as more residents could choose to donate bulky items for re-use (as demonstrated in section 4.20 some charities offer a free collection service for items in a decent condition and therefore this may become the preferred option). There will also be a reduction in emissions from Biffa's vehicle fleet. However, for those households disposing of more than one item, these transport emissions could potentially be transferred to the resident themselves and result in multiple journeys to the HWRC. Additionally, there could be an increase in fly-tipping or backyard burning which would have a negative environmental impact. These factors should be considered along with methods to reduce the potential negative impacts.

Louise Buckley, Senior Environmental Consultant
Ext 37 2293

6.4 Equalities Implications

An equalities impact assessment is being undertaken and has identified, thus far, that there are potential impacts for older, disabled and pregnant service users and the mitigating actions available. The main adverse impact is that of the proposed charge on low income households, but socio-economic impacts are not a consideration under our Public Sector Equality Duty.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead
Ext 374147

7. Background information and other papers:

Building a Strong Future for our City: Labour's Manifesto for Leicester 2015
<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/180397/labour-manifesto-2015.pdf>

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1

Figure 1: Benchmarking against other bulky waste services

Figure 2: Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016 – total count of collections
By Census LSOA

Figure 3: Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016 – total count of collections
by Census LSOA, including estimated fly tipping numbers by ward

Figure 4: Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016 – percentage of collections for households on Housing Benefit

Figure 5: Low income households using the bulk collection service

Figure 6: Fly tipping, supporting information

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No.

10. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes

11. If a key decision please explain reason

This is a key decision as all wards are affected.



Appendix 1

Bulky waste charging: supporting research

October 2016

Contents

Figure 1: Benchmarking against other bulky waste services

Figure 2: Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016 – total count of collections By Census LSOA

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Figure 5: Low income households using the bulk collection service

Figure 6: Fly tipping, supporting information

Figure 1 - Benchmarking against other bulky waste services

Local Authority	Free collection (Any Limits)	Chargeable (Any Limits)	Fridge/Freezers (Free/Cost)	Garden Waste (Free/Cost) or N/A
Leicester City Council	5 items / every 2 months	6 - 15 items - £15	Free	Free 15 bags (normal collection)
		15 - 30 items - £50		
Charnwood Borough	3 free collections a year (3 items each)	1 - 3 items - £15	Free	Not on bulky service
		4 - 6 items - £30		
		7 - 9 items - £45 and so on		
Blaby District Council	None	1 - 2 large items or 6 small - £16 (minimum charge)	Cost	Not on bulky service
		3 - 4 large items or 7 to 12 small items - £24		
		5 - 6 large items or 13-18 small items - £35		
		Cement bonded asbestos - £100		
Melton Borough Council	None	1 item = £17.20 (no concessions)	Cost - £17.20 per item	Not on bulky service
		2 - 5 = £29.60 (concessions £20.60)		
		6+ = £28.90 for first 5 + £8.50 for each additional item		
		(Concessions- £20.10 for first 5 items plus £6.35 for each additional item)		
North West Leicester	None	1-3 items= £20	Cost	Not on bulky service
		4 items= £25		
		Additional £5 per item up to 6 items		
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council	Free for those who receive qualifying benefit	Non electrical items - £20 per item - additional £3 per item	Cost	Not on bulky service
		Electrical items - £20 per item - additional £4 per item		
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	None	Non electrical bulky items - 1 - 3 - £21.50 (concession available)	Cost	Not on bulky service
		Non electrical bulky items - 4 - 5 - £32.50 (concession available)		
East Northamptonshire District Council	None	Up to 7 items - £25.38	Cost	Not on bulky service
Corby Borough Council	None	Up to 10 items - £22 (concession £11)	Cost	Not on bulky service

Kettering Borough Council	None	£23 - 6 items per collection - limited to 2 collection per annum (£11.50 if over 60, under 18 or student) (£4.60 concessions)	Cost	Not on bulky service
Daventry District Council	None	1 - 3 items £16.38	Cost	Not on bulky service
		up to 6 items - £32.76		
Northampton Borough Council	None	up to 3 items - £25	Cost	Not on bulky service
South Northampton District	None	up to 6 items collected - £30	Cost	Not on bulky service
Borough Council of Wellingborough	None	up to 5 items - £35.60	Cost	Not on bulky service
Rushcliffe	None	£15.60 one item, £7.50 per additional item (up to 10 items)	Cost	Not on bulky service
Broxtowe	None	£13 per order & £7 per item	Not collected	Not on bulky service
Bassetlaw	None	£11 per item, up to 9 items max	Cost	Not on bulky service
Gedling	None	1 item= £14.50	£14.50	Not on bulky service
		Up to 3 items= £17.50		
		Up to 5 items= £23		
		up to 10 items - £34		
		Two waste types and charges vary per waste type		
Newark & Sherwood	None	£12 first item, £6 each item (£12 additional large electrical)	£12	Quotable service
Mansfield	None	Up to 3 items- £20.40, £6.15 for additional items	Cost	Not on bulky service
Ashfield	None	£12.20 one item, £6.10 per additional item.	Cost	Not on bulky service
Nottingham City	Free			Not on bulky service
Derby City Council	None	1 item - £12.10	£10	Not on bulky service
		2 - 5 items - £18.75		
		6 - 15 items - £26.50 (cannot collect more than 15 items)		
Birmingham City	None	Up to 6 items- £25 (£23 online)	Cost	Yes- up to 18 bags
Coventry City	None	5 items £26.25 (concessions £21), £4 per additional 5 items (£3.20 concessions) (up to 10)	Cost	Not on bulky service
London Borough of Harrow	None	Recyclable items; 1st - £36, 2nd- £21, subsequent items £16. Non recyclable items; 1st item £52, 2nd item £31, subsequent item £16. Half price concessions	Cost	Not on bulky service
London Borough of Hounslow	1 free per year for those on benefits	Up to 5 items- £40; £8 per additional item	Cost	Not on bulky service

London Borough of Brent	5 items, three a year		Free	Not on bulky service
Canterbury City Council	None	Each item £14.20 (concession £9.47)	£27.35	Not on bulky service
Southampton City Council*	None	£10 for first item, and then £5 per item up to 10 items. (Concessions 25% discount)	Cost	Not on bulky service
Cambridge City Council	None	1 item- £22, 2-3 items- £28, 4-6 items- £33, 7-10 items- £44	£22	Bulky garden items, bundled, boxed or bagged
Newcastle City Council*	None	£40 for each heavy item, £10 for each large item, £20 for up to 8 small items, £70 for each special large item e.g. a bath or bathroom suite, £40 for each special small item e.g. door, timber fence panel	Cost	Up to 20 bags
Manchester City Council*	1 free collection of 3 items per year	£27 for 1-3 items and £54 for 4-6 items.	Cost	Unknown
Sheffield City Council	1 free collection of 9/12 items per year for council house/housing association tenants.	1-3 items - £20.40, 4-6 items £34.20, 7-9 items £48, 10-12 items £61.20. (Concessionary rates for those in receipt of income support, housing benefit, pension credit or job seekers allowance: 1-3 items - £10, 4-6 items - £15, 7-9 items - £25, 10-12 items - £35)	Cost unless in council/housing association property	Unknown

Figure 2

Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016 Total Count of Collections By Census LSOA

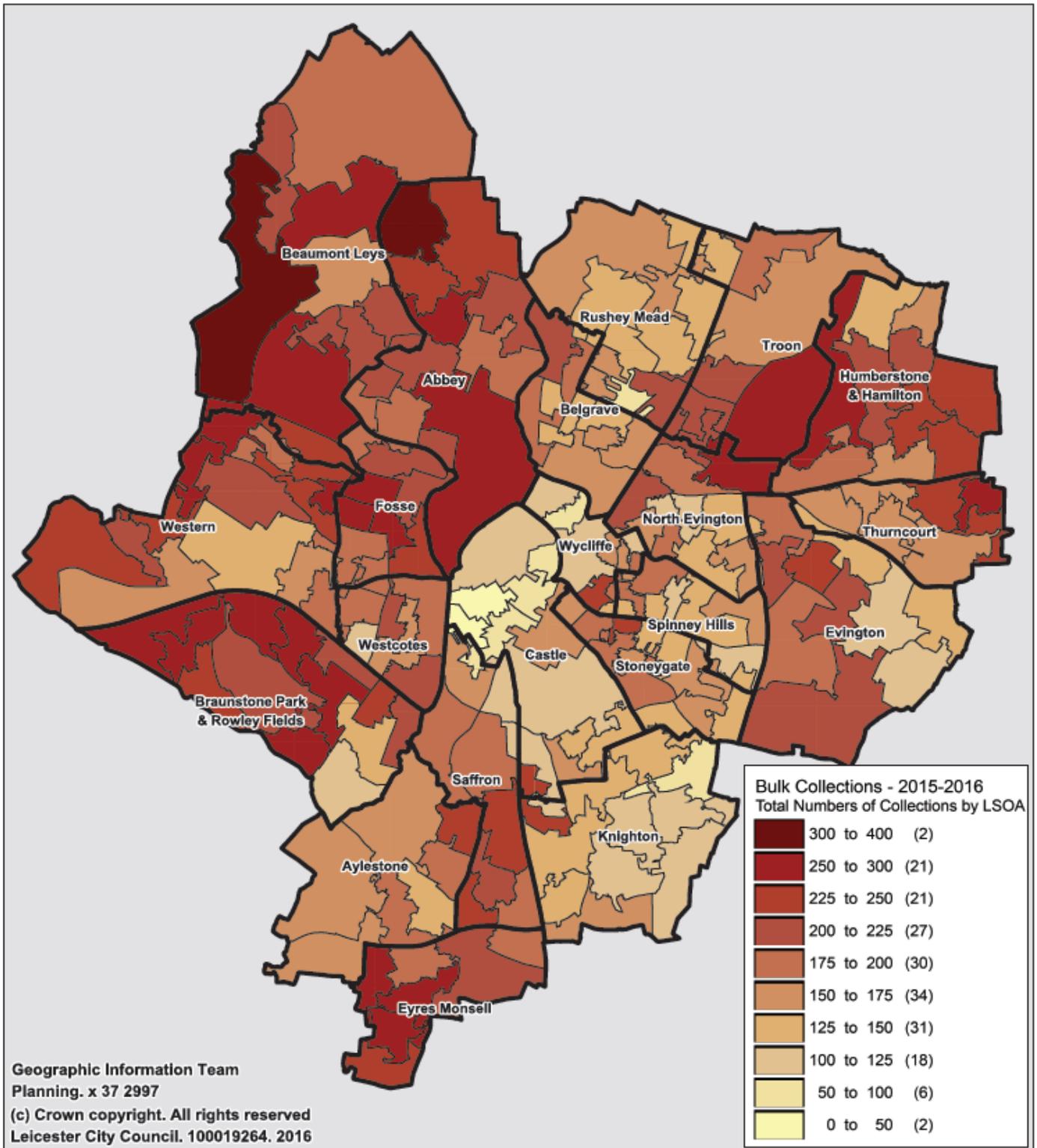
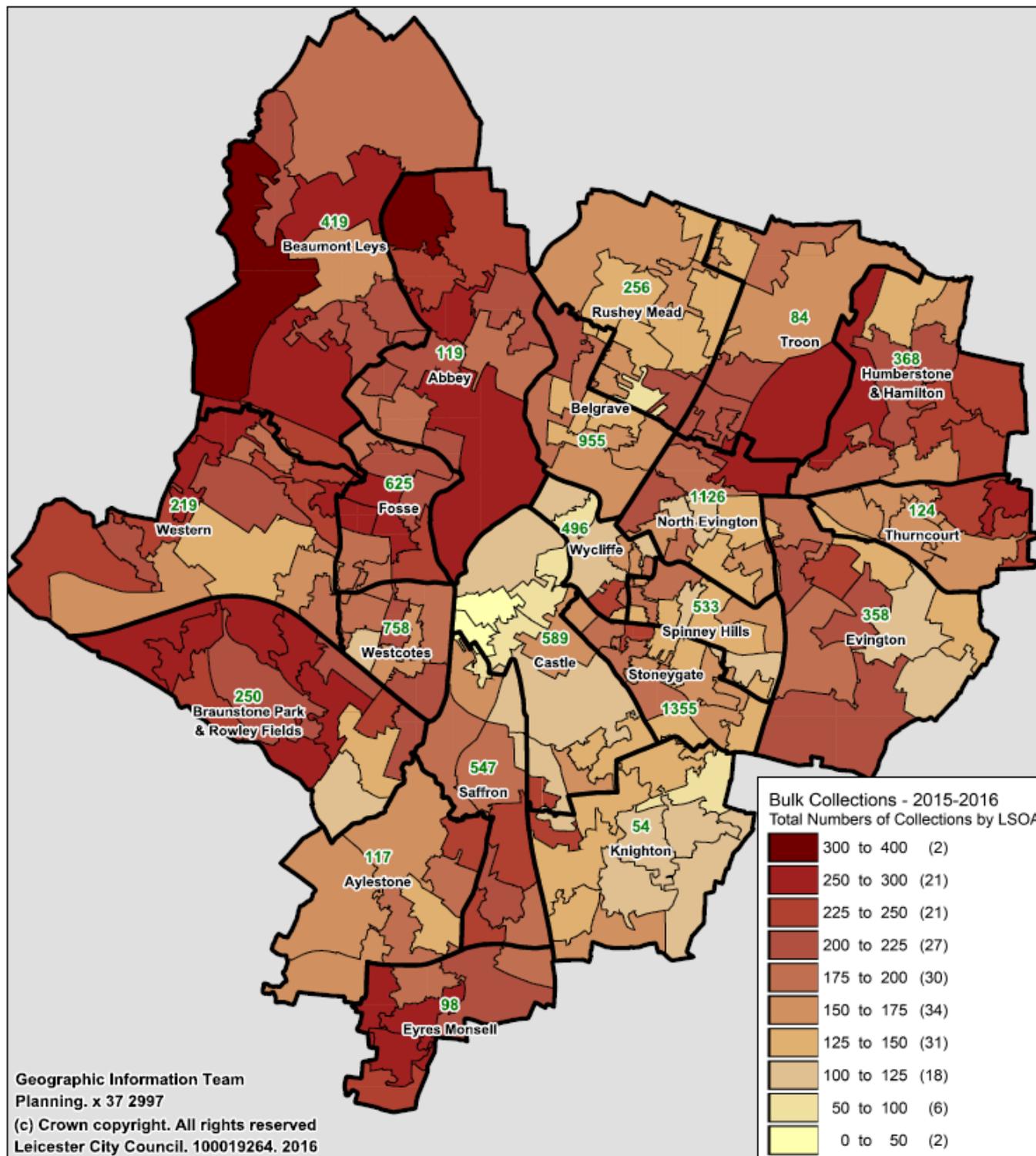


Figure 3
Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016
Total Count of Collections By Census LSOA
Estimated Fly Tipping Numbers By Ward



*Note: Fly tip figures are estimated for those wards whose boundaries were changed during 15/16.

Figure 4

Map Showing Bulk Waste Collections 2015-2016 Percentage of Collections for Households on Benefits By LSOA

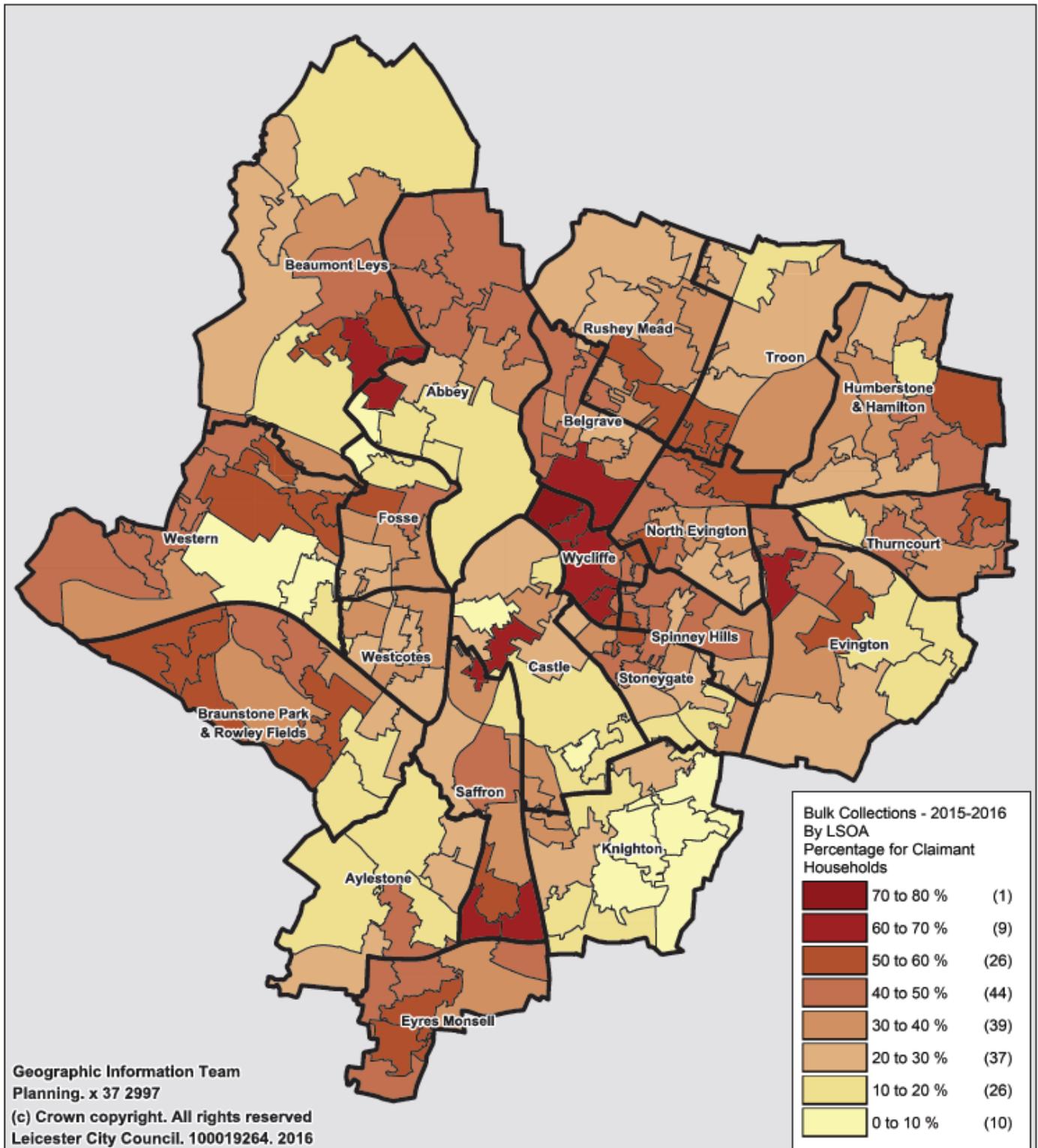
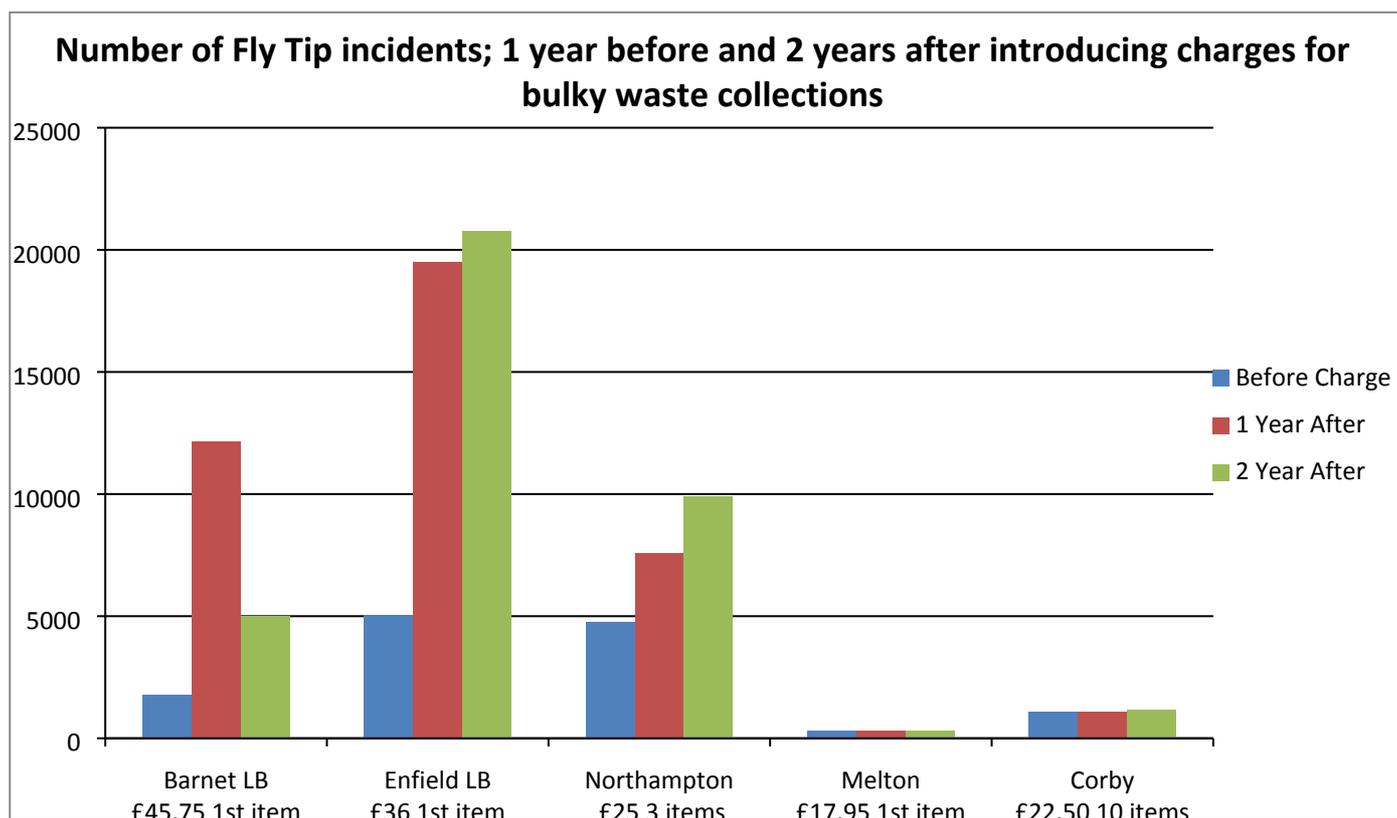


Figure 5 – Low income households using the bulk collection service

Total number of LCC council properties in the city	21,400
Number of LCC council property residents using the bulk waste service in 15/16	2,983

Figure 6 – Supporting fly tipping information



Leicester City Fly Tip figures per year			
12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
8020	6592	8416	9449

If an increase in fly tipping was experienced, the below costs may be incurred by Cleansing Services:

Potential increase in spend for Cleansing Services if fly tip incidents increase			
Percentage increase	10%	30%	50%
Additional cost	£32,127	£96,380	£160,633



Consideration of Charging for DIY Waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres

For consideration by:
Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement
Scrutiny Commission

Date: 5th October 2016

Lead director: John Leach

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Luke Crown, Service Development Manager (Waste Management)
- Author contact details: luke.crown@leicester.gov.uk Direct line 0116 454 6741

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To ask Members of the Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Community Involvement Commission for their views regarding the potential to charge for DIY waste deposited at the City's two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)

2. Summary

- 2.1 The City Mayor and Executive have agreed a new programme of spending reviews in order to help tackle the significant funding shortfall that Leicester City Council has been set by the Government to manage. This paper considers the opportunity to consider charging for DIY (classed as non-household) waste at the City's two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) in order to help contribute to the Council's required savings. This paper does not cover consideration of charging for household (non-DIY) waste.
- 2.2 The Council currently operates two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which allow householders to dispose of household waste. The HWRCs are at Freeman's Common and Gypsum Close. The HWRCs accept a wide range of materials from cardboard to furniture and garden waste to rubble.
- 2.3 A charge can be levied by the Council under the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 for this specific waste disposal service.
- 2.4 It is intended to consult the public prior to a decision being made on this matter (subject also to discussions with Biffa Leicester) and Scrutiny's views are welcomed as part of this process.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Community Involvement Commission is invited to comment on the proposal to charge for the disposal of DIY waste at the City's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs).

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

- 4.1 The Council provides a range of waste services to residents in Leicester, including refuse bin and recycling bag collections from all domestic properties. Other services provided include clinical waste collection, garden waste collection, recycling banks, two Household Waste Recycling Centres and a bulky waste

collection. These services are delivered through a 25 year PFI contract in partnership with Biffa Leicester, which commenced in 2003.

- 4.2 The Council currently operates two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) which allow householders to dispose of household waste. The HWRCs are at Freeman’s Common and Gypsum Close. The HWRCs accept a wide range of materials from cardboard to furniture and garden waste to rubble.

DIY waste

Current service and operations

- 4.3 The Council has a duty to arrange “for places to be provided at which persons resident in its area may deposit their household waste and for the disposal of waste so deposited” under section 51 (1) (b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Under this duty two HWRCs at Freeman’s Common and a new centre at Gypsum Close are provided for the disposal of a range of items including garden waste, domestic appliances, rubble and plasterboard.

- 4.4 HWRCs are for the deposit of Household Waste only. The exception to this is for small quantities of construction and demolition wastes (DIY waste) which are legally classified as Industrial Wastes, even if from a domestic property. These ‘exceptions’ were agreed with the Environment Agency. DIY waste consists of items such as hardcore, rubble, soil, concrete slabs, bathroom furniture, asbestos and plasterboard. These wastes have always been accepted at the HWRCs, however, such waste does not have to be accepted or a charge can be made for accepting such waste.

- 4.5 A permit system is operated to control the use of the centres and prevent abuse of the HWRCs by traders. Traders do not pay council tax and therefore do not contribute to the running costs of the HWRCs; use of the HWRCs gives traders an unfair competitive advantage over those legally disposing of their waste. Permit holders may only deposit their waste at Gypsum Close HWRC. Permits are only required by those customers using vans or trailers over 1.4m in length on the basis they are more likely to bring trade waste to the sites. The permit is limited to 15 visits per year.

- 4.6 The sites see considerable usage, as demonstrated in the table below:

HWRC visitor numbers (2015/16)	
Gypsum Close	132,234 (actual)
Freeman’s Common	76,401 (based on annualised data due to breakdown of ANPR camera system)
Total	208,635

Proposed service change and context

- 4.7 Following a consultation on a variety of measures, Leicestershire County Council has implemented a chargeable system and Waste Management recommends mirroring their pricing structure, if a scheme was to be introduced. This would (if implemented) create a similar system throughout the City and County where some DIY waste is charged for. Leicestershire County Council are charging £3 per

bag/item deposited for such wastes, i.e.:

- Hardcore, rubble and soil - £3 for up to every 20 litres
- Concrete slab/post -£3 each
- Bathroom furniture (Bath, basin, toilet, shower tray, etc) -£3 per item or up to every 20 litres
- Roof tiles, slates, ceramic wall and floor tiles - £3 for up to every 20 litres
- Whole sheets or broken window glass - £3 per unit or up to every 20 litres
- Plasterboard - £3 per sheet up to 1.8 x 0.9m, or every 20 litres
- Asbestos - £10 per sheet up to 2.4 x 1.2m, or every 20 litres

4.8 It is proposed that the Council could look to adopt the same rates of charging as the County Council, with the exception of asbestos on the grounds that where fly tipped, asbestos is more costly to clear than other fly tipped material. It will also avoid potential health issues as asbestos is classed as hazardous waste. In addition to the above charges it is also suggested that charges be imposed for the deposit of wood. It is not proposed to offer concessions. Payments would be by debit/credit card only as it is Biffa policy that Biffa staff do not handle cash. Biffa staff taking payment at the point of deposit would be subject to negotiation with Biffa.

4.9 It is proposed that the charges for the trade waste facility at Gypsum Close are increased in line with the £3/per item/bag charge. Currently they are £1-£1.50/bag depending on the waste type. Charging less than £3 per item/bag to householders is unlikely to generate sufficient revenue if tonnages of rubble and plasterboard drop by the anticipated amount of 75%.

Finance - Costs/income

4.10 Overall projected costs and income are estimated to be as follows, but there are many factors that could alter these. Further potential savings may be achieved due to reduced tonnages, but it is not possible to determine what these would be at this stage.

	75% reduction in tonnages
Potential income after overheads including cost of collection	£77,425

Not all wood will be chargeable. No data is available on the percentage of wood that is chargeable. It is assumed most is chargeable. Costs incurred due to possible increased fly tipping have not been included. Modelled on 15/16 tonnages, assuming a reduction of 75% - this could be more or less.

Considerations

4.11 Research has been conducted with other local authorities charging for DIY waste.

Fly tipping

- 4.12 The general consensus from councils introducing a charge is that an increase is likely. Many said increases were small, but there were also several reporting it was unknown whether an increase due to charging actually occurred. It is understood to be too early to say yet whether an increase in fly tipping will be experienced in Leicestershire districts because of the County Council's new charging policy.
- 4.13 In the case of one large, predominately rural council, recent statistics showed that only 4% of fly tipped waste was DIY waste and that the majority of wastes fly-tipped were wastes accepted free of charge at their recycling centres.
- 4.14 One County Council spoken to reported a reduction in the illegal use of sites by traders and that indications were skip hire companies were dealing with more waste than before the introduction of charges.
- 4.15 As with bulky waste, the impact on fly tipping levels in the City if charging is introduced is unknown.
- 4.16 There is the potential for more backyard burning of wood if a charge is introduced.

Media and publicity considerations

- 4.17 8 councils who have introduced DIY waste charges were approached for details of their service – please see Appendix 1. On asking them for further information on their experiences, of the 8, 6 responded. 5 councils said that they had experienced negative publicity in their local media, but that this was generally short lived and complaint levels fell after 3-6 months of the charges being introduced. Some councils had received several hundred complaints on introduction of the changes. Councils where charging has been in place for some time stated that residents now largely accepted the rationale, albeit reluctantly.
- 4.18 One council advised a publicity period of 3 months to advertise the changes to reduce conflicts at the sites. They had only advertised for approximately 2 weeks which lead to considerable customer confusion.
- 4.19 It is proposed that a communications and marketing plan would be developed to support the introduction of the changes. This would be done in collaboration with the Council's Communications Team.

Concessions

- 4.20 Of the 6 councils responding to requests for information, 4 offered some level of concession. This ranged from a single bag per week of DIY waste up to 10 items. Leicestershire County Council is not offering any concessions. Figure 1 (appendix 1) details concessions offered.
- 4.21 Housing have advised that LCC council property tenants infrequently do improvement work on their properties, with most work being carried out by LCC staff who remove the waste themselves.

Recycling rate impact

4.22 The introduction of charging for DIY waste would reduce the tonnage of waste handled by the Council's contractor. A reduction of 2.82% could be experienced on Biffa's contract recycling rate. This could be more or less depending on the reduction in wastes deposited at the sites by customers.

Consultation

4.23 No consultation has been undertaken on the potential to introduce charging to date. However, it is proposed to undertake a public consultation exercise, recognising the challenges in doing this where feedback may centre on residents not wanting to pay a charge or stating that they wish to pay as small a charge as possible. The Council's Communications Team and the 'Fair and proportionate public consultation Officer's guide' have been consulted on how best to consult on the proposal, in order to make the consultation as meaningful as possible.

4.24 The legal implications to be considered are set out in 6.2.

5. Details of Scrutiny

5.1 This report is presented for the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission's (NSCIC) consideration.

6. Financial, legal and other implications considered by the Executive

6.1 Financial implications

Currently there is no charge to householders for disposing waste at recycling centres. Introducing charging for DIY waste would likely generate revenue (potentially up to c£77k), and the volume of unauthorised disposal by traders could reduce. However, there is no certainty as to the actual figures. There is also the consideration of the costs of collecting any increased fly tipped waste, the costs of which are unknown.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance
Ext 37 4081

6.2 Legal implications

As stated in the report the Council is entitled to charge for this service under the permitting regulations quoted. There is no restriction on what this charge can be and how it can be implemented.

Consultation:

There is no general duty to consult in public law. Consultation is therefore the exception rather than the general rule, however there is a risk that the Council could be found to have been required to consult as a result of the nature of the decision and

impact upon the public as a result of the introduction of these charges and the potential charge for bulky waste collection (as detailed within a further report). Given the figures within the report the implications will affect a large number of the public who currently use the service for free.

The Courts have generally determined that the more serious the impact of a decision is on affected individuals, the more important it is that the right decision is reached and that those affected feel that their concerns have been considered by the decision-maker. Broadly, therefore, the more serious the impact, the more likely it is that fairness requires the involvement of affected individuals in the decision-making process by some form of consultation.

Consultation must be meaningful and conducted appropriately to be free from challenge. There is no set way to carry out consultation or requirements, but principles established in case law.

Meaningful consultation could potentially be undertaken in relation to the options of which services to charge for, the level of charge and the possibilities of there being concessions. However there is a risk in that if consultation is not meaningful there could also be a challenge.

Usually the following must be taken in to consideration when formulating the consultation:

- Consultation must be made at a time when the proposals are at a formative
This means that we need to consult at a point where our mind is still open to change and the responses would therefore be able to influence our decision. It does not prevent us having a preferred option, or even a decision in principle, provided we genuinely haven't made a decision as to the way forward and there is the genuine potential for that preference to change as a result of the consultation.
- Sufficient reasons must be given to allow intelligent consideration and response
This is in order to allow effective and informed responses. Consultees should also be made aware of:-
 - the basis on which a proposal for consultation has been considered and will be considered afterwards;
 - the criteria that will be applied by the Council when considering proposals; and
 - the factors that will be decisive or of substantial importance at the end of the process.
- Adequate time must be given for a response –

There isn't a set meaning and time frames need to be decided upon taking in to account relevant considerations, including the:-

- Size of the group to be consulted.
- Capabilities and resources of consultees.
- Urgency involved.
- Means of consultation.
- Complexity of the issues

- The product of the consultation must be taken into account in the final decision. The responses must be fed into the decision-making process and in a transparent manner in accordance with any information given as to how this will happen. If this is not done it may leave a decision open to challenge on the basis the decision was taken without regard to the consultation and it was nothing more than the appearance to engage.

How we consult will generally be influenced by those we consult and their characteristics and the practical issues arising from those. The natural set of consultees will be those who are liable to be affected by the proposals if they are implemented, including individuals, groups, contractors and the public as a whole.

Contract:

There may be a need for there to be a formal variation of the BIFFA contract to cover the additional payment collection services in the event we begin to charge for DIY waste at the two identified sites.

It is not considered that these variations would be significant and therefore there are not anticipated to be any issues under the Public Contract Regulations.

Emma Horton, Head of Law (Commercial, Property and Planning)
Ext 37 1426

6.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Unlike the proposals for the bulky waste collection, there is not the same potential for the re-use of DIY waste, and therefore the climate change implications for the proposals in the report are more likely to be negative; through a potential increase in fly tipping and backyard burning.

Louise Buckley, Senior Environmental Consultant
Ext 37 2293

6.4 Equalities Implications

An equalities impact assessment is being undertaken and has identified, thus far, that there are no adverse impacts for any of the protected characteristics.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead
Ext 374147

7. Background information and other papers:

Building a Strong Future for our City: Labour's Manifesto for Leicester 2015
<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/180397/labour-manifesto-2015.pdf>

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1

Figure 1: Benchmarking against other chargeable HWRC services

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No.

10. Is this a “key decision”?

Yes

11. If a key decision please explain reason

This is a key decision as all wards are affected.



Appendix 1

DIY waste charging: supporting research & implementation plan

October 2016

Contents

Figure 1: Benchmarking against other chargeable HWRC services

Figure 1 - Benchmarking against other chargeable HWRC services

	Date charges implemented	Materials charged for									Concessions
		Soil/Turf	Rubble/ Hardcore	Plasterboard	Tyres	Bath/ Shower tray	Shower screen	Pipes, Gutter ing	Concrete/ Paving	Asbestos	What?
Blackpool Council	May-12		Yes								No
Cornwall Council	Sep-14	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes					Yes	No
Devon County Council	2011	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No
Lancashire County Council	Jun-15	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes			Yes		10 items free
Norfolk County Council	Jun-05	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		1 free item per week
Warwickshire County Council	2011	Yes	Yes	Yes							3 bags free
Leicestershire County Council	May-16		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	No
Somerset Waste Partnership	Apr-11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes						Single bag

Appendix D



Welfare Reform

For consideration by:
Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement
Scrutiny Commission

Date: 5th October 2016

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: James Rattenberry, Service Improvement Manager
- Author contact details: james.rattenberry@leicester.gov.uk

1. Summary

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide Neighbourhood Scrutiny with an update on the effect of welfare reform in Leicester during 2015/16, and to highlight the expected impact of changes to be introduced by April 2017.

2. Main report

2.1 Introduction

The government is committed to implementing over £12 billion of new benefit cuts per year nationally by 2019/20, primarily through the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. From 2013, welfare reform impacts have already had a significant impact on the finances of local people, and this is expected to worsen - as illustrated by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation report “the uneven impact of welfare reform,” Leicester is expected to be the 9th worst affected local authority with an average loss in income per working-age adult of £490 per year by 2019/20.

The impact of changes is in part mitigated by the council’s discretionary schemes – primarily the Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) fund. Funding for 16/17 was increased by 12.7% to £781,000. However, as illustrated below the Council’s schemes cannot make a substantial difference given the scale of impact of the cuts.

2.2 Impacts assessed in 2015/16

Under Occupancy, also known as the ‘bedroom tax,’ is a reduction in Housing Benefit (HB) for social sector tenants of either 14% or 25% on the basis of ‘spare’ bedrooms. Over 15/16, there was a fall of 186 (7.4%) of households in Leicester affected - as of June 2016, 2,326 claimants were subject to a reduction in their housing benefit award averaging £14.38 per week, two thirds of whom were single adults. Detailed analysis is provided in Appendix 1.

There are a number of reasons for under occupancy reducing – for example, a new member of the household, or a move to alternative accommodation. The reduction in affected households may partly be attributed to the DHP policy, requiring households, where appropriate, to seek more appropriate accommodation through Housing Options within 13 weeks of applying for a DHP. The future impact may however be limited – over 470 households receiving a DHP are on Housing waiting lists seeking to downsize their tenancies, an indication of the shortage of one bedroom properties in the sector. One in ten affected households are currently receiving a DHP, accounting for £306,000 in 2015/16 – 45% of our DHP expenditure.

The Benefit Income Cap is a limit on the maximum benefit which can be awarded to a claimant (for all types of benefit combined). In 2015/16, this was £26,000 for lone parents and couples without children, £18,200 for single people – equivalent to £500 or £350 per week. The cap is given effect by reducing Housing Benefit awards by the amount by which total benefit would otherwise exceed the cap (i.e. it is our job to apply it, albeit on the basis of data supplied by DWP). The cap applies to working age households dependent on welfare benefits, although disabled households and those in full time work are exempt. Over 2015/16 the number of capped households in Leicester decreased from 135 to 124, a fall of 8%.

The DWP has claimed nationally that 41% of households capped have moved into work - this analysis has been questioned by some commentators, and has not been reflected locally in our persistent caseload. Tighter DHP policy enforcement locally from October 2015 has seen expenditure on benefit cap households reduce from 19% of the total budget in 2014/15 (£160,000) to 11% (£75,000) in 2015/16.

Universal Credit (UC) is gradually replacing Housing Benefit, Tax Credits, Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Income Support and Employment & Support Allowance. It is being gradually introduced in Leicester since 25 January 2016, starting with single, childless claimants who would otherwise claim JSA. The UC caseload reached 1,161 in July. Of these, 81 claimants previously on Housing Benefit have had their claims terminated and 228 are now receiving Council Tax Reduction with Universal Credit.

Because UC is paid to claimants directly, it risks increases in rent arrears. Both the Housing Department and housing associations locally have reported that, in line with the national picture, arrears of UC claimants are broadly double those of continuing Housing Benefit claimants – 36 referrals for Personal Budgeting Support (PBS) have been sent to the Citizens' Advice Service. In addition, 15 UC DHP claims have been received and awarded payments totalling £2,600. It is anticipated that this demand will continue to grow. A timetable for UC full service rollout is not yet available, but is expected to be introduced locally during 2017/18, following which the majority of working-age claimants will be migrated to UC by 2022. Pensioners and those in supported accommodation are currently exempt from the transfer.

2.3 Changes anticipated in 2016/17

Restriction of backdating - since April 2016, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction cannot be backdated by more than one month, as opposed to six months previously, for working age claimants unless good cause is demonstrated. In 2015/16, over half of backdates were for longer than one month – we have estimated that the new restrictions will result in an estimated 400 to 500 households losing the equivalent of six weeks' rent (if we have the same number of backdating requests). It is not permissible to compensate this by awarding DHP to cover periods during which Housing Benefit has not been awarded. Similarly, 61% of CTRS backdate claims would lose an average of seven weeks' Council Tax – although our local scheme does allow us to award discretionary relief in such circumstances.

Removal of family premium for new HB cases - from May 2016, new HB claimants no longer receive an additional income allowance for having children in their household. In 2015/16, 8026 households benefited from this allowance worth £11.31 per week – of whom 140 households would lose their entitlement to Housing Benefit

altogether once they have made a new claim. We notified households directly affected by this change by letter earlier in the year, offering them advice and support.

Restriction of temporary absence from home for HB, CTR and Pension Credit was introduced on 28 July 2016. Claimants leaving their properties will no longer be entitled after in most circumstances after four weeks absence from Great Britain, losing their benefits while they are away and having to reapply when they return. This maximum period of absence has been reduced from thirteen weeks in most circumstances. . No data is available from the DWP on how many households this will affect, but a higher proportion of Leicester's population than nationally have links abroad which suggests Leicester may be affected to a greater extent than other cities outside London. National research suggests that 20% of visits between 28 and 90 days are to an Asian country, potentially resulting in a disproportionate impact on certain religious and ethnic groups. We have been proactive in communicating this message to community groups, council hubs and local media.

Reduction in the Benefit Income Cap threshold – this is expected to be the largest single welfare reform impact this year. The cap is due to be reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 (£384.62 per week) from November 2016 for couples and families with children and from £18,200 to £13,400 (£257.69 per week) for single people. The DWP estimates that 763 households in Leicester will lose an average of £76 per week. The council's original estimates were higher still. This is an increase from the current 124 subject to the cap.

Full analysis of the expected impact of the benefit cap is provided at Appendix 2. The data suggests vulnerable groups will be disproportionately affected. Households affected by this change have been written to by the DWP, and will receive a further letter 13 weeks before the cap is applied to their HB award. We believe some families will struggle to pay essential bills and afford food and fuel as a result of these reductions and we therefore anticipate an increased number of households seeking assistance through the Discretionary Housing Payment policy. The council has been engaged with proactive communication with affected tenants and social sector landlords, and has introduced an enhanced programme of referrals to Citizens' Advice for budgeting, benefit and employment advice for affected claimants seeking financial assistance.

Universal Credit - the caseload is anticipated to increase gradually throughout 16/17, although this is limited by strict eligibility criteria defined by DWP. From April 2016, however, significant cuts to allowances and tapers were introduced to UC. These were originally intended to apply to all tax credit recipients, but the Government withdrew these proposals in the face of criticism. As a result, UC claimants receive less Universal Credit when working than those able to receive Tax Credits. From April 2017, new UC and Tax Credit claimants will no longer receive allowances for having more than two children. It is anticipated that more claimants are likely to experience hardship as a result of these changes – in the last two months, both PBS hardship referrals and DHP applications have increased threefold.

Benefit rates freeze – from April 2016 to 2020, most working-age benefits including Tax Credits and Housing Benefit rates will be frozen in cash terms. By 2020, this will equate to an average cost of £260 per year, due to inflation. The move follows three years of below-inflation increases resulting in a real-terms cut of 8% between 2012 and 2019. The impact of this will gradually increase over the period, but will be partially

offset through the introduction of the National Living Wage for those who work.

Continued changes to disability benefits – from April 2016, Employment and Support Allowance claimants no longer receive a ‘work related component’ if they do not have a permanent disability. Approximately 2,000 families locally have been affected, losing £29 per week per claimant. Additionally, reassessment of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to new, less generous Personal Independence Payments (PIP) has accelerated in recent months, with over 300 per month being reviewed and 20% losing their award as a result.

2.4 Changes expected in April 2017

The above changes will continue to impact claimants in 2017/18, as new claimants face more stringent restrictions for Universal Credit, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit. It is also expected that the following will be enacted, as they were announced in the last Summer and Autumn Statements (unless the new Government changes course):

- New claimants for Tax Credits and Housing Benefit will receive entitlement based on only two children, and children born after April 2017 will no longer count towards entitlement;
- Housing Benefit will no longer be automatic for claimants below 22 years of age; although it is unclear whether claimants in work, education, with disabilities or with families will benefit from any exemptions;
- Housing Benefit rates for new claimants in social sector accommodation will be limited to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) private sector rates for claimants who have lived in their properties for less than two years – with particularly drastic impacts for those in supported accommodation, where rents frequently exceed £200 per week. The potential to apply these rules to supported accommodation is threatening the viability of new extra care schemes, and has been the subject of many representations to the Government both locally (from the Deputy Mayor) and nationally.

3. Details of Scrutiny

The equality impact assessment will be presented to the Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement committee.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

Changes to benefits are having, and will continue to have, a direct impact on the incomes of those who depend on such income.

Those in exceptionally difficult circumstances may apply for discretionary funding which the

Council administers. These include:

(a) a council tax discretionary relief (hardship) fund, initially intended to assist those having to pay a proportion of their council tax for the first time. The indicative budget for this fund is £500,000k in 16/17, and the amount is set annually as part of the general fund budget;

(b) discretionary housing payments, for which the budget in 16/17 is £781k. This budget is directly supported by government grant;

(c) community support grant, a budget originally transferred from the DWP and supported by government grant. The two year annual grant was £1.6m, although ring-fenced funding has now ceased. The council has sustained the programme for the time being, having saved various related underspends in a reserve specifically for this purpose. The budget for 2016/17 is £535k, funded from this reserve. The estimated amount held in the welfare reform reserve was £4m as at 1st April 2016.

At the current rate of spending, the welfare reform reserve is likely to be exhausted by 2020. However, as described above, future government changes are likely to increase demand for discretionary funding. It is possible to increase the annual budget, but this will result in the reserve being spent sooner. Decisions on the amount to spend are taken as part of annual budget deliberations. If any of the three funds' in-year expenditure is likely to exceed their allocated budget, This will be identified as part of the general fund budget monitoring reports.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Jeremy Rainbow – Principal Lawyer (Litigation) - 371435

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

There are no climate change implications associated with this report.

- Mark Jeffcote, Environment Team x372251

5.4 Equalities Implications

The report is useful in describing emerging trends arising from the next tranche of the Government's tightening of household income available for those dependent on benefits. From an equalities perspective, the most notable changes are the anticipated adverse impacts of the reduced benefit caps for an increased number of lone parent families in particular (the protected characteristics most affected are sex – more female lone parents – and race – more BME lone parents). Another area of anticipated

adverse impact is the curtailment of provision/financial support for the 3rd child onwards in a household. This substantially departs from the principles of a welfare safety net based on need. On the basis of household profile information in the city, larger families tend to be BME households and it is the protected characteristic of race which is likely to be most adversely affected by this aspect of change in benefit provision. Given the potential negative impact on children's 'equality of opportunity' regarding their life chances because of decreasing household incomes, the opportunities available for the personal development of children in these households should be monitored to ensure that they are not disproportionately disadvantaged because of these welfare reforms.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext 374147.

6. Background information and other papers:

- The Welfare Reform Act 2012; <http://www.Department for Work and Pension.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/welfare-reform-act-2012>
- The Localism Act 2011; https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5959/1896534.pdf
- The Equality Act 2010; <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/notes/contents>
- The Local Government Finance Bill;
- http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/local-government-finance-bill-/journal_content/56/10171/3752842/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE and
- other legislation in relation to Vulnerable Groups including but not limited to the Child Poverty Act 2010;
- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/notes/contents> and
- Social Security Act 1986. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1986/50/contents>

7. Summary of appendices:

1. Appendix 1 Local welfare reform data analysis 2015/16
2. Appendix 2 Benefit Income Cap - impact of 2016/17 changes

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a "key decision"?

No



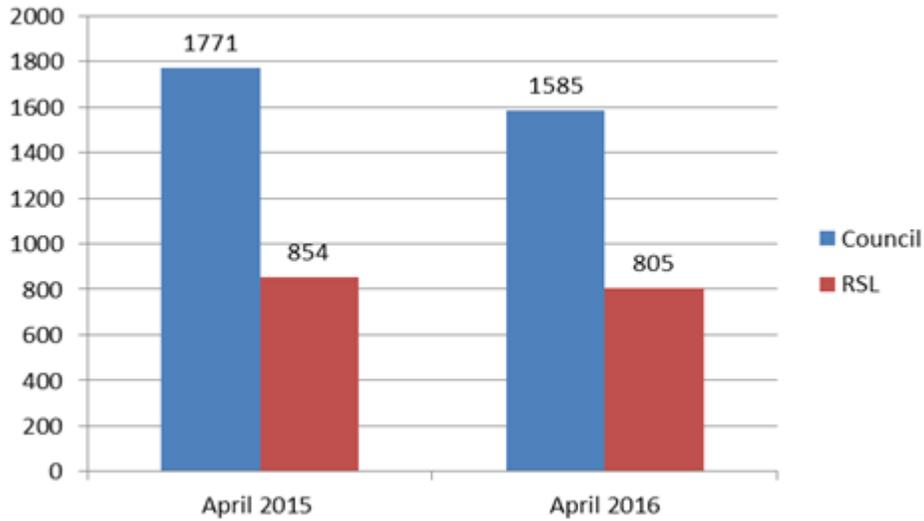
Appendix 1:

Local welfare reform data analysis 2015/16

1. Under Occupancy

Tenure Type:

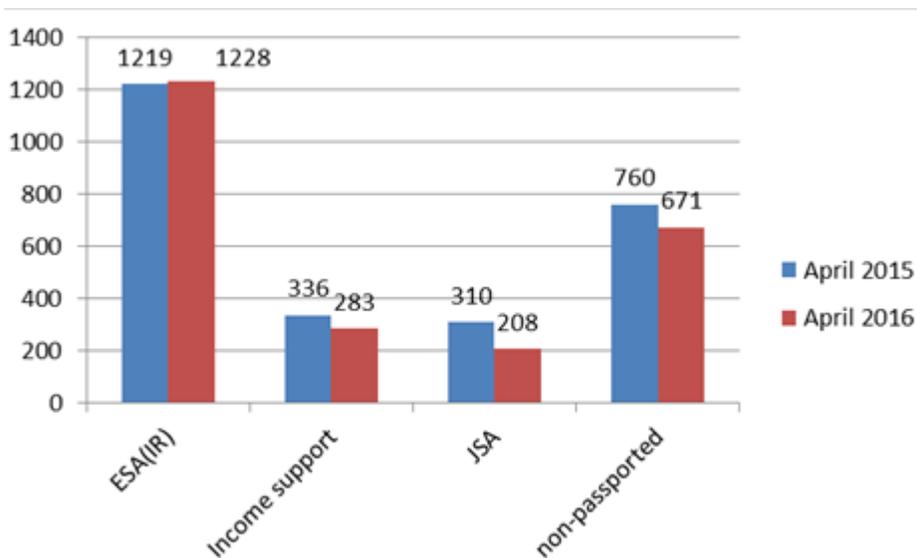
Council tenants make up over 2/3 of the claimants that are affected by the under occupancy charge and there has been no significant change from 2015 to 2016.



Income Type:

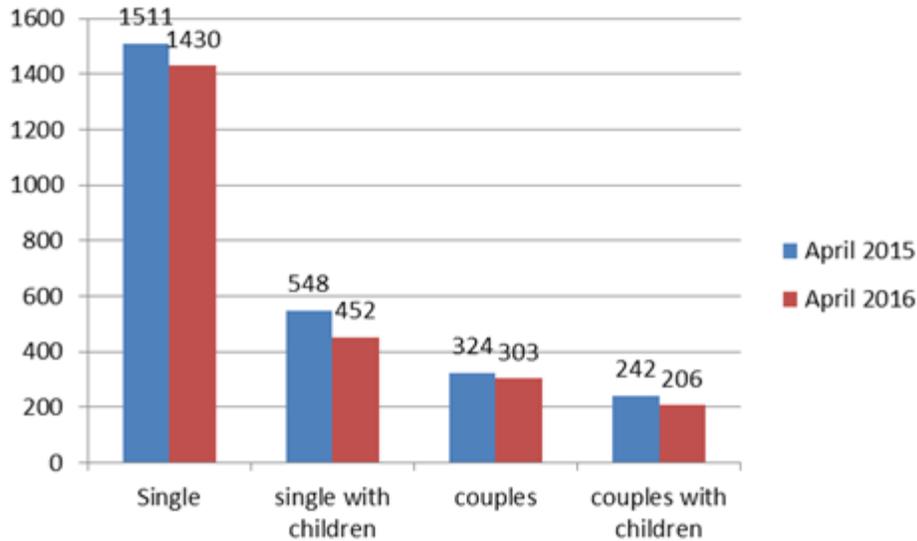
There are four different income types that are subject to the cap. These are Employment & Support Allowance (income-related) (ESA(IR)), Income Support (IS), Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and non-passported income e.g. earnings.

Claimants on DWP benefits (ESA (IR), Income Support and JSA) make up over 70% of the total caseload. Although there was an overall fall in the number of households that are affected, the number of claimants in receipt of ESA (IR) rose by 1%



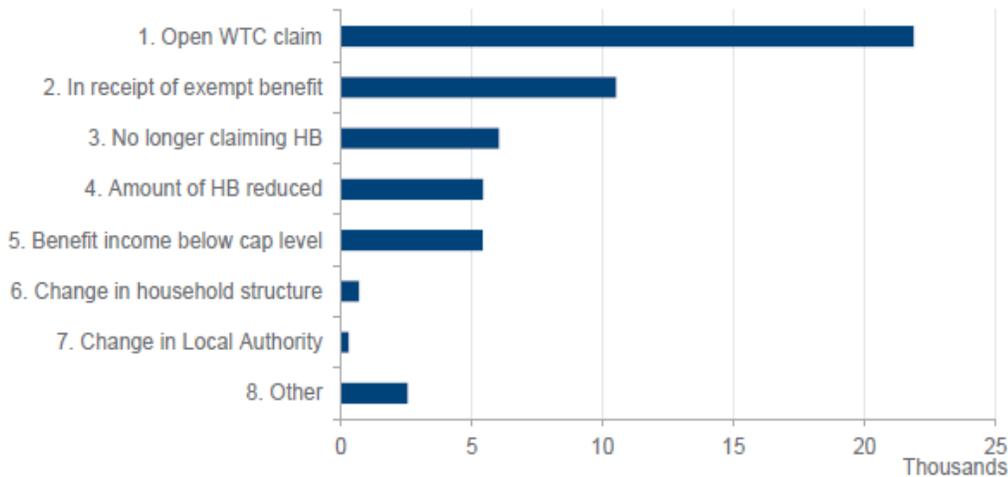
Family Makeup:

Approximately 60% of the claimants that were affected were single people both in April 2015 and April 2016. Lone parents made up 20% and couples with and without children made up the remaining 20%. Again, no significant changes were seen throughout the family categories.



2. Benefit Income Cap cases in Leicester 2015/16

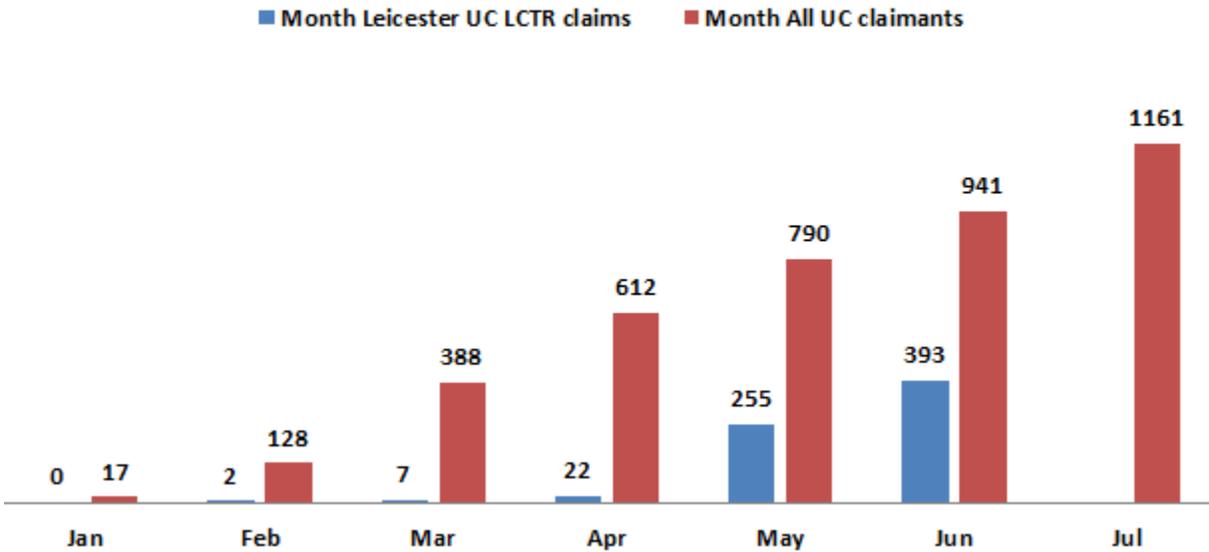
The tables below show the reason as to why households are no longer capped, and the family makeup of capped households in April 2015 and April 2016.



	April 2015	April 2016	% change
Couples with children	63	55	12.7% decrease
Lone Parents	69	69	No change
single people	3	0	100% decrease
Total	135	124	8.15 % decrease

3. Universal Credit

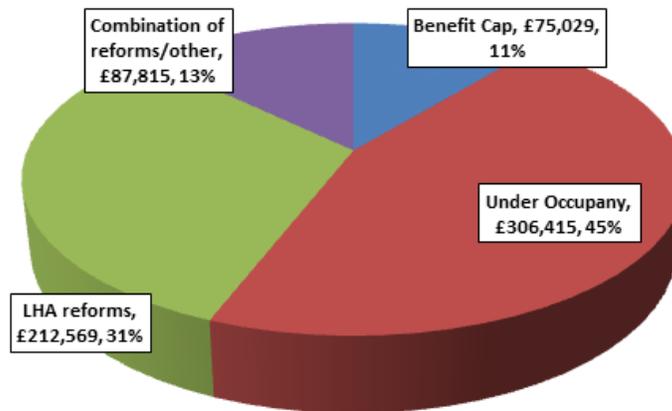
Universal Credit caseload in Leicester 2016/17



4. DHP expenditure 2015/16

The chart below shows the reasons for DHP awards:

DHP expenditure 2015/16





Leicester
City Council

Appendix 2:
Benefit Income Cap:
impact of 2016/17 changes

Background: Lowering of the benefit cap

The current benefit cap stands at £26,000 per year (equivalent to £500 per week) for couples and lone parents and £18,200 per year (or £350 per week) for single people. The number of capped households in Leicester varied during 2015/16 from 115 to 135 during any given month.

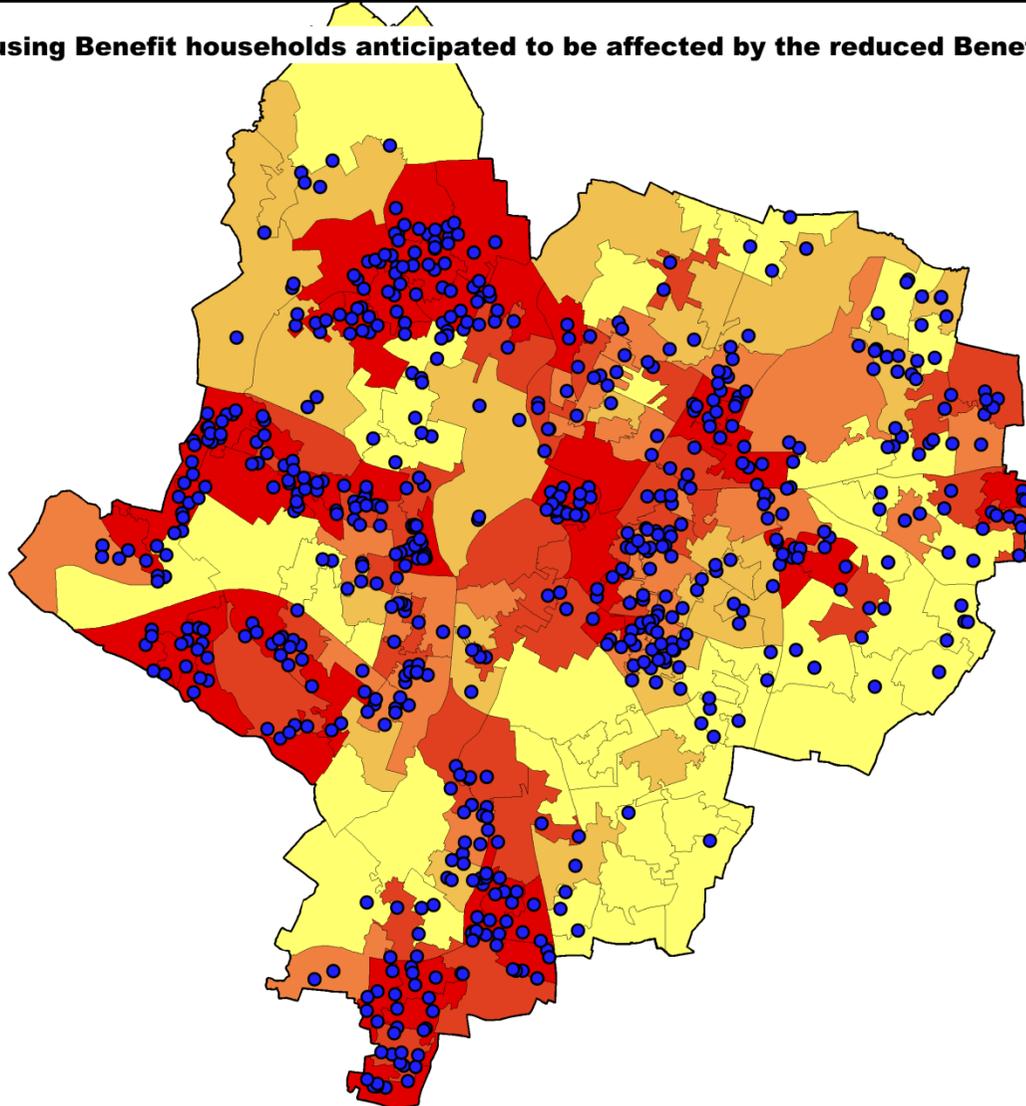
From November 2016 a new lowered benefit cap threshold will be applied. This will reduce the cap level amount to £20,000 per year (or £384.62 per week) for couples and lone parents and £13,400 per year (or £257.69 per week) for single claimants. As a consequence there may be losses of up to £6,000 per year experienced by affected households through reduction to Housing Benefit entitlement. This is in addition to loss of income experienced from the previous benefit cap.

DWP data has indicated that 753 households claiming Housing Benefit will be affected, each losing an average of almost £4,000 per year, or over £75 per week. This equates to a loss to the city in disposable income of nearly £3 million per year.

Particularly vulnerable groups seem to be predominantly affected:

- Nearly three quarters of the potentially affected households will be lone parents – 40% are lone parents with five or more children;
- 82% of the projected affected claimants are female;
- 41.3% of the total caseload are BME (Black and Minority Ethnic), with a disproportionate impact on black households;
- 14% are already subject to the current, higher cap and will see household income further reduced.

Housing Benefit households anticipated to be affected by the reduced Benefit Cap during 2016/17



Affected households are shown in blue – there is a close correlation between with the areas identified as ‘most deprived’ using the Indices of Multiple Deprivation highlighted in red.

Indices of multiple deprivation	
5 to 9 (50)	Least deprived
4 to 5 (26)	
3 to 4 (33)	
2 to 3 (37)	
1 to 2 (46)	More deprived

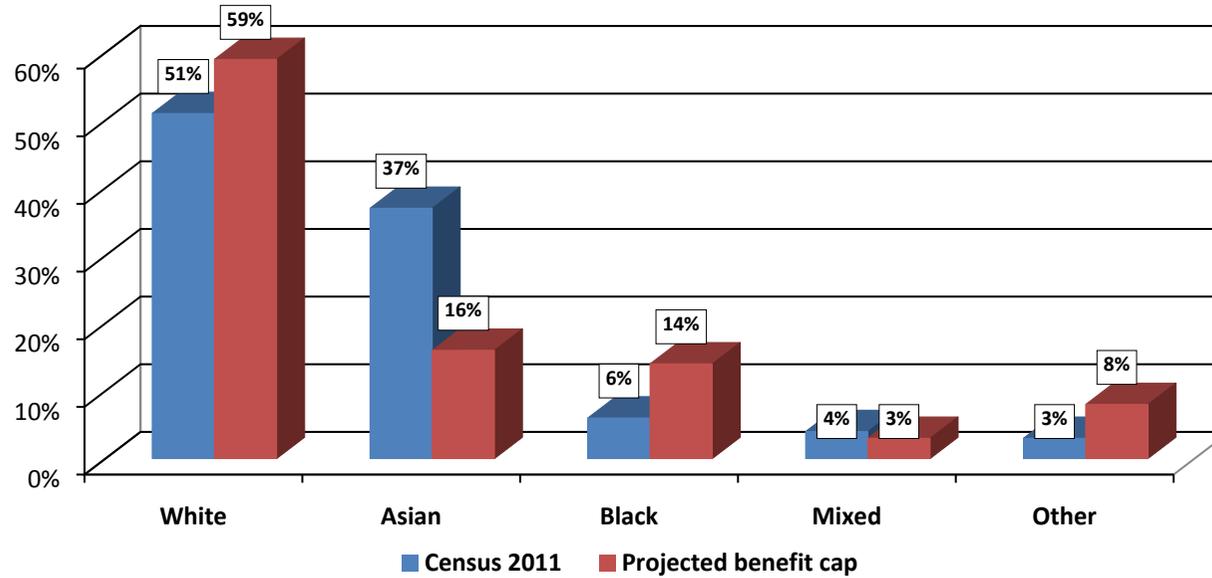


Projected benefit cap cases by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Frequency	%
White	291	58.7
Mixed	16	3.2
Asian	79	15.9
Black	69	13.9
Other	41	8.3
Total	496	100.0

As can be observed below through comparison with Census 2011 data, the Autumn benefit cap has a disproportionate impact on Black and Other ethnic groups – although this analysis is based on incomplete local data, as 34% (257) of potentially affected households do not have details of ethnicity recorded.

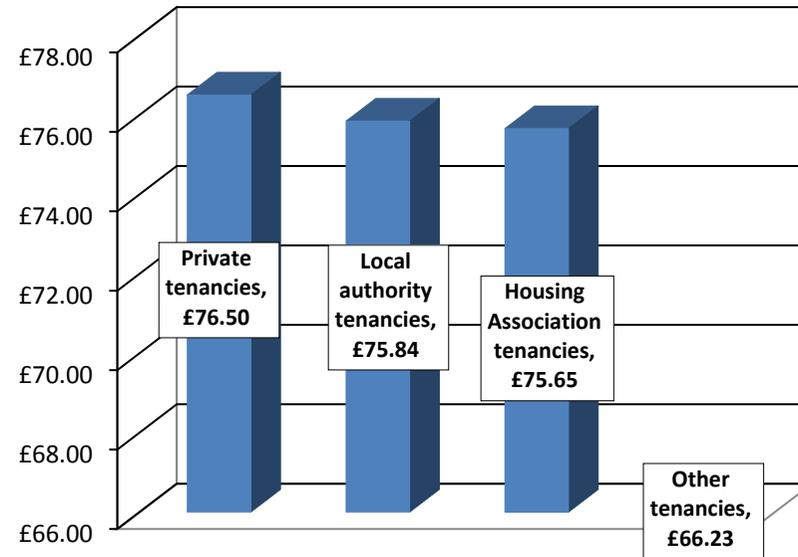
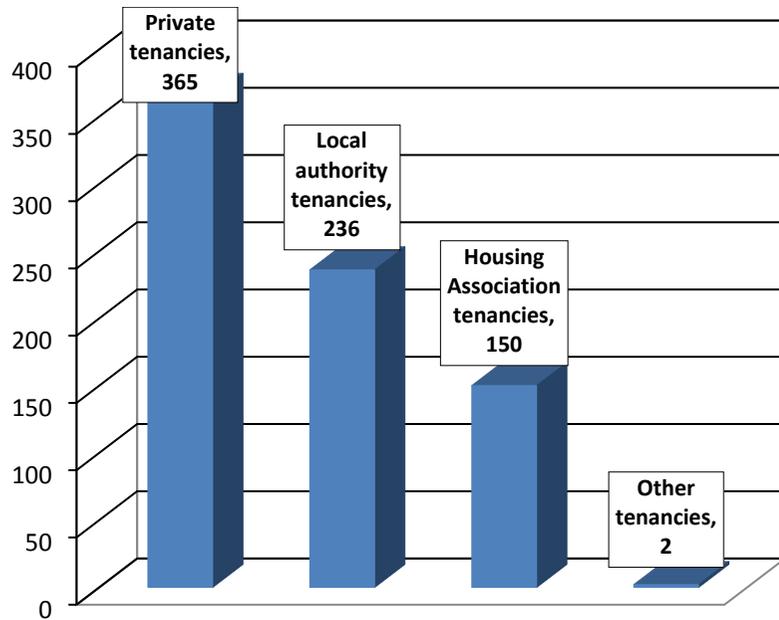
Census 2011 versus projected capped households by ethnicity



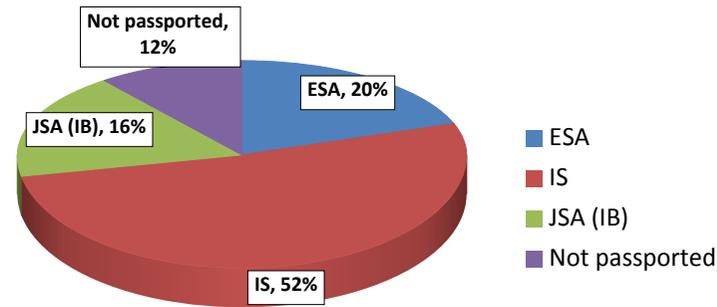
Projected Benefit Cap cases and average household loss by tenure type

Tenancy type	Frequency	%
Private tenancy	365	48.47
Local Authority tenancy	236	31.34
Housing Association tenancy	150	19.92
Other tenancy	2	0.27
Total	753	100

Private tenancies are more likely to be affected by the Benefit Cap due to the higher rents in the sector.



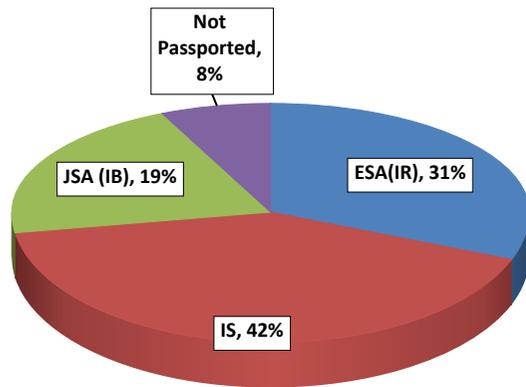
Projected benefit cap cases by primary income



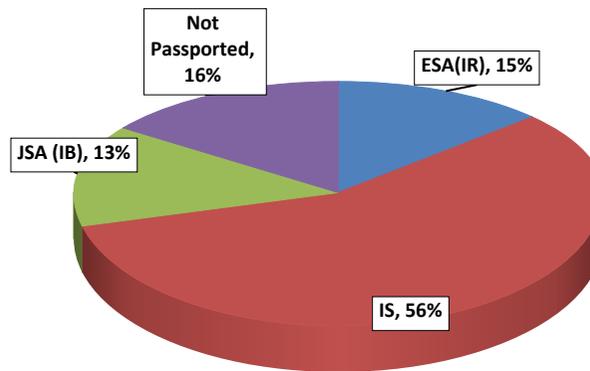
Less than one in six potentially affected households is currently assessed as able to seek paid employment (i.e., currently receiving Jobseeker’s Allowance).

For those in Local Authority properties, over 30% of affected households are affected by long-term illness or disability (and are receiving Employment & Support Allowance). In Housing Association and Private Properties, 56% are receiving Income Support, paid to the primary carer of children under the age of 4.

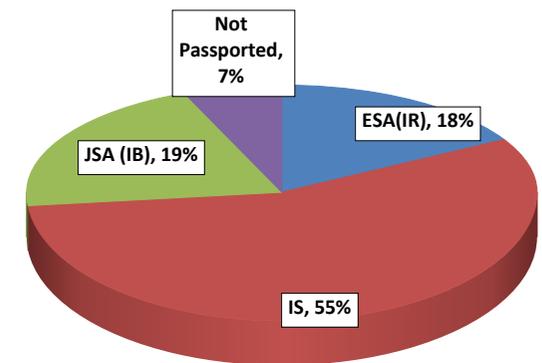
Primary income for LA Bencap projections



Primary income for Housing Association / RSL tenants for bencap projections



Primary income for Non HRA rent rebate and HRA rent rebate for bencap projections





Citizens Advice LeicesterShire City Advice Services Contract Performance 2015-16

For consideration by:
Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement
Scrutiny Commission

Date: 5th October 2016

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: Priority Wards
- Report author: Caroline Jackson
- Author contact details: 0116 454 2501

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Social Welfare Law and Advice (SWLA) contract outcomes for the city, highlight key outcomes and identify any risk or issues which may have arisen during 2015/16.

2. Recommendations

2.1 NSCIC is invited to note the observations on the contract adherence, comment on the recommendations and, to make additional comments particularly from a community perspective.

3. Background

3.1 The authority awarded a contract for three plus one, plus one years for the annual value of a £370,700pa from April 2013. This contract is to provide SWLA for the residents of the city and was awarded to the Citizens' Advice LeicesterShire (CAL). CAL is a voluntary organisation. Citizens Advice LeicesterShire's objectives are to promote any charitable purpose for the public benefit by the advancement of education, the protection and preservation of health and the relief of poverty, sickness and distress in particular, but without limitation, for the benefit of the community in Leicestershire, Leicester City and surrounding areas.

Their contractual remit is to provide a service:

- for all
- to include social welfare law at all levels
- from initial signposting and assisted information
- generalist advice and generalist advice with casework to
- Specialist representation.

This is the largest amount of funding provided for advice and assistance to any voluntary organisation which had been considered as part of the 2011/12 Social Welfare Advice review.

3.2 There are various definitions of what social welfare law and advice is and also what constitutes advice and at what level. However, following the Social Welfare Advice Review 2011/12, the Council adopted the definitions set out in the new Quality Mark (NQM) for Legal Advice 2010. In 2012/13, Advice Services Alliance took over ownership of the Standard, known as the current Advice Quality Standard (AQS).

- 3.3 The AQS demonstrates that an agency has a well-managed service, ensures staff have relevant and up to date knowledge and the quality of advice given remains high. In 2014, the AQS received full accreditation against the Money Advice Service (MAS) quality framework.
- 3.4 Social welfare law generally refers to those categories of law which govern entitlement to state benefits and public housing;
- the management of personal and business debt;
 - an employee's rights at work and access to redress unfair treatment.
 - Additionally, access to appropriate care and support for people with particular health problems.
- 3.5 The contract states they provide this advice through a city centre location operating 5 days per week. 8.30am -4.30pm, with an out of hour's service (to be agreed by the commissioner in response to demand) and an 'outreach' offer to priority groups across the city.
- 3.6 The contract was varied in 2015/16 to include the provision of Personal Budgeting Support, in relation to Universal Credit, for 55 clients from January 2016 to March 2017.
- 3.7 CAL is required to supply the authority with an annual report detailing their performance, outcomes and concerns. This is attached in Appendix 1.

4. Overview of the contract expectation and performance against outcomes:

- 4.1 Revenues & Customer Support formally meet with CAL on a monthly basis to review contract deliverables, understand current contract risks and issues plus to discuss future developments.
- 4.2 CAL fulfils the requirement for social welfare law at all levels through three tiers of advice with the third tier being specialist and includes representation in legal proceedings. A definition of the three tiers is supplied in appendix 2.
- 4.3 The table below outlines the contract requirements and demonstrates where CAL have met the contract advice outcomes for 2015/16.

Social Welfare Law and Advice Contract Outcomes 2015/16			
Tier	Description of activity	Target year 15/16	Actual
1	Assisted information and signposting	19,600	19,674
2	Generalist advice & casework	9,800	10,240
3	Specialist advice, multiple needs, representation in court, tribunals, assessments	600	670
Outreach	10 session ran across the city per week for 50 weeks	500	500

- 4.4 Tier 1 offer is delivered through face to face triage reception at their Charles Street office, outreach sessions and on the telephone. A 24/7 advice website enables those who can serve themselves to do so. The council promotes this website on its Advice page, a link is provided as appendix 3. The webchat pilot is an interesting development and aligns to the council channel shift model and promotes assisted service for clients who struggle to navigate websites. Signposting includes referral to other specialist agencies.
- 4.5 Tier 2 offer is often triaged through tier 1 and delivered through the outreach provision and Charles Street. Predominately casework based including form filling and assisting clients to help themselves. The offer is contract compliant and clients are aware the service is accessible and available.
- 4.6 CAL refers into the Councils Discretionary funds. They are one of the primary referral sources. They have user tested our e-forms, change of circumstance e-forms and act as third party agent directly referring their clients to the Crisis fund minimising stress and time for the individual seeking assistance for food, fuel and furniture. This demonstrates a proactive working partnership leading to better outcomes for their clients.
- 4.7 The outreach provision is part of the contract arrangement and is delivered in partnership with AgeUK. This provision was commissioned late due to the late award of the contract. It began in September 2013 and because of this had a faltering start in the first year; year 2 saw significant resourcing issue from the partner organisation, together with technical difficulties with locations. The poor communication of provision from the outset resulted in CAL failing to meet contract expectations and as a direct consequence poor service delivery to clients. However through contact management these teething issues have been overcome and provision improved from 2014/15 and in 2015/16 has settled, meeting contract outcomes running 500 sessions and seeing 2,544 clients. Appendix 4 details the outreach outcomes for the city. CALs' delivery partner AgeUK undertakes home visits, where appropriate, for any age provided they are housebound and vulnerable. 210 home visits were undertaken in 2015/16.
- 4.8 The contract requires that the Commissioner annually reviews the priority groups and priority wards for outreach. This exercise has been carried out. It has been identified both priorities remain unchanged however to improve the facilities and unify the locations going forward the locations for the sessions will be undertaken through the Using Building Better programme.
- 4.9 CAL operates two advice sessions in the Granby Street Customer Service centre. This has expanded the customer offer and experience in the centre. Advisors are proactive and floor walk for clients. They are present during the summons/court days to directly assist charge payers and support the council tax recovery position.
- 4.10 Tier three casework is delivered through employed specialist advisers. Tier three delivery 2013/14 was challenging with overall resources failing to meet demand and clients not receiving the service as promptly as the contract and need would demand. Through robust contract management by the authority and CAL 2014/5 has seen the provision stabilise, been delivered in-house to CAL and subsequently improve. For 2015/16 CAL have met contract expectations. Tier

three has an specific contract expectation that the advice supports predominately (95%) priority groups, these are:

- People with long term illness or disability
- Older people
- Families and lone parent on low incomes
- People with Mental Health Problems
- Carers
- People moving into work or training
- Vulnerable young people
- New arrivals

The tier three contract outcome as detailed in appendix 5.

It may relevant to note that the contract also states that Leicester Citizens Advice should assume that these Priority Groups (and the Priority Wards) may change during the term of the contract, and that, as the Service Provider, Leicester Citizens Advice will be expected to adapt their service to cater for those changing needs.

4.11 The advice client demographics in appendix 6 demonstrate the service provided. It should be noted this data is only available where the service user is willing to share their details. This information demonstrates the contract demographic profile which is reflective of the community it serves.

4.12 CAL are an active partner in the Social Welfare Advice Partnership group undertaking a significant co-ordination role in networking, strategic planning and support of advice organisations in the city.

4.13 The authority are satisfied the client feedback and complaints handling process is in place and acted upon appropriately. Customer satisfaction survey carried out annual customer satisfaction survey. This was carried out throughout October 2015. The contract asks the provider to meet a satisfaction level of 85%. The CAL has exceeded this contracts expectation. However it should be noted they have not conducted canvassing client satisfaction in the outreach sessions.

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire 2015/16 Customer Satisfaction Survey Summary of Results		
Service Area	Number of Respondents	Satisfaction %
Overall service delivery	550	93%
Gateway (triage) Tier 1	250	95%
Contact centre (Tier 1 & 2)	115	98%
Generalist advice (Tier 2)	124	98%
Specialist Advice	62	97%
Outreach	Not undertaken	Not undertaken

4.14 CAL has received 6 formal complaints during 2015/16. Of these 100% were resolved. 1 was upheld and 5 were found to be unfounded. The authority has received two formal complaints regarding service delivery in 2015/16. These were resolved within the terms of the contract. The outcome found the complainants cases to be unfounded.

4.15 The CAL service is predominately supported through volunteers. This is a requirement of the contract. The authority is satisfied volunteers are appropriately trained, the training programme is effective, the quality assurance process in place and has been audited by the CA Bureaus auditors. Volunteers are supported in their role; they are canvassed for the opinion of the support annually with the Leicester branch returning a score of 4.9 out of 6 with 6 being the highest. They ask questions such as

- *Over the past 12 months I have had the opportunity to express or contribute ideas or suggestions for improving our services for clients or the way we work and these have been listened to.*

4.16 CAL have provided the authority with all supporting business contract requirements including their business plan, business continuity plan, insurance compliance. In addition they have offered us the opportunity to view their risk register should this be of assistance.

5. Risks and issues identified through contract management.

5.1 With every contract there will be elements of business delivery which require monitoring; this is what contract compliance is all about. Here I have identified the headline contract limitations and delivery risks going forward. It should be noted that the requirements of the contract specification are not robust and are currently being reviewed. Therefore, where there are aspects of improvement, this may not necessarily be entirely directed at the provider.

- Advertising and communication of provision. Little or no evidence of a take up campaign or promotion of provision.
- There is some evidence of outcomes, benefit take up amounts declared and breakdown of main areas of advice given however the contract does not specify outcomes therefore the providers are not asked to report on such provision benefits.
- Little or no evidence of neither targeting of advice in key areas nor development of self-reliance provision (future proofing clients). The contract does not specify outcomes therefore the providers are not asked to report on such provision benefits.
- Outreach sessions are spread across the city, within key locations however delivery is fractured and communication of the advice offer is, as a result, ineffective, confusing. It is very difficult to identify when outreach would be available.
- The business continuity plan is in the process of being refreshed. This progress will be monitored.
- They have an on-going volunteer training plan. They have a high turnover of volunteers, as many are young and move into education/work, therefore they have supervision/monitoring in place to ensure the information they provide is correct and appropriate. However this holds inherent risks.
- The potential development of an online referral process with ALP (Advice Leicester Partnership) has yet to come to fruition.
- CAL perceived reputation, outside the client and contract management arena, is poor. Their profile, take up campaigns and press presence needs to be raised in

the city.

- Client experience needs to be tested independently.
- Identify future plans / priorities for the provision

5.2 The monitoring (in addition to contract targets) follows these aspects of provision:

- Understanding demand, delivering an effective take up plan for the city and how CAL will assist this objective
- Self-access and referrals from other agencies
- Quality of advice and outcomes for clients
- Customer satisfaction
- Partnership work with LCC and TNS project
- Communication plan

5.3 The authority is satisfied this demonstrates the contract is overall compliant and clients are aware, in the main, that the service is accessible and available.

6. Financial, legal and other implications

6.1 Financial implications

There are no significant financial implications for the Council arising directly from this contract overview report – Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance, ext. 37 4081.

6.2 Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising as a result of the recommendations of this report. - Emma Horton Head of Law (Commercial, Property & Planning, Ext 37 1426

6.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Where clients of the services in this report have needs relating to fuel poverty and affordable warmth, the Commission should note that the Council's Home Energy Team is able to receive referrals from Citizens Advice LeicesterShire. The Home Energy Team can offer specialist advice on steps people can take to stay warm on a limited budget, including help to access funding for insulation measures where this may be available. Advice of this kind can help Leicester households to stay warm without increasing carbon emissions.

In addition, the provision of local advice sessions around the city may help to minimise clients' need to travel, in turn preventing congestion and resulting carbon emissions from vehicles.

Duncan Bell, Senior Environmental Consultant, Environment Team. Ext. 37 2249.

6.4 Equalities Implications

The high level of customer satisfaction reflected in the report demonstrates that the service is of value to the user. Given the socio-economic profile of Leicester's residents, there is a need for the service. While appendix 1 gives some headline outcomes for users of the service, it gives no indication of the extent to which the service has promoted 'equality of opportunity' to some, most or all of its users in successful outcomes being achieved, an aspiration reflected in our Public Sector Equality Duty. If outcomes could be presented, particularly for the different priority groups, that would be useful evidence in determining how this service is directly benefiting users.

Irene Kszyk, Corporate Equalities Lead, ext. 374147.

7. Background information and other papers:

None

8. Summary of appendices

Appendix 1: CAL Annual Report 2016-2017 (separate document)

Appendix 2: Advice Tier definitions

Appendix 3: Link to LCC Advice page.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-community/benefits-and-support/advice-and-guidance/>

Appendix 4: Summary of outreach outcomes

Appendix 5: Tier three contract work profile by priority group

Appendix 6: Advice client demographics (separate document)

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

10. Is this a "key decision"?

No



Appendix 1

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire City Advice Services Contract Performance 2015-16

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Date: 6th October 2016

1. Background

Leicester City council has commissioned social welfare law advice for the city and Citizens Advice LeicesterShire was awarded the contract in April 2013 who work with Age UK Leicestershire and Shelter Housing Aid and Research Project (SHARP).

2. Headlines Summary

- **30,500** enquires
- Volunteer delivered service
- **98%** clients would recommend service
- **£265,032** of unclaimed income identified
- **£1,292,528** of debt managed
- **£922,389** Other savings including energy savings, consumer, holiday complaints/compensation etc
- **38%** of service users disabled
- **58%** of service users of working age
- Continuing 10 outreach sites across the city and new service out of York House
- **58** Volunteers moved into paid work as a result of our training

3. Provision

The target levels set for this contact are 30,000 contacts per annum.

30,584 enquiries were dealt with during the last year (2015/2016) exceeding the contract target by **2%**. The target and numbers achieved are shown below:

Contract Targets and numbers achieved - 2015/16			
Tier	Providing	Target	No. of enquiries
1	Information and signposting	19,600	19,674
2	Generalist advice	9,800	10,240
3	Specialist advice	600	670
Total		30,000	30,584

A full definition of the advice offered for Tier 1, 2 and 3 can be found in *Appendix A*.

4. Outcomes

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire completes an annual client survey. For 2015 98% of the clients surveyed advised that they would recommend the service. (Appendix B)

58 candidates that have volunteered have completed training and gained experience enabling them to move from unemployed into paid employment and the annual staff/volunteer survey scored a 78% satisfaction rate with working in the organisation. (appendix C)

£265,032 of unclaimed income identified, **£1,292,528** of debt managed and **£922,389** other savings including energy savings, consumer, holiday complaints etc

We provided assistance with energy supplier comparisons and switching suppliers, obtaining refunds from water suppliers including a day with BBC Radio Leicester that assisted more than 70 people move to a cheaper tariff.

The case studies below give examples of the types of issues dealt with and outcomes achieved:

Case Study 1: Asylum Support

Client was a Sri Lankan national, who had applied for asylum based on grounds of humanitarian protection meaning that she had no rights to public funds. The client presented with limited language skills and required a translator which was sourced immediately through Clear Voice. The client was experiencing large amounts of debt due to costs of accommodation and client was unsure of National Asylum Support Services (NASS) she was receiving, and the stage of her application for asylum.

The Adviser was able to contact NASS to confirm the support, and to contact the Home Office for an update on the stage of her asylum application. The client was linked with asylum based projects in the city, and hot food provision across the city networks.

Due to the client's immigration status, there are limited options for access to public funds, however we provided a primary access point for the client to access their support network and ensured that any action to recover the rent arrears was placed on hold whilst the client's situation was resolved.

Case Study 2: Personal Budgeting Support Referral

Client was referred from Leicester City Council for Personal Budgeting Support (a mandatory referral for clients who have requested Alternative Payment Arrangements after applications for Universal Credit). Client had debts in gas and electricity, water, and council tax. An Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) rained Money Adviser was able to provide a holistic approach to budgeting advice; the client was supported in applying to Big Difference Fund Scheme, resulting in a refund of over 90% of the clients water arrears and prevented enforcement action regards to the clients other debt. The adviser also supported the client in accessing furniture and white via the Local Authority Community Support Grant Scheme.

Case Study 3: Benefit Cap

Client was a single mother of three children. The youngest child had just become of school age. The mother was moved from Income Support to Job Seekers Allowance. The client had moved out of the family home which was owned and in the name of her husband into rented accommodation. The client was then divorced, and as part of the settlement she was awarded possession of the family home, which she could not sustain on her sole income. As the client's current residence is in a private tenancy, and she was reliant on housing benefit to pay this rent. A Discretionary Housing Payment was not possible as she was maintaining housing benefit. We provided support to enable the client to identify her options with regards to the asset of the house. The client was then informed by the local authority that she could be affected by the benefit cap. CITAL were able to assist the client by providing 'what if' benefit calculations, supporting her in looking at viable options to be able to support herself and her young family through tax credits.

5. Client Profile

5.1.1 Clients Reasons for contacting us

The top three requests for advice in the city are related to:

1	<p>Welfare benefits</p> <p>Predominately for vulnerable clients with literacy, language and other barriers preventing them from accessing services independently. For help with benefit applications (increasingly online), handling the new appeal process (reconsiderations are now mandatory prior to appeal), and coping with the impacts of sanctions or disputing the decision to apply a sanction. Appointments for financial capability and debt advice.</p>
2	<p>Debt</p> <p>Our largest area of debt advice has been providing support with the impact of benefit changes. Clients presenting with benefit problems that have created financial difficulties are not included in this category</p>
3	<p>Employment</p> <p>Problems linked to tax credits, employment support allowance – submitting mandatory reconsideration (challenging award decisions) due to suspension of benefits</p>

Leicester’s top three reasons for contact reflect those of Citizens Advice’s national advice service. However for the UK’s national picture the highest contact reason is debt advice, predominately council tax recovery.

We believe that the reason for the difference is due in part, to the strong partnership working between Citizens Advice and the local authority. We feel this has minimised the effects of council tax debts advice given within the locality due to our work with the Council and operating outreach sessions at the main Leicester City Council’s Customer Services Centre three times a week to establish contact with those who may need assistance.

There continues to be an increase in the proportion of clients seeking help with family law since the changes to civil legal aid in April 2013. We are seeing more people unable to access and receive legal aid help for court action in relation to divorce or child custody/access issues. This is not one of the areas in which we are able to provide Tier 3 help. There is family law advice provision in the city however this advice is chargeable. We have awareness of which organisations offer a free initial consultation and provide this information to clients so they can make an independent choice of provider.

We support with Discretionary Housing Payments for clients in arrears with their rent, and are able to support with these applications online. One of the areas of growth is the increase in the number of these clients that are referred for food parcels and hot meals; 32% more than this period last year. We are pleased to be one of the partner organisations chosen by the Council’s Community Support Grant Team to be able to directly refer clients to the main city food bank. We also provide additional support for clients who have been referred to the food bank by the city council and need ongoing assistance.

5.1.2 Client demographics

Disability - 38% of our clients (11,641) identify as having a disability or long term health problem. Nationally about 17% of UK residents describe themselves as disabled, which suggests people with disabilities have a disproportionate need for our service. This is to be expected given the ongoing changes to sickness and disability benefits.

Age – 58% (17,841) of our clients are of working age, with around 4% (1692) being over 65. Given that Leicester is a young city, we need to do more to market the service towards young adults. We are expanding our social media and online presence, offering to appeal to this age group.

Ethnicity – White British is our biggest single group of clients. The next largest groups identify as:

- Asian or British Asian and
- Indian and Black – African

We have clients recorded from **55 different nationalities** during this period. This reflects the wide variety of cultures and ethnicities within Leicester city.

We are still seeing an increase with European Economic Area (EEA) nationals, due to the recent government policy changes relating to right to reside for benefit purposes.

We have produced a leaflet that provides clear instruction to clients with limited language skills. This leaflet is available on the Social Welfare Vision page of Leicester City Council's website and also available via the three advice agencies that created the project (Citizens Advice, Community Advice and Law Service and Welfare Rights).

Our volunteers reflect the cultural diversity of the city, and we are able to assist most clients in their primary language. However where we are unable to do this we utilise a telephone translation services, which is accessible immediately but incurs a cost.

6. Client Contact methods

Clients have the option to self-help through Citizens Advice LeicesterShire's website. Online advice is provided through a search facility providing up to date legal and practical advice.

In addition to self-help clients have **4** methods of contact options available to them where they are provided with an initial assessment to obtain a full diagnosis of the issue(s) the client has presented.

- Telephone** – calls taken by the Contact Centre Monday to Friday between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm. Operated by 14 volunteers supervised by a paid member of staff
- Email** – contact can be made by our website www.citizensadviceleicestershire.org through the 'contact us' page at any time with an expected response time of 48 hours

- c) **Drop-in** – at 60 Charles Street between the hours of 9.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am to 3.30pm Friday. Clients are greeted by reception and details taken to check eligibility to access the service. At this stage clients have data protection explained to them and client profile details are obtained. Clients are given details of when they will be seen. The drop-in operates on a first come first served basis with the exception of clients presenting as emergency cases (for example a pregnant homeless person) who are prioritised.

Clients contacting through these methods are asked questions to extract detail of the issues they are faced with and provided with information relating to their issue(s). In many case the initial detail provided is adequate for the issues to be resolved. For those clients that require further advice and support signposting or referrals are made to the appropriate Citizens Advice specialist service or external organisation.

The main method of contact for clients during 2015/16 has been through drop-in at our contact centre located at 60 Charles Street. This drop in has seen over **19,000** over the year.

d) **Outreach Delivery**

The outreach sessions are offered in 10 wards across the city. These comprise 10 half day sessions per week, one in each ward. In Braunstone & Rowley Fields, Humberstone & Hamilton and Spinney Hills the outreach takes place at alternating venues to cover the ward area.

Locations, times and venues for the outreach sessions across the city - 2015/16		
Braunstone/Rowley Fields	Brite Centre	Alternative Mondays 9.30am - 12.30pm
	Oak Centre	Alternative Mondays 9.30am - 12.30pm
Spinney Hills	Wesley Hall	Alternative Tuesdays 9.30am - 12.30pm
	St Matthews TARA	Alternative Tuesdays 9.30am - 12.30pm
New parks	New Parks Library	Wednesdays 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Beaumont Leys	Beaumont Leys library	Tuesdays 2.00am – 5.00pm
Abbey	Tudor Centre	Tuesdays 9.30am - 12.30pm
Stoneygate	Open Hands	Thurs 9.30 - 12.30
Humberstone and Hamilton	Netherhall Community Centre	Alternative Fridays 10.00am – 1.00pm
	Hamilton Library	Alternative Fridays 10.00am – 1.00pm
Charnwood and Coleman	St Barnabas Library	Tuesdays 2.00am - 5.00pm
Eyres Monsell	Southfields Library	Wednesdays 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Rushey Mead	Woodbridge Sure Start Centre	Thursdays 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Leicester City Council Customer Service	91 Granby Street, Leicester	Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 10.00am - 12.00pm

The outreach is delivered by 2 advisors supplied by our partners AgeUK. Their workers see anyone, of any age.

We are currently encouraging people to book appointments for outreach by contacting the city centre office, through councillor referral or by using our contact centre phone or email as this has proven to be the most effective way to achieve maximum use of their sessions, but there remains some facility for drop in. Clients can choose whether they wish to be seen at their local Outreach or at the City office, whichever is more convenient or accessible for them.

We have been providing an outreach service at York House since April 2015, on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning. So far we have seen 1864 clients at this location. This is proving to be very successful, with clients both dropping in and being booked in for appointments. As we are located within the council offices, we primarily see clients presenting with local authority issues such as council tax. However we are seeing clients for a multitude of different reasons there including debt to employment issues. We have seen several vulnerable clients there that may not have engaged with our service through our usual channel of service at 60 Charles Street from domestic violence and substance misuse. The holistic service we are able to offer these clients enables them to access both generalist and specialist support from us, and partner agencies.

e) Appointments

In more complex cases the client is referred for an appointment for further advice at Tier 2 for support:

- Writing letters
- Form filling for benefit applications, local authority online forms, immigration form filling at OCSI Level 1
- Phone calls to relevant companies/organisations and government departments
- Use of the Citizens Advice AdviserNet database

and for Tier 3 Specialist advice for:

- Benefits
- Employment
- Debt

Support at Tier 3 includes casework and where appropriate and representation at tribunals for these specialist areas

Advice & Support contact routes 2015/16					
Tier	Face to face at Charles Street	Telephone, Email & Webchat via contact centre	Outreach & Home Visits	Age UK Outreach	SHARP & Employment referrals
1	11,149	8025	500	n/a	n/a
2	8596	n/a	2044	2,044	n/a
3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	670

f) Surgeries provided by third parties

- We have a pro bono solicitor, Josiah Hincks, who attends once a month to provide a free half hour in family law. They see 6 clients per session
- Community Advice and Law Service (CALs) also provides 2 sessions per week to provide debt case work up to bankruptcy and Debt Relief Order level. They see 3 clients per session.

In 2015/16 these two organisations have assisted clients in the numbers given below. The numbers reflect both the number of sessions provided and the number of clients able to be seen in the session which is influenced by the complexity of the work:

- Josiah Hincks - **68 clients**
- Community Advice and Law Services – **288 clients**

The table below clarifies which third party organisation dealt with what subject area and the numbers involved with in 2015/16. These are in addition to the above figures:

Subject Area	Organisation	No. of clients
Debt	CALS	122
Family Law	Josiah Hincks	72
Total	Total	356

CLS also provided a service during the year. Whilst the service was initially beneficial due to administrative issues this was not continued.

7. Quality Assurance

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire are the lead for the contract and hold ‘The Advice Quality Standard’, It is a requirement for this standard to demonstrate that our services are easily accessible, effectively managed and ensuring that staff and volunteers have the necessary skills to provide a quality service to the residents of Leicester City.

Quality Assurance monitoring is completed daily by the Service Leader and scoring is against the national Citizens Advice quality requirements. Scores are marked as poor, weak and met.

For work that has been marked as week or poor feedback is provided to the volunteer/worker on the expected level of work and how it can be achieved. Additional mentoring and training is provided where appropriate.

During 2015/16 we invited a peer from another branch of Citizens Advice to visit and review our work. From the checks made 86% of the criteria had been met.

As a member of national Citizens Advice we are audited in depth and must meet their requirements. We have chosen to become part of the national Citizens Advice pilot for case checking to further improve standards.

8. Volunteers contribution to the service

Volunteers provide the core workforce for our advice services. To ensure volunteers have the necessary skills and knowledge we have in place robust and effective mandatory training plans. This includes use of training mentors, continuous and rigorous supervision with ongoing case checking and quality checks to ensure all work done meets the National Citizens Advice and the AQS standard.

Our volunteers include those who are retired, those who supplement study with practical experience and those seeking to get back into the employment market. We help these volunteers tackle any barriers to work they may have, such as improving their literacy, language and computer skills as well as giving them experience in a workplace environment with support through the recognised reputation of the Citizens Advice network. This is compounded by an in-depth continual training programme, mitigating any risks factors involved in a client lead service whilst ensuring service delivery is unaffected.

A large number of the Contact Centre volunteers are the long term unemployed. Through a DWP scheme and the training and the work experience we provide gives them valuable skills and knowledge during an eight week placement. During their time with us we provide additional support to help them understand recruitment application processes and prepare for interviews. In 2015/16 we have seen over **58** candidates that have participated in this scheme move from unemployed into paid employment.

We continue to encourage law students to volunteer and work in both the contact and face to face service and have a high take up for this from both Leicester and De Montfort Universities; the students join us with good skills and they find the practical situation of providing advice at face to face invaluable for experience to enable them to progress their studies.

9. Partnership working

Although not funded by LCC, we are working in partnership with Leicester Ageing Together to provide advice, income maximisation and guidance to isolated older people in the following wards, Thurncourt, Wycliffe, Evington and Spinney Hills. There are 16 partners within the project, which is funded by The Big Lottery and managed by Vista. We have a Project Worker in post and have established several successful outreach venues within these wards. For example, one outreach at Belgrave library is booked up for the next 3 weeks due to the success of the project. We are also providing 'problem noticer' training to the partners and volunteers within the project. A problem noticer is a volunteer or employee based in libraries, foodbanks, and surgeries who spot individuals that may need support.

We contributed to the Fairer Finance Leicestershire consultation on financial pressures and risks in the city in March 2016 and the Gambling Community Impact Task Group to give witness testimony on the impact of gambling on vulnerable communities.

Leicester City Citizens Advice continues to work with the Advice Leicestershire Partnership (ALP) group.

We also contribute to the Homelessness Reference Group and Emergency Food Partnership within the city and attend these meetings. These meetings offer a great opportunity to create and strengthen partnership working within the city.

We participate in the forum Social Welfare Advice Partnership (SWAP) for organisations that offer advice in Leicester. SWAP allows us to regularly communicate with other advice providers and to discuss information, issues, and future changes affecting services at operational and strategic levels.

10. Social Policy Work

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire has been very active in undertaking research and campaigning in Leicester City.

During 2015/16 we took appropriate campaigns action for 1 in 9 clients seen that had a Social Policy Issue(s) raised regarding their case.

Examples of campaigns Action:

- **Big Switch** - We worked in partnership with BBC Radio Leicester to provide a day's worth of appointments at their site, providing assistance with energy supplier comparisons and switching supply if the clients required. We saved 70 clients over £27,500 during this single day period.
- **Scams Awareness** -Scam awareness month runs as a national campaign during July. Last year we worked with our partner agency AGEUK to deliver materials and engagements with clients to promote scam awareness.
- **Fortnight of Action Basic Bank Account Report** - CITAL took part in the national call for evidence, visiting 9 banks within Leicester City under their campaign Fortnight of Action. This involved Leicester City Research and Campaign Officers completing a series of pre-set questions within local banks enquiring about the services they are available to offer and collating this experience into a report.
- **Leicester Pride** -During the Leicester Pride event in August, Citizens Advice LeicesterShire was active in promoting our services during the event. We operated a stall at Victoria Park during the event to engage clients and promote equality and diversity.
- **Housing** - CITAL attended the Landlord Forum to engage with private landlords about the upcoming welfare reform and universal credit. We established what assistance CAL could give to landlords and their tenants, and gave a presentation about what impact these upcoming political changes would have on their housing responsibilities.
- **Zero Hours Contracts** - A long term investigation is continuing to investigate how zero-hours contract affect individuals. This research has shown that many people express severe financial hardship and debts as the result of not having fixed hours. It has been very difficult for clients to budget accordingly, with little idea of how many hours they can expect to have worked.
- **Europeans Economic Area migrants** - We are continuing to research the effects of welfare reforms on European Migrants in the city. New regulations on welfare entitlement have meant we have seen increased European migrants expressing financial hardship.

11. Initiatives

Communication and information

The media team have been very busy towards the end of 2015/16 raising the profile of our service with Leicester residents and highlighting the campaigning work we undertake. Recent press coverage through radio and TV has included pieces on payday loans, rogue landlords, consumer queries, Employment Support Allowance appeals and the summer budget. We are also increasing our social media presence through Facebook and Twitter, and provide regularly updated information through a television set located in our city office waiting room, providing step by step guidance on subjects such as, form filling and enforcement agents which we hope that waiting clients find informative.

We have been and continue to work on our communication methods to ensure staff and volunteers are kept up to date of changes and new developments. We have introduced a monthly newsletter to highlight the work done both across the City and County circulated to all staff and volunteers, and we update our intranet regularly with information that staff and volunteers would find useful in their work.

Work with Young People

During the year, separate to this contact, Citizens Advice LeicesterShire has completed work with colleges to provide training for diversity and confidence building to students. We feel this work will benefit the advice service by making young people aware of Citizens Advice LeicesterShire and other services available to them.

Work with landlords

This continues to be an area of work that wish to develop. We have already We have formed a relationship with the Landlord forum to promote services available to them and to their tenants.

Zero hours contracts

This work continues with continued monitoring of numbers of enquiries in relation to zero hours contracts and providing financial support.

Information Management System

Working with Citizens Advice to introduce a data management system that improves data captured and assists workers to better identify issues associated with the main identifying problem. For example the system would prompt the worker to consider if a client presenting with a housing issue has debt related problems and others that are common to the main issue.

Work is taking place to break ethnicity categories down further to enable a clearer picture to be gained of the number of East European clients other ethnic groups presenting to the service that have been historically grouped under a less descriptive heading.

Appendix A:

TIER 1: Information & Signposting

An information service involves giving clients the information they need, for them to know and do more about their situation. It can include information about rights, policies and practices; and about national and local services and agencies. Responsibility for taking any further action rests with the client.

TIER 2: Generalist Advice

A generalist unaccredited advice service includes a diagnosis of the client's enquiry and their financial circumstances, giving information and explaining options, and identifying further action the client can take. Some assistance is provided, for example contacting third parties on the client's behalf, form completion and drawing up a budget or action plan.

This level of service may be provided either by self-contained interviews following which the customer takes responsibility for further action, or ongoing casework support including all of the above and taking action on behalf other client, with the advice provider taking responsibility for follow-up work.

TIER 3: Specialist Advice

A specialist service accredited by the Financial Services Authority undertakes advice and casework at a level where detailed knowledge of the law is required. This would involve intensive one-on-one support and casework up to litigation and advice on Court hearings, including bankruptcy, insolvency, Debt Relief Orders and appropriate financial products.

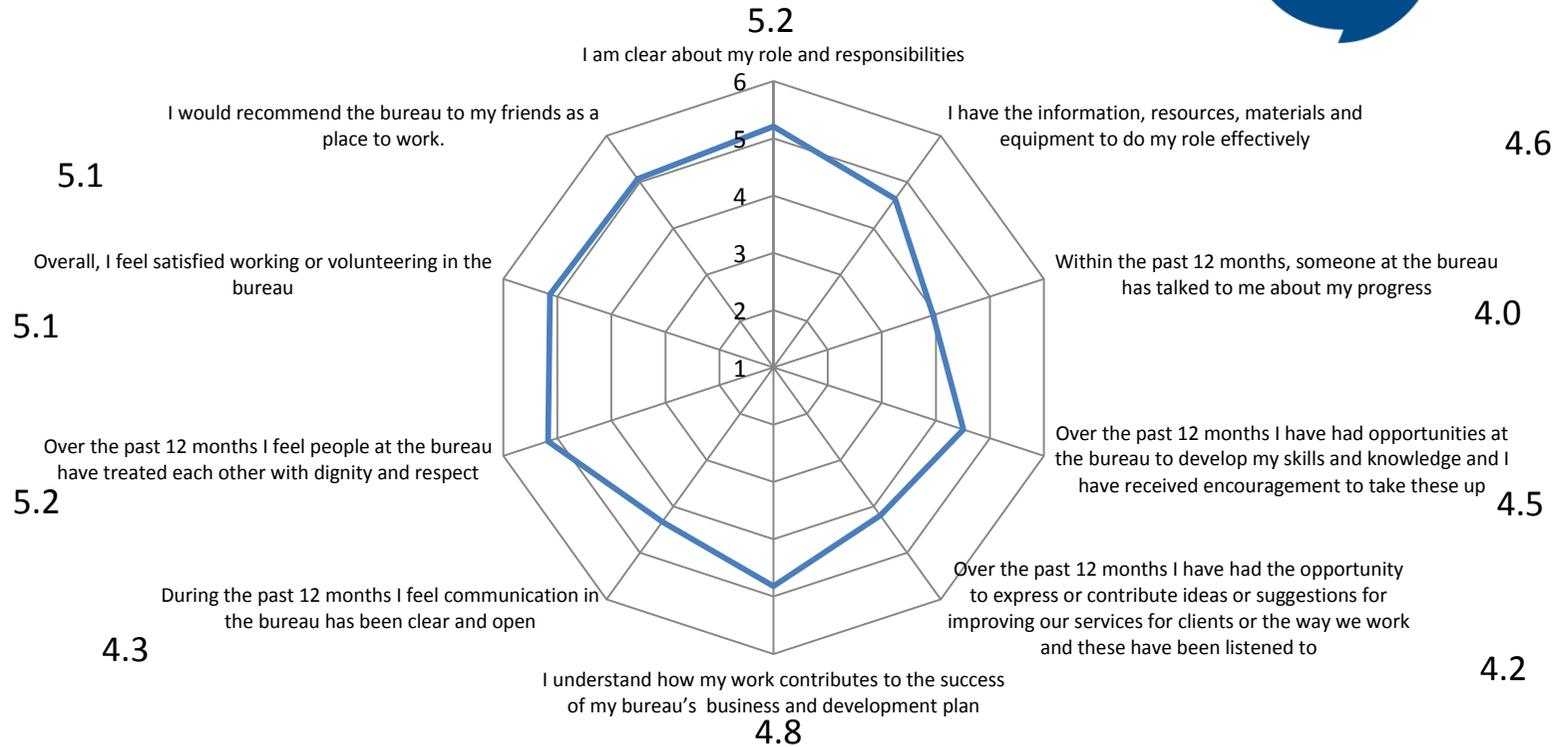
Existing '**Tier 3**' services include LCC Welfare Rights, Community Advice Legal Services (CALs), CA and two other **voluntary agencies**.

Appendix B:**Citizens Advice LeicesterShire - Client Satisfaction Surveys 2015**

Questions	<u>OVERALL</u> (Total number of response s per question as above)	Total positive responses	% Positive responses	Total Negative Response s	% Negative Responses
1. How easy did you find it to access our service?	550	512	93.1%	38	7%
2. How happy are you about the times we're open?	546	511	93.6%	35	6%
3. How happy are you about how long you have to had to wait in total	546	499	91.4%	47	9%
4. How happy are you about the time you had to discuss your problem?	549	542	98.7%	7	1%
5. How happy are you with the information and advice you have received?	549	541	98.5%	8	1%
6. Overall, how happy are you with the service that you have received?	546	536	98.2%	10	2%
7. Would you use the CAB service again?	517	508	98.3%	9	2%
8. Would you recommend using the CAB service to others?	516	509	98.6%	7	1%

Appendix C:

Staff and Volunteer Survey Summary 2015



Average score across the organisation of 4.7/6 (78%)



Appendix 2

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire Contract Analysis 2015-16 Advice Tier Definitions

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Date: 6th October 2016

Appendix 2: Advice Tier definitions

Tier	Overview	Detail
1	Assisted information and signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involves giving clients the information they need, to enable them to know more and do more about their situation. ▪ Includes information about rights, policies and practices, national and local services and various agencies that can help them. ▪ The responsibility rests with the client whether to take any further action or not
2	General advice and general advice with casework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes diagnosis of a client's enquiry and their financial circumstances, giving information and explaining their options and identifying further action to take. ▪ Some assistance is provided, for example contacting third parties (e.g Council Tax Department or enforcement agents on the client's behalf, form completion and drawing up a budget.) ▪ This level of service may be provided either by self-contained interviews, following by the customer taking responsibility for further action ▪ Mandatory reconsiderations ▪ Or, ongoing casework support including all of the above and taking action on behalf other client, with the advice provider taking responsibility for follow-up work.
3	Specialist advice and tribunal representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A specialist service accredited by the Financial Services Authority undertakes advice and casework at a level where detailed knowledge of law is required. ▪ This would involve intensive one-to-one support and casework up to litigation and advice on Court hearings, including bankruptcy, insolvency, Debt Relief Orders and appropriate financial products. ▪ Acting as an Appointee ▪ Appeals work ▪ Representation in legal proceedings.



Appendix 4

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire Contract Analysis 2015-16 Outreach Outcomes

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

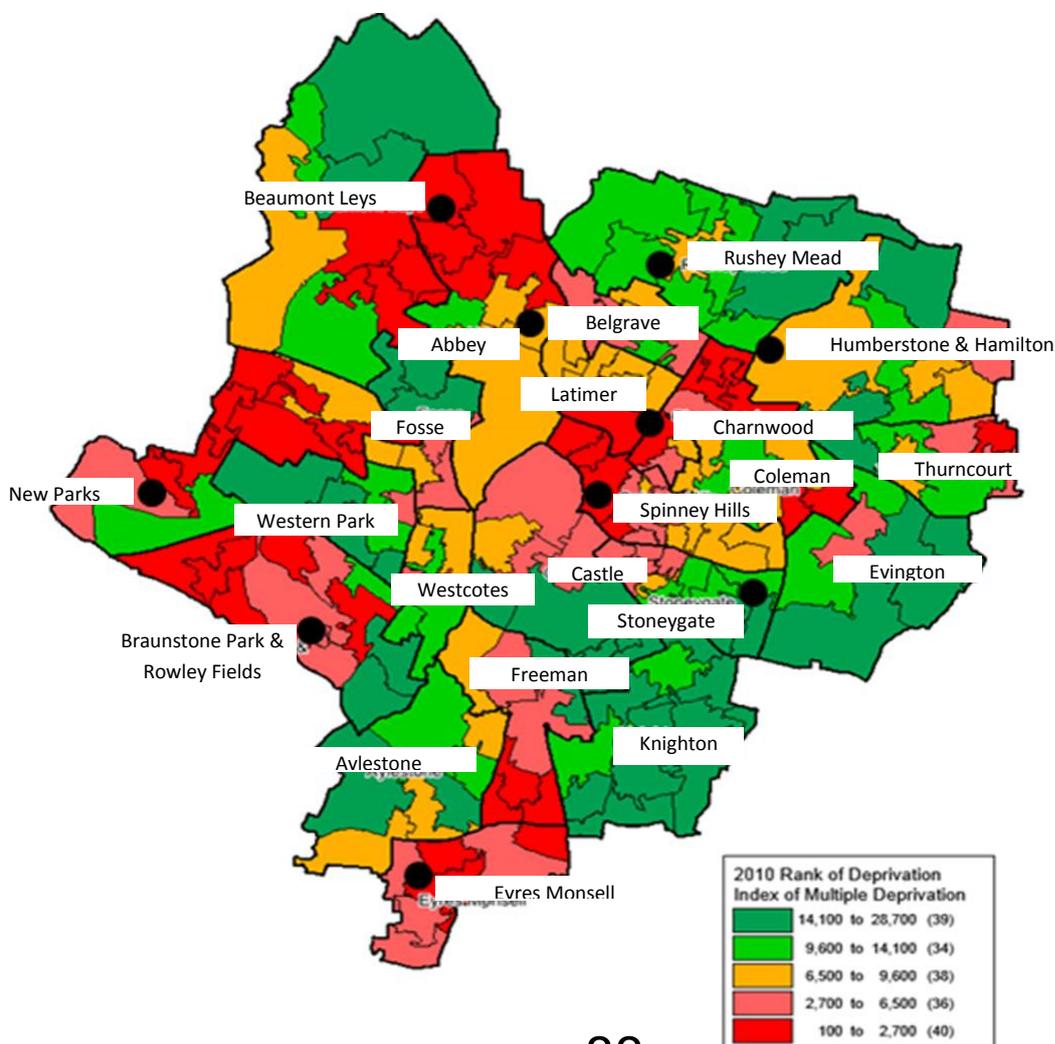
Date: 6th October 2016

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire subcontracts its outreach and home visits service to Age UK. In total, the outreach and home visit services supported 2,044 clients.

In the 2015-16 financial year, 210 home visits undertaken by the service for the most vulnerable clients, such as those clients who were housebound.

504 outreach services were provided by Citizens Advice LeicesterShire. The map and table below provides details of the locations where the service is provided.

Outreach location	Days of operation	Hours of operation
Brite Centre	Alternate Mondays	09:30 - 12:30
Oak Centre	Alternate Mondays	09:30 - 12:30
Wesley Hall Community Centre	Alternate Tuesdays	09:30 - 12:30
St Matthews Tenants and Residents Association	Alternate Tuesdays	09:30 - 12:30
Beaumont Leys Library	Tuesdays	14:00 - 17:00
Tudor Centre	Tuesdays	10:00 - 13:00
St Barnabas Library	Tuesdays	10:00 - 13:00
New Parks Library	Wednesdays	14:00 - 17:00
Southfields Library	Wednesdays	14:00 - 17:00
Rushey Mead Neighbourhood Centre	Thursdays	14:00 - 17:00
Open Hands Compassion Centre (Trinity Life Church)	Thursdays	14:00 - 17:00
Netherhall Community Centre	Alternate Fridays	10:00 - 13:00
Hamilton library	Alternate Fridays	10:00 - 13:00





Appendix 5

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire Contract Analysis 2015-16 Priority Groups

Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Date: 6th October 2016

The Priority Groups were identified in the Social Welfare Advice review, conducted by Adult Social Care in 2012.

The table below shows the number of people who accessed Citizens Advice LeicesterShire's services from these priority groups.

Priority Group	Total Figure	Tier 3 clients
Older People	1810	13
Carers	385	22
People with Mental Health problems	1157	82

It is important to note that numerical variations can occur due to a number of factors. For example clients may not wish to disclose that they belong to a priority group or they may not be aware that they are deemed to be vulnerable.

In addition, multiple indicators could be used to determine figures for some of the priority groups. For example, people moving into work or training and vulnerable young people may be recorded as:

- Carer leavers
- People with employment issues
- Benefit with certain benefit entitlements – particularly Universal Credit and Tax Credits
- Victims of domestic violence and discrimination

By the nature of the work completed by Citizens Advice LeicesterShire, the organisation supports clients who can be considered to be on low income based on their requests for assistance with benefits, debt or employment issues.



Appendix 6

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire Contract Analysis 2015-16 Demographics Analysis

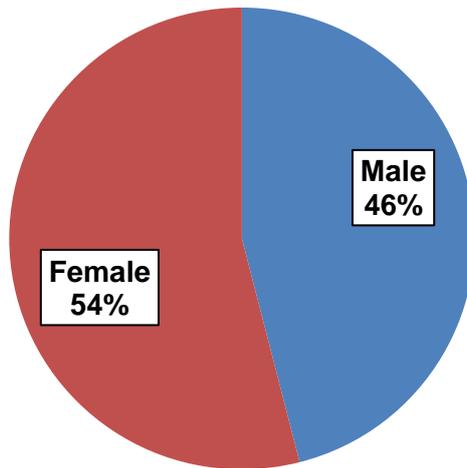
Lead director: Alison Greenhill

Date: 6th October 2016

1. Breakdown by Gender

Gender	Number
Male	10,121
Female	11,880

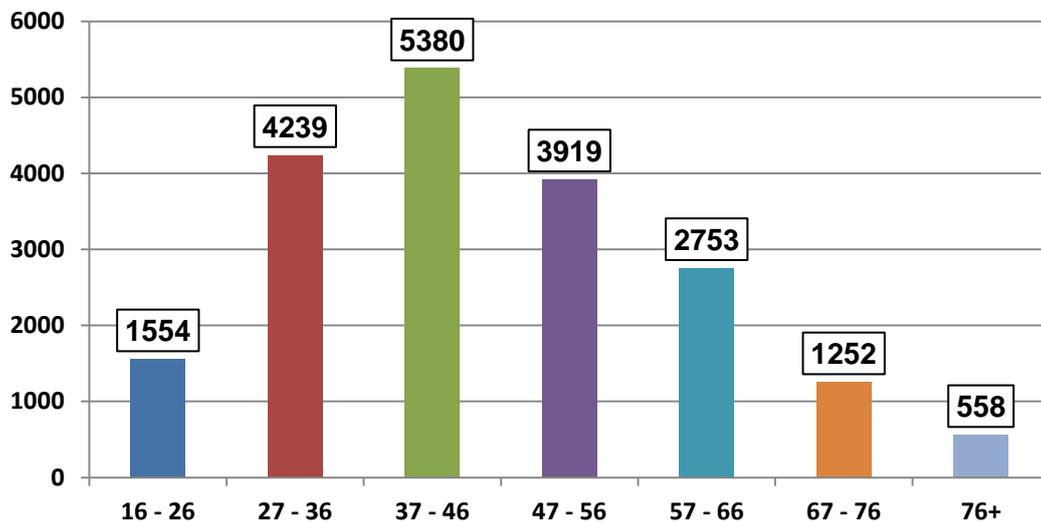
Analysis by Gender



2. Breakdown by Age

Age Range	Number
16 - 26	1554
27 - 36	4239
37 - 46	5380
47 - 56	3919
57 - 66	2753
67 - 76	1252
76+	558

Analysis by Age Group

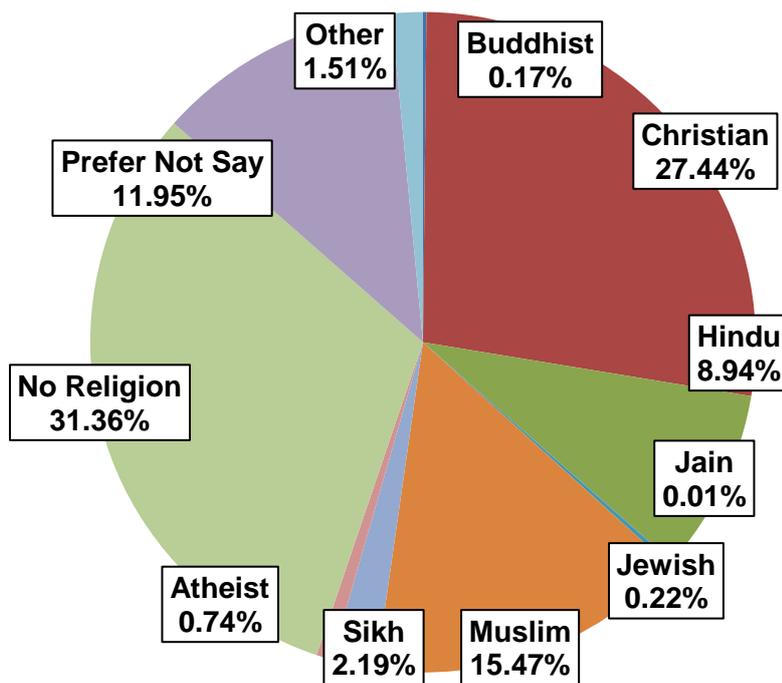


3. Breakdown by Faith Group

Faith Group	Number
Buddhist	24
Christian	3912
Hindu	1274
Jain	2
Jewish	31
Muslim	2205
Sikh	312
Atheist	106
No Religion	4470
Prefer Not Say	1704
Other	215

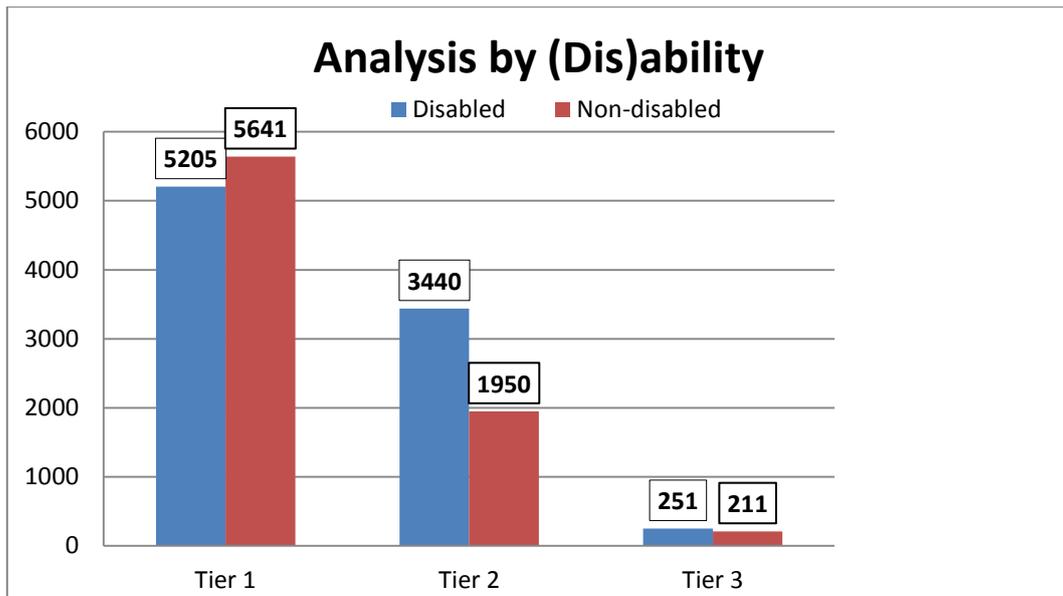
No results for Bahai

Analysis by Faith Group



4. Breakdown by Disability

Tier	Disabled	Non-disabled
Tier 1	5205	5641
Tier 2	3440	1950
Tier 3	251	211

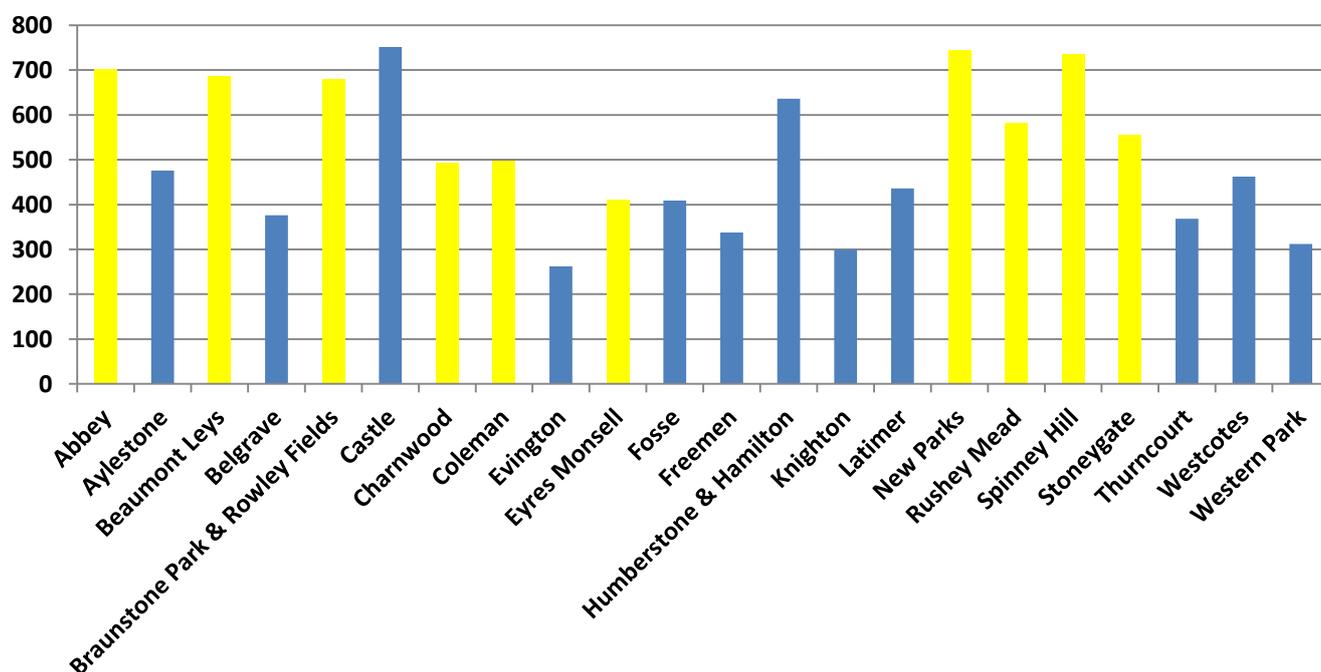


5. Breakdown by Ward: Quarters 1 and 2

Priority wards are highlighted in yellow. Quarter 1 and 2 reflect the pre-election boundaries – templates were not updated until prior to Quarter 3. Priority wards have not yet been identified following boundary changes.

Ward	Number
Abbey	703
Aylestone	476
Beaumont Leys	686
Belgrave	376
Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	680
Castle	751
Charnwood	492
Coleman	497
Evington	262
Eyres Monsell	411
Fosse	409
Freemen	338
Humberstone & Hamilton	636
Knighton	299
Latimer	436
New Parks	744
Rushey Mead	581
Spinney Hill	735
Stoneygate	554
Thurncourt	368
Westcotes	462
Western Park	312

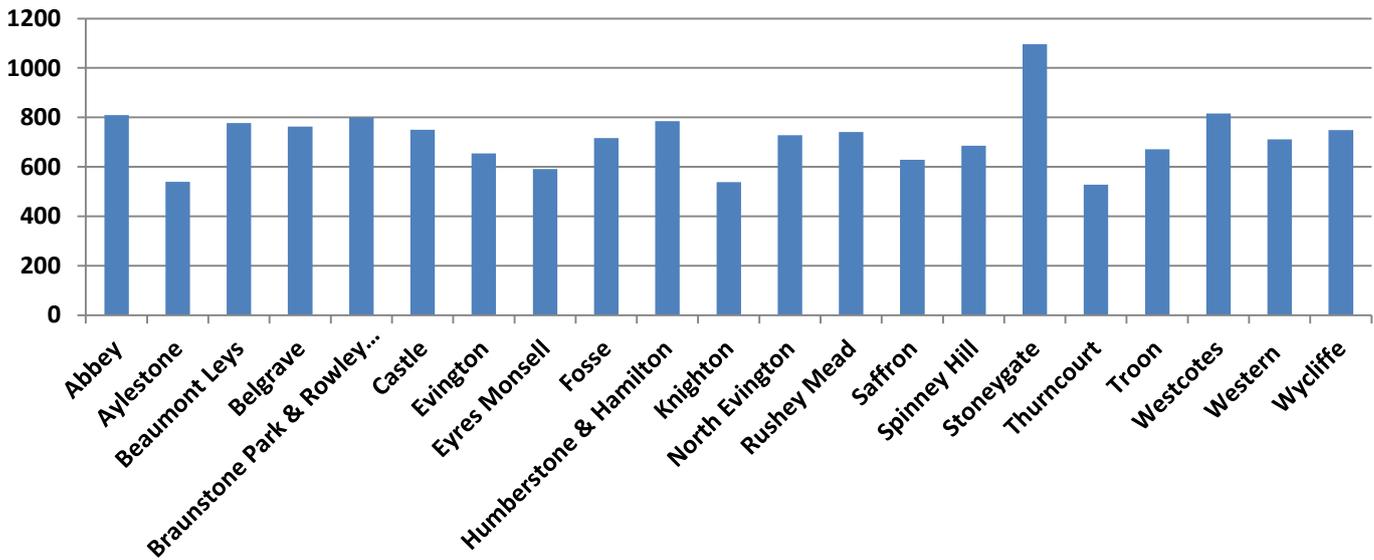
Analysis by Ward- Quarters 1 and 2



6. Breakdown by Ward: Quarters 3 and 4

Ward	Total
Abbey	810
Aylestone	540
Beaumont Leys	777
Belgrave	763
Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	799
Castle	750
Evington	654
Eyres Monsell	591
Fosse	716
Humberstone & Hamilton	785
Knighton	538
North Evington	728
Rushey Mead	741
Saffron	629
Spinney Hill	685
Stoneygate	1096
Thurncourt	528
Troon	671
Westcotes	816
Western	711
Wycliffe	749

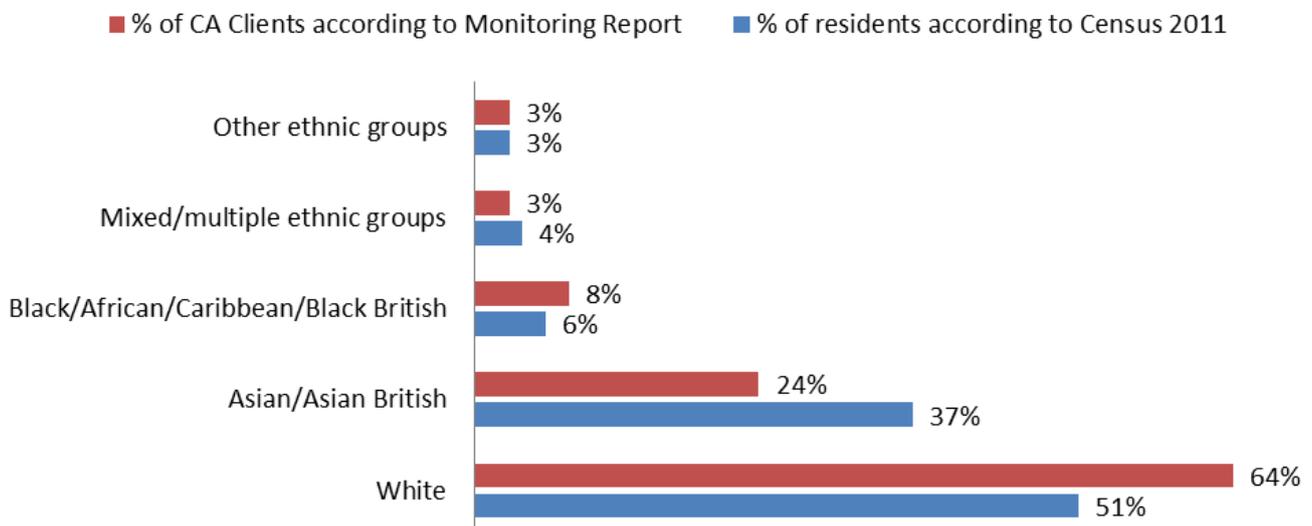
Analysis by Ward- Quarters 3 and 4



7. Breakdown by ethnicity for Leicester City Council

Ethnicity	% of residents according to Census 2011	% of CA Clients according to Monitoring Report
White	51%	64%
Asian/Asian British	37%	24%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	6%	8%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	4%	3%
Other ethnic groups	3%	3%

Analysis by Ethnicity



Neighbourhood Service and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Work Programme 2016-17

Meeting date	Meeting items	Actions Arising	Progress
<p>6th July 2016</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Portfolio overview 2. Using Buildings Better overview 3. Response to the Leicester Advice Sector: A report outlining the risk and demands in the city 4. The City's Emergency Food Bank Briefing Report 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That work to combat fly-tipping and that undertaken by the City Warden's service, be included in the forward plan and come as a report at a later meeting. 2. That the Director of Delivery, Communications and Political Governance continue to provide reports on Channel Shift and the UBB programme to the commission; that the legacy of TNS come to the commission after the programme has been rolled out; and for the UBB programme to be included in the OSC's work programme. 3. That the next report from the Social Welfare Advice Partnership and the Councils response to this consider including a SWAP representative; and that the CAB report comes to the commission later this year. 4. That a feasibility study in the introduction of community supermarket provision in the city is supported; That the Head of Revenues and Customer Support identify ways to address concerns for providers of food and fuel crisis; to invite Action homeless to contact faith communities to be included in the Councils emergency food provision; and to liaise with Voluntary Action LeicesterShire about the provision of volunteers in relation to the 	<p align="center">Complete</p>

Neighbourhood Service and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Work Programme 2016-17

		Braunstone area. The Director of Delivery, Communication and Political Governance is asked to liaise with the Chair about offering a standing invitation to representatives of Voluntary Action LeicesterShire to attend meetings of the Commission.	
24th August 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Furniture Bank Pilot Scheme 2. Social Welfare Advice procurement paper 3. Scoping document: 'Getting the best out of our neighbourhood services' 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For an update report to come back to the commission in a years' time on the schemes future arrangements and operation. 2. The Commission endorsed option 2 to go to the Executive; procurement to include organisations which have local knowledge, contacts and addresses the needs of a multicultural city in respect to language translations; for there to be a clear framework for monitoring of the contract and advice services in the city under the new arrangement; and for an update on social welfare advice to come back to the commission in the future. 3. Scoping document was endorsed by members of the commission. 	
5th October 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consideration of charging for Bulky waste collections 2. Consideration of charging for DIY waste at household waste recycling centres 3. Welfare Reform 4. Citizens Advice Leicestershire: City advice services contract performance 2015-16 5. Update on Spending reviews 		

Neighbourhood Service and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Work Programme 2016-17

30th November 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Channel Shift update2. Fly-tipping3. Social Welfare Advice Partnership report4. Update on Spending reviews		
25th January 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Gambling impact report update2. Update on Spending reviews		
22nd March 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Update on Spending reviews		

Neighbourhood Service and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Work Programme 2016-17

100

FORWARD PLAN / SUGGESTED ITEMS		
Topic	Detail	Proposed Date
Apps and digital offer	Love Leicester app and digital inclusion	
Budget		
CAB	Leicester's Welfare Advice Contract Analysis 2015/16	5 th October
Channel shift		30 th November
Children Services (TNS)	Children services (TNS and using buildings better)	
City Wardens Service	Communication of role to public	
Cleansing Services		
Communications Strategy		
Community Asset Transfer		After UBB
Community Involvement	Community engagement review report	25 th January 2017?
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	Consultation exercise Briefing session for members To come back to scrutiny to discuss outcomes and recommendations.	?
Customer Services	Scrutiny review on getting the best out of neighbourhood services Resident needs and communications	24 th August
DIY and Bulk	Consideration for charging for waste	5 th October
Emergency food: City's Food Banks	Overview and forthcoming developments Update report on volunteering numbers on food banks Voluntary action LeicesterShire	6 th July
Enforcement	Residents parking	
Fly tipping	Data from each ward City Wardens service	30 th November
Food Action Plan	Emergency food survey	
Food Safety: Public protection and	Update in respect of 2015.	22 nd March

Neighbourhood Service and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Work Programme 2016-17

regulation	Improvement plan Quality assurance and food procurement Halal meet in schools	
Gambling Impact Task Group Report		January 2017
Libraries	Which community groups use this space?	
Lottery Fraud		
Neighbourhood Policing and Community Safety	Governments modern crime prevention strategy	March 2017?
Private Landlords.		
Regulatory Service review	1 million saving	?
Social Welfare Advice Partnership	Report on advice provision and Council's response SWAP representative to be invited Single male claimants seeking help and crisis support	30 th November
Social Welfare Advice review	Social welfare advice contract procurement Briefing session for members	24 th August
Taxi Drivers	Child Safety/ screening process/ air quality	
Taxi Penalty System	12 month review – recommendation from NSCI August 2015	Early 2017
The Furniture Bank Pilot Scheme: Evaluation & Future Options	Evaluation of pilot scheme and future options	24 th August
Trading Standards	Legal highs	
Transforming Neighbourhood Services		
Using Buildings Better	Overview of the programme	6 th July
Ward Community meetings		
Waste Management	Biffa contract 2028	
Welfare reform	Briefing Impact and roll-out.	5 th October 2016

