



KEY DECISION PLAN
VERSION 07/13

Issued –
Effective for Period:
01/07/13 - 30/06/14

*Representations in respect of all the matters shown should be sent in writing, at least one week before the date or period the decision is likely to be made, to: Julie Britton, Senior Member Services Officer, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1EE.
Fax: 01362 690821; e-mail:julie.britton@breckland.gov.uk or telephone 01362 656343*

The Key Decision Plan shows all key and significant decisions that are likely to be made over the next **twelve months**

The Key Decision Plan is updated every month and shows the decisions that will be considered and the date when the decision is expected to be made. Some of the decisions will be recommendations to full Council, particularly if they impact on the Budget and the Policy Framework (comprising of statutory plans and strategies).

Key decisions are Executive decisions involving expenditure or savings exceeding 25% of the budget sum approved for a particular service or function, or a decision which significantly affects the community in two or more wards or electoral divisions.

Significant decisions are: 1. A decision made in connection with setting the Council Tax; 2. A decision to approve any matter relating to a Policy or Strategic Plan; 3. Any non-Executive decision which significantly affects the community in two or more wards or electoral divisions.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION
Councillor Lynda Turner Localism Act 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note for information the activity already undertaken to ensure compliance with the Localism Act 2011, and the establishment of a Community Assets Register as outlined in body of the report and in compliance with the Localism Act 2011; • To agree a policy of no compensation payments with regards to loss of income due to the moratorium on sale imposed by registration on the Community Assets Register (i.e. compensation for delay or failure to sell as a result of registration NOT loss of property value through the sale) 	Regarding the Community Assets Register, ward members will be consulted over the nominations in their wards and required to respond to the nominating party and nominated property owner (when the property is not a council asset). Asset management will be consulted when the nominated property is a	Document To Follow	Cabinet 18 Jun 2013

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION
		<p>council asset. In cases where the owner objects to a decision to list their property the Localism Portfolio holder may consult Community Development, Legal, Planning or an other department relevant to the case.</p>		
<p>Councillor Elizabeth Gould, Councillor Mark Kiddle-Morris</p> <p>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)</p>	<p>For Members to consider and agree a revised Statement of Community Involvement and approve it for adoption.</p>			<p>Cabinet 18 Jun 2013</p> <p>Council 4 Jul 2013</p>
<p>Thetford Town Centre MasterPlan</p>	<p>For Members to consider the outcome of the Thetford Town Centre Masterplanning process and agree that the Thetford Town Centre Masterplan be adopted as a Council document to coordinate investment and regeneration activity in Thetford Town Centre.</p>			<p>Cabinet 18 Jun 2013</p>

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION
<p>Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services</p> <p>Pest Control Services</p>	<p>Recommend that the Pest Control Service with affect from 1 April 2014 is withdrawn and appropriate sign-posting to commercial providers via the Customer Services Team is provided</p>	<p>CMT, Portfolio Briefing, Cabinet</p>	<p>Breckland Pest Control Report Amended 15 May 13 (v41 23.05.13 Removal of Pest Control Services[1] Workings for pro b removal of pest control service(2)</p>	<p>Cabinet 30 Jul 2013</p>
<p>Breckland Community Infrastructure Levy - Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and Viability Assessment</p>	<p>To consider the findings of the CIL viability assessment, and review the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and agree this for a period of public consultation.</p>			<p>Cabinet</p>
<p>Councillor Michael Wassell</p> <p>Budget Setting, Financial Medium Term Plan & Capital Strategy</p>	<p>Recommend to Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the revenue budgets & parish and special expenses for 2014-15 • the capital estimates & associated funding for 14-15 & outline position to 2018-19 • the Medium Term Financial Plan & Capital Strategy • the Council Tax level for 2014-15 	<p>Corporate Management Team, Portfolio Briefing, Cabinet and Full Council</p>	<p>Document To Follow</p>	<p>Cabinet 11 Feb 2014 Council 27 Feb 2014</p>

PORTFOLIO HOLDER / SUBJECT	PURPOSE OF DECISION	CONSULTEES AND METHOD OF CONSULTATION	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	LIKELY DATE OF DECISION AND WHO WILL MAKE DECISION
Councillor Michael Wassell Council Tax Setting	To approve the Special Expenses for 2014-15 To approve the formal Council Tax resolutions for 2014-15	The report covers the formal resolutions required to set the Council Tax in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended	Document To Follow	Council 27 Feb 2014

If you have any comments or queries regarding any of the entries in the Key Decision Plan please contact:
Julie Britton, Senior Member Services Officer, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1EE.
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BRECKLAND COUNCIL

Report of: Philip Adams, Public Protection Manager / Cllr Elizabeth Gould, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Environmental Services

To: Cabinet, 30 July 2013

Author: Richard Boole, Environmental Protection Manager

Subject: **PEST CONTROL SERVICE**

Purpose: To seek Cabinet approval for the withdrawal of the Pest Control Service with affect from 1 April 2014.

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet: -

1. Withdraw the Pest Control Service with affect from 1 April 2014 and provide appropriate sign-posting to commercial providers via the Customer Services Team.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Pest Control Service currently provided by the Council, was highlighted by residents during the "Could We Should We" consultation events in September 2012 as a potential area for disinvestment.
- 1.2 This report has been put together following this consultation and recommends the withdrawal of the Pest Control Service with affect from 1 April 2014.
- 1.3 Under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 (PDPA) the Council is required to inspect its area for rodent infestations and require land owners to take action to control such incidences. There are no equivalent provisions regarding insects.
- 1.4 To help fulfil this obligation, the Council has traditionally delivered a Pest Control Service.
- 1.5 For domestic properties, a free service has been provided for rodents (rats and mice) with charges being made for the treatment of insects (wasps, fleas, cluster flies and bed bugs). For commercial properties, charges have been levied for all services/treatments.
- 1.6 The Pest Control Service is provided by an external contractor, Pest Express Ltd, at a budgeted cost to Breckland Council of £59,090 in 2013-14. The present contract runs from 1 May 2011 to 30 April 2014 with an option to renew for a further year (the cost of this further year would see an increase in costs by an RPI (retail price index) formula identified within the contract).

- 1.7 Pest Express Ltd provide a service during normal working hours Monday to Friday with an emergency service out of hours and at weekends.
- 1.8 The above costs are offset in part by income from chargeable treatments, which are subject to significant fluctuation (weather dependent plus other factors beyond our control).
- 1.9 In 2011/12 the income received from chargeable treatments totalled £21,574. In 2012/13 the equivalent figure was £6,575.
- 1.10 The numbers of treatments requested are shown in the table below: -

Pest	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Rats	701	625	665
Mice	107	128	149
Wasps	583	565	118
Fleas	44	49	53
Bed Bugs	13	18	12
Cluster Flies	21	24	8

- 1.11 With regard to the pest control service provided by neighbouring authorities: -
 - Broadland District Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council provide free treatment for rodents in domestic properties;
 - Broadland District Council provides a chargeable service for insects in domestic properties;
 - Great Yarmouth Borough Council do not provide a service for the treatment of insects but have agreed preferential rates with Pest Express Ltd;
 - Norwich City Council and South Norfolk District Council provide a chargeable service for rodents and insects (e.g. South Norfolk District Council charges £30 per rodent treatment);
 - North Norfolk District Council and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council do not provide a Pest Control Service.

2.0 ISSUES

- 2.1 As highlighted above Breckland Council currently provides a full Pest Control Service through an external contractor with a combination of free treatments (rodents) and chargeable services (insects).
- 2.2 Withdrawing the full Pest Control Service would save the Council circa. £46,100 per annum in 2014-15.
- 2.3 Withdrawing the Pest Control Service would not compromise the Council's obligations with regard to the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 (PDPA). That said, some additional work would be picked up within the Council's existing Environmental Health resource if the full service was withdrawn.
- 2.4 As demonstrated above demand for some treatments/services has decreased over recent years.

- 2.5 The full Pest Control Service could be retained and charges could be introduced for those services currently provided without charge (rodents). To make this service cost neutral to the Council it is estimated that a charge (per treatment) of £98.90 would need to be levied. A lower charge could be introduced, thereby reducing the net cost of the service but not making the service cost neutral.
- 2.6 A charge of £98.90 is high when compared to the charges applied by neighbouring local authorities, e.g. South Norfolk District Council (£30). Indicative charges provided by private contractors are listed below (excluding VAT): -
- Rodents £50 for 2 visits thereafter £20 per visit
 - Wasps £40 per treatment
 - Bed bugs from £150 per treatment
 - Fleas £125 per treatment
 - Flies £125 per treatment

Breckland Council's current charges are provided in the appendices of this report. The above figures suggest that our current Pest Control Charges for insects are low when compared to the market; the proposed charge for the treatment of rodents detailed above is higher than the market rate. Should Members decide to retain the Pest Control Service then a review of Fees and Charges [and the associated contract price] should be undertaken.

- 2.7 The withdrawal of the service or the introduction of charging could have the effect that domestic property owners are less willing to actively seek treatment for problems as they arise and could lead to increased requirement for the Council's enforcement function.
- 2.8 That said, experience from other local authorities suggests that there wasn't a significant impact on the Environmental Health Service in terms of additional enforcement activity after the withdrawal of a Pest Control Service.
- 2.9 Furthermore, experience from other local authorities that have withdrawn such provision would suggest that although some impact and customer dissatisfaction is felt in the early stages following the change, this subsides over time as people become accustomed to the new arrangements.
- 2.10 It is important that the withdrawal of the service is well publicised, the website amended and the Customer Service Team supplied with suitable scripts, to help keep customers well informed and to ensure that as little impact as possible was felt by the Environmental Health Team.

3.0 OPTIONS

- 3.1 Do Nothing – retain the Pest Control Service at a budgeted cost of £65,630 in 2014/15 including tendering costs. The cost being offset by income from seasonal insect treatments, circa. £19,530. Net cost to Breckland Council would be circa. £46,100 (inc. contract re-tendering costs).
- 3.2 Withdraw the Pest Control Service with a saving of circa. £46,100 in 2014/15 and provide appropriate sign-posting to commercial providers via the Customer Services Team.
- 3.3 Retain the Pest Control Service but introduce a charge for domestic rodent treatments at an amount similar to that charged by South Norfolk Council i.e. £30.

Based on the current rodent figures for 2012/13 with some reduction for people not able to pay, 400 payments of £30 and an income of £12,000 could be expected. Net cost to Breckland Council of the Pest Control Service would therefore be circa. £34,100.

- 3.4 Retain the Pest Control Service but implement appropriate charges to ensure that the service is cost neutral. An income of £19,530 from insects (based on budgeted income is assumed. If 400 rodent treatments are provided each year then a charge of £98.90 would need to be levied to realise an additional income of £39,560 which would make the service cost neutral (excluding re-tendering costs of £6540).

4.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 4.1 The Pest Control Service is not a statutory function and disinvestment would make a significant contribution to the Council's "efficiency programme". There is public support for disinvestment as evidenced in the "Could We, Should We" consultation events. Experience from elsewhere suggests that the impact on residents and businesses diminishes over time and is not significant.

- 4.2 Retaining the Pest Control Service and introducing charges for all treatments could make the service cost neutral. That said, it is difficult to predict the level of income that would be generated due to the evidenced fluctuations in demand and the overall reduction in demand for such services. Furthermore, there would be a need to re-tender and renegotiate any contractual arrangements with an associated cost to the Authority and vary fees and charges annually to reflect the demand for service.

5.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS AND TIMELINES

- 5.1 Revenue saving of circa. £46,100 per annum from 1 April 2014 forward.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Carbon Footprint & Environmental Issues

Not applicable.

6.2 Constitution & Legal

Legal implications have been considered and have been included within the report.

6.3 Contracts

The current contract expires on 30 April 2014 (with the option to extend for a further year) and there is no legitimate reason to seek early termination.

Should the service be retained there would be a need to retender the contract from mid 2014. Tender processing using an external agency is estimated at £6540. It is unclear what the cost of a new contract price would be per annum until the market is tested, the only benchmark being the contract we already have.

6.4 Crime and Disorder

Not applicable.

6.5 Equality and Diversity & Human Rights

No specific implications identified, other than the potential impact on low income families were a free or low cost treatment service not available.

6.6 Financial

See above and attached Proforma B

6.7 Risk Management

Business risk issues have been identified and are covered in the report. Additionally, were the service to cease, there may be public relations / reputational risks that would need managing, particularly in the short term immediately after the contract ended.

6.8 Staffing

Staffing issues have been considered and are included within the report.

6.9 Stakeholders / Consultation

Not applicable.

6.10 Other

Not applicable.

7.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

All Wards

Lead Contact Officer

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Key Decision:

Yes - This report results in Cabinet making a key decision.

Appendices attached to this report:

Current Pest Control Charges

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PROFORMA B

BRECKLAND COUNCIL PROFORMA B
(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)

FROM: Mandy Ashton (Senior Accountant – Revenue & Projects)

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED REPORT

REPORT: Pest Control Services
REPORT DATE: 23rd May 2013

	£ Year 1 2013-14	£ Year 2 2014-15	£ Year 3 2015-16	£ Year 4 2016-17	£ Year 5 2017-18
Revenue					
Removal of Pest Control Service (up to)	-	(65,630)	(59,090)	(60,920)	(62,810)
Lost income from chargeable services (up to)	-	19,530	19,530	19,530	19,530
Total	-	(46,100)	(39,560)	(41,390)	(43,280)
Funding required:		Considered by:		Date:	
Total capital cost	£nil	CMT		TBC	
Revenue Cost/ (Saving) – up to	(£46,100)	Exec Cabinet		TBC	

Financial Services Comments

The report seeks approval to withdraw the pest control service from 01st April 2014. The table above shows the net saving to the council based on full removal of the service. Other options to be considered are listed below:

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Charge fee for rats (400 cases @ £30)	(£12,000)	(£12,000)	(£12,000)	(£12,000)
Charge fee for rats for service to breakeven (400 cases @ £98.90)	(£39,560)	(£39,560)	(£39,560)	(£39,560)

The above table assumes that the pest control function is retained with a charge being made for the control of rats. By charging a nominal fee of £30 per case the additional income generated will be approximately £12,000 per year. For the service to breakeven (excluding tender costs in 2014/15), based on budgeted income, a fee of approximately £98.90 will need to be made for this service.

Financial Risk

All options reduce costs to the council. If either option is taken to retain the service and charge for removal of rats shortfalls in income budgeted will remain a risk, as income received for the treatment of pests and rats are partly determined by weather conditions. Should the higher level of charge be approved the take up of service may be reduced.

This PB is valid for 3 months from PB date	If this PB is not longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.
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Workings for Pro B 15/04/13 - Removal of Pest Control Service**Option A**

Current budget	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Pest Control service	(59,090)	(65,630)	(59,090)	(60,920)	(62,810)
Lost income	19,530	19,530	19,530	19,530	19,530
	(39,560)	(46,100)	(39,560)	(41,390)	(43,280)

Option B

Pest Control service	59,090	65,630	59,090	60,920	62,810	
Income	(19,530)	(19,530)	(19,530)	(19,530)	(19,530)	
Charge for Rats	(12,000)	(12,000)	(12,000)	(12,000)	(12,000)	400 cases @ £30
	27,560	34,100	27,560	29,390	31,280	

Option C

Pest Control service	59,090	65,630	59,090	60,920	62,810	
Tendering costs	0	(6,540)	0	0	0	
Income	(19,530)	(19,530)	(19,530)	(19,530)	(19,530)	budgeted income
Charge for Rats	(39,560)	(39,560)	(39,560)	(41,390)	(43,280)	
fee based on 400 cases	(98.90)	(98.90)	(98.90)	(103.48)	(108.20)	

Last 3 years income

2010/11	(16,905)
2011/12	(21,574)
2012/13	(6,575)
average	(15,018)

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