

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL
PEST CONTROL – ACTION PLAN

SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	POST TITLE	BUDGET COST	TIMESCALE																				
1. Consideration be given to Middlesbrough Council offering a low cost Pest Control Service to residential properties and whether this would provide an additional income stream to the service area.	<p>To ascertain potential demand based on previous years uptake.</p> <p>To understand what provision is already available to residents from other sources</p>	Pest Control Manager	<p>Previous year's uptake have been in the region of 2600 jobs for financial year 2016/17 and 2016 jobs for financial year 2017/18. Therefore we have based the assumptions below on the uptake of similar numbers to the higher uptake.</p> <p>A provision/charge analysis of the Tees valley councils and private businesses has been undertaken, showing the below information.</p> <table><tr><th>Council</th><th>Free Service</th><th>Chargeable Service</th><th>Charge</th></tr><tr><td>Stockton Council</td><td>Rats and mice</td><td>Wasps, Fleas, Bed Bugs, Cockroaches</td><td>£35+vat per visit</td></tr><tr><td>Darlington Council</td><td>Rats and mice</td><td>Wasps, Fleas, Bed Bugs, Cockroaches</td><td>£70.20 + vat per visit</td></tr><tr><td>Redcar & Cleveland Council</td><td></td><td>Rats/Mice Insects</td><td>£83 (up to 2 visits)</td></tr><tr><td>Hartlepool Council</td><td>Rats (if in house)</td><td>External rats Mice</td><td>£40 £80 (up to 4 visits)</td></tr></table>	Council	Free Service	Chargeable Service	Charge	Stockton Council	Rats and mice	Wasps, Fleas, Bed Bugs, Cockroaches	£35+vat per visit	Darlington Council	Rats and mice	Wasps, Fleas, Bed Bugs, Cockroaches	£70.20 + vat per visit	Redcar & Cleveland Council		Rats/Mice Insects	£83 (up to 2 visits)	Hartlepool Council	Rats (if in house)	External rats Mice	£40 £80 (up to 4 visits)	<p>2 April 2021</p> <p>2 April 2021</p>
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	Based on the above, to carry out an income/ expenditure exercise to understand the financial befits/risks.	<p>In order that the service met the expected demands of circa 2,000 (actual visit numbers for 2017/18) Circa 10 visits would be required per working day and as such 2 staff would be required, plus ancillary resources, as shown below, to deliver the service:</p> <table><tr><td>2 X New Operative @ Grade F</td><td>£52,068</td></tr><tr><td>2 X Vehicles</td><td>£14,000</td></tr><tr><td>Additional equipment & supplies</td><td>£5,000</td></tr><tr><td>Upgrade x1Technician to Senior Technician</td><td>£2,670</td></tr><tr><td>Total Cost</td><td>£73,738</td></tr><tr><td>Total estimated annual Income</td><td>£73,740</td></tr></table> <p>Given the above direct cost (to MBC) information, a charge of £36.87 would be required, to ensure that MBC recovers the costs and therefore is not at financial risk.</p> <p>The number of treatments varies, pending on the pest problem. In most cases up to 4 treatments will be required to treat Rats/Mice in a rolling 12 month programme.</p> <p>There is the risk in offering this chargeable service, as it is based on supply and demand of service requests.</p>			2 X New Operative @ Grade F	£52,068	2 X Vehicles	£14,000	Additional equipment & supplies	£5,000	Upgrade x1Technician to Senior Technician	£2,670	Total Cost	£73,738	Total estimated annual Income	£73,740	2 April 2021
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			<p>Should the residential uptake be below the minimum required 2,000 visits per year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000 visits per annum are required to make the service financially viable (a breakeven position). • A reduction in requests will generate less income, resulting in a budget pressure, as a consequence of the income not recovering the costs of providing the service. • An increase in requests will generate service pressures to fulfil the service, resulting in possible additional resources required and/or complaints, which in turn will lead to further financial risk to MBC 	
2. Investigate whether an amount could be included within the Council Tax charge to provide a pest control service to private residents without any additional fee.	MBC Finance Dept have confirmed that this is not possible		<p>The Head of Finance has confirmed that funding of any specific service from Council Tax is not possible as the overall funding available to the Council, which includes Council Tax, Business Rates, Government grant funding etc. is allocated to directorates for overall service management</p> <p>Finance advice given is that the ECS Director could decide to use some of the amount allocated for his Directorate to fund a free pest control service to residents but this would mean that other budgets for services would have to be reduced so that the overall budget stays within the amount allocated for the Directorate, and also that the director would have to deal with any political consequences of this. The Pest Control budget for 2020/21 has a net surplus budget of £122k so any reduction or removal of this surplus budget would require budget to be found from elsewhere within the Directorate.</p> <p>A possible route to provide funding is to make a request</p>	2 April 2021

			<p>to the MTFP for funding. This has to be done by the submission of a business case paper from the Director to LMT including the reasons etc. and the link to the Council's Strategic Priorities. The next refreshing of the MTFP is in June so any paper to LMT would need to be taken before then. Generally bids to the MTFP will be rejected if they are for amounts less than £50k as the Directorate would generally be told to fund them from their existing resource allocation.</p> <p>Another point to note is that this has been examined before many years ago and one issue is that once the service is free how do we control demand and meet the expectation of the public. We would still only have finite level of resources to provide the service, and we may then get residents wanting to pay for an enhanced service if there are long delays in the service provision. A similar issue exists in the Junk Jobs Service currently, where there is free and enhanced service</p>	
3.	Promote educational messages about good house-keeping to prevent vermin infestations through the Love Middlesbrough magazine.	Design and arrange for a one page article / advert in the Love Middlesbrough publications. Promote the service via the council website, social media and community hub/library posters.	Pest Control Manager	<p>£1500 would enable the promotion of educational material and for a one page article in the Love Middlesbrough magazine</p> <p>1 August 2021 (summer edition of Love Middlesbrough)</p>