

Agenda

Meeting name	Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee
Date	Tuesday, 22 February 2022
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH
Other information	This meeting is open to the public

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are summoned to the above meeting to consider the following items of business.

Edd de Coverly
Chief Executive

Membership

Councillors	R. Child (Chair)	J. Wilkinson (Vice-Chair)
	P. Chandler	J. Douglas
	C. Evans	M. Glancy
	E. Holmes	J. Illingworth
	P. Posnett MBE	M. Steadman

Quorum: 5 Councillors

Meeting enquiries	Democratic Services
Email	democracy@melton.gov.uk
Agenda despatched	Monday, 14 February 2022

No.	Item	Page No.
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	MINUTES To approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 January 2022.	1 - 6
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Members to declare any interest as appropriate in respect of items to be considered at this meeting.	7 - 8
4.	REVIEW OF THE FORWARD PLAN To consider the attached Forward Plan and identify any relevant items for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme, or to request further information.	9 - 20
5.	REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22 Members are to review and comment upon the attached Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22.	21 - 28
6.	UPDATE ON ALLOTMENTS The Committee are to receive an update on allotments.	29 - 36
7.	URGENT BUSINESS To consider any other items that the Chair considers urgent	

Minutes

Meeting name	Scrutiny Committee
Date	Tuesday, 25 January 2022
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor R. Child (Chair)

Councillors

J. Wilkinson (Vice-Chair)	P. Chandler
J. Douglas	C. Evans
M. Glancy	E. Holmes
J. Illingworth	M. Steadman

In Attendance

Councillor R. Bindloss	Councillor R. Browne
Councillor R. de Burle	Councillor M. Graham MBE
Councillor J. Orson	

Officers

- Chief Executive
- Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
- Director for Corporate Services
- Director for Growth and Regeneration
- Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy (via remote link)
- Corporate Services Manager
- Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer (via remote link)
- Democratic Services Officer (HA)
- Democratic Services Officer (SE)

Minute No.	Minute
43	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>An apology for absence was received from Councillor Posnett.</p> <p><i>(At 6:32pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor Holmes entered the meeting.)</i></p>
44	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2021 were approved.</p>
45	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>No declarations of interest were received.</p>
46	<p>GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2022/23 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2025/26</p> <p>The Chair informed Members that the report is due to be presented to Cabinet on 9 February 2022. Currently the report and appendices are in draft and subject to amendments.</p> <p>Following an introduction by the Chief Executive, the Director for Corporate Services gave a presentation on the budget proposals for 2022/23 and the medium term financial strategy.</p> <p>During the introduction, Members noted that the Budget Scrutiny Workshop was conducted before the provisional financial settlement was known. As a result of the favourable settlement, some of the suggestions made at the workshop have not been carried forward and therefore the savings have been scaled back.</p> <p>With regards to the provisional financial settlement, the Council received £493k more than anticipated from the new homes bonus, a one-off payment of £60k from the lower tier services grant which wasn't expected and a one-off payment of £92k from the 2022/23 services grant which wasn't expected. This results in a surplus of £384k on the draft revenue budget.</p> <p>In covering the medium-term financial strategy, the Director for Corporate Services stated that forward projection was difficult due to the uncertainty of future financial settlements.</p> <p>The Chair stated that it was pleasing to see a consultant was due to be appointed to assist in the development of plans for a cemetery but questioned how a new cemetery was to be funded, especially as there is only £284k in the special expenses reserve. Members were informed that the cost of a reasonably sized cemetery is estimated to be £1m, although there is a considerable amount of work to be done before options and proposals were due to be considered. It was also confirmed that a new cemetery is not in the local plan but that a feasibility needs to be developed.</p>

There was a discussion on how the ongoing maintenance of the cemetery in Melton Mowbray is paid for, it was confirmed that these come from special expense funds charged to residents living in Melton Mowbray. It was clarified that this does not preclude non-Melton Mowbray residents from choosing to be buried there but that they will face higher burial costs than a Melton Mowbray resident.

A discussion ensued regarding a crematorium for the Borough. It was noted that the issue was reviewed a decade ago but that with more growth this would need reconsidering and the assumptions regarding viability rechecked. In response, it was confirmed that there was an opportunity to include a review of the original business case in the specification for the consultant procured to support the cemetery development.

The query was raised why the £384k budget surplus was being transferred to regeneration and innovation reserve and what projects was it likely to be used for. In response, the Committee was informed that the reserve would be ringfenced for projects that are categorised as spend to save or invest to save and they would have a business case to proceed. The funds will enable the Council to ensure that the activities it wants to proceed, happens at the pace that is required. Supporting the Asset Development Programme was an example of the kind of project which could be supported through this fund.

In response to the query why is Council Tax being raised in light of the favourable financial settlement and the revenue budget surplus, Members were informed that due to the financial uncertainty of future finance settlements, then there is a need to maximise income. If council tax is not raised it would be lost each year going forward due to referendum restrictions. In addition to this, the Local Government Association review stated that the Council had a low level of reserves, therefore there is a need to bolster the reserves.

When reviewing Council Tax in special expense areas, the question was raised as to why there is a substantive variation. The Committee were told that in some special expense areas, the tax base is low so therefore a small change could have a greater impact.

With regard to vacancy savings, a comment was made that the Project Officer post should not be removed as it is important that the Council has in-house project expertise in order to support colleagues with their projects. The justification for the removal of the post was that the post could not provide the specialist support that is currently required and that additional support is funded via the relevant project budget. The team that this post sits within in the council would be the subject of a review in year as a result of an impending retirement and leaving the post vacant would assist with this.

In response to a query on the saving identified in the elections service, Members were reassured that the capacity remains in the service but that the saving relates to unused funding this financial year.

Concern was raised over the vacancy saving proposed in the Community Safety Team. It was noted that the team are already stretched and it was believed that additional capacity within the team would help.

A discussion ensued regarding staff vacancies and it was confirmed that SLT review every vacancy and the work of the section where the vacancy is. Every vacancy that arises is managed and monitored and that a decision might be taken, based on workload, not to recruit straight away but appoint on an interim basis. It is important that roles and structures are reviewed regularly to ensure resources are supporting current needs most effectively.

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021-2026 - GENERAL FUND AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23

The Chair informed Members that the report is due to be presented to Cabinet on 9 February 2022. Currently the report and appendices are in draft and subject to amendments.

The Director for Corporate Services outlined the capital programme to the Committee.

In response to a query raised on the lifeline digital switchover scheme and the fact that there is currently no business case, it was confirmed that the basis for the upgrade is to continue the provision of the service. The analogue equipment will become obsolete and therefore transition is required. The matter had been considered at Cabinet on 12 January 2022 and Cabinet had agreed a two stage approach, with the initial investment supporting the digital switchover, pending a wider review of the service to ensure it was customer-focussed and commercially viable.

Concern was raised that there is not a strategy for managing the Council's assets and that there should be a strategy outlining what assets the Council has and what can be done with those assets in order to achieve the Council's aims and objectives. In response, Members were assured that an asset development plan is being developed and that there will be a Scrutiny Workshop in order to obtain the views of Scrutiny Members. In addition, it was made clear to Members that there are currently assets that are not being utilised and that can be disposed of to reinvestment in order to support the aims of the Council. Officers are planning to bring an update on the Asset Development Plan, including any additional resource requirements, to the Council meeting in March.

The comment was made that previously a decision was made to dispose of the car park at the Cattle Market but that it did not happen and that if the Council has an asset to dispose of in order to reinvest, then that is what should be happening. Members were reminded that the Council had disposed of a number of assets recently and that the decision to establish the Corporate Assets team two years ago was now delivering.

A query was raised regarding the potential for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to move to the Borough. The Chief Executive stated that Officers are ready to find the appropriate space within the Borough to facilitate a move but things had not progressed to that stage yet.

(At 8:04pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor Bindloss left the meeting and did not return.)

(At 8:06pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor Browne left the meeting.)

(At 8:07pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor Browne returned to the meeting.)

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REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2022/23 - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The Chair informed Members that the report is due to be presented to Cabinet on 9 February 2022. Currently the report and appendices are in draft and subject to amendments.

The Director for Corporate Services outlined the 2022/23 revenue budget proposals for Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Following the introduction by the Director for Corporate Services, the Chair informed Members that the HRA Business Plan was due to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at the meeting scheduled for 22 February 2022, however it will no longer be presented then. The Business Plan will be presented to Cabinet at their meeting scheduled for 13 April 2022, however it will be presented to Scrutiny, either at a Committee meeting or a Workshop before that date.

It was commented that the capital budget for 2021/22 was £4m, however only £2m was spent and that over the last six years there had been an underspend of £22m. Members sought reassurance that the budget would be spent in 2022/23. In response the Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services informed Members that the Council needed the stock condition survey to identify where the budget needs to be spent and confirmed that £4.6m is to be spent in 2022/23. It was noted that the Council are facing the nationwide issue of a lack of labour but that the expectation is that the budget will be spent.

In respect to the stock condition survey, the Committee was informed that 1461 surveys have been carried out and that this represents 81.1% of the stock. The survey outlines what the Council needs to spend each year in order to keep the stock well maintained. A Member commented that it was surprising that access had not been achieved in respect to 19% of Council homes, however the Committee was informed that there is a process that the Council has to follow in order to achieve access.

After a comment was raised on the issue, it was confirmed that homelessness remains an important issue and that the Council will prioritise resources to help the most vulnerable in the Borough.

In response to a question about tenant engagement, it was confirmed that the Tenants Forum Executive Committee (TFEC) would be disbanded due to declining membership and will cease to exist but that the Council will be supporting the development of enhanced tenancy engagement forums, as part of the recently approved framework.

The £100k for Fairmead regeneration was raised, however the Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services stated that he wanted to review whether what was originally planned was now appropriate and whether it should still be a priority. The Portfolio Holder intends to speak to Ward Councillors and Officers and establish what is required.

A Member questioned whether HRA resources could fund youth services, however it was clarified that HRA monies are ringfenced and can only be used for specific purposes.

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URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at: 8.45 pm

Chair

Advice on Members' Interests

PERSONAL AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

If the issue being discussed affects you, your family or a close associate more than other people in the area, you have a personal and non-pecuniary interest. You also have a personal interest if the issue relates to an interest you must register under paragraph 9 of the Members' Code of Conduct.

You must state that you have a personal and non-pecuniary interest and the nature of your interest. You may stay, take part and vote in the meeting.

PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

If a member of the public, who knows all the relevant facts, would view your personal interest in the issue being discussed to be so great that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest and it affects your or the other person or bodies' financial position or relates to any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration then **you must state that you have a pecuniary interest, the nature of the interest and you must leave the room***. You must not seek improperly to influence a decision on that matter unless you have previously obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Audit and Standards Committee.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

If you are present at any meeting of the Council and you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered or being considered at the meeting, if the interest is not already registered, you must disclose the interest to the meeting. You must not participate in the discussion or the vote and you must leave the room.

You may not attend a meeting or stay in the room as either an Observer Councillor or *Ward Councillor or as a member of the public if you have a pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interest*.

BIAS

If you have been involved in an issue in such a manner or to such an extent that the public are likely to perceive you to be biased in your judgement of the public interest (bias) then you should not take part in the decision-making process; you should leave the room. **You should state that your position in this matter prohibits you from taking part.** You may request permission of the Chair to address the meeting prior to leaving the room. The Chair will need to assess whether you have a useful contribution to make or whether complying with this request would prejudice the proceedings. A personal, pecuniary or disclosable pecuniary interest will take precedence over bias.

In each case above, you should make your declaration at the beginning of the meeting or as soon as you are aware of the issue being discussed.*

*There are some exceptions – please refer to paragraphs 3.12(2) and 3.12(3) of the Code of Conduct

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MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL Forward Plan

FOR THE PERIOD February 2022 - May 2022

What is the Plan?

It is a list of the Key Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet during the period referred to above. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare this document, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended). The Plan is published 28 clear days before a meeting of Cabinet is to be held. The Plan is available to view at the Council's main offices in Melton, or on the Council's website, <http://www.melton.gov.uk>.

What is a Key Decision?

Definition of a key decision as detailed in the Council's Constitution is one which is likely to result in the Council:

- Incurring expenditure of £50,000 or more, or;
- Making savings or generate income of £50,000 or more, and/or
- Has a significant impact on two or more wards in the Borough and on communities living or working in those areas.

Who makes Key Decisions?

Under the Council's Constitution, Key Decisions are made by:

- Cabinet
- The Leader and Portfolio Holders
- Individual officers acting under delegated powers

Are only Key Decisions published on the Plan?

The Council has a statutory obligation to publish Key Decisions in the Plan. However, the Council has voluntarily decided to list non-key Cabinet decisions as well. To clarify matters, Key Decisions will be identified on the Plan with a Yes, non-key decisions with a No.

What does the List tell me?

The List gives information about:

- Upcoming Key and Non-Key Decisions (identified by Yes or No next to them)
- Whether the decision will be made in public or private.
- When decisions are likely to be made.
- Who will make these decisions.
- Who you can contact for further information.

Who are the members of the Cabinet?

The members of the Cabinet and their areas of responsibility are:

- Leader of the Council
- People and Communities (and Deputy Leader)
- Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources
- Climate, Access and Engagement
- Council Homes and Landlord Services
- Growth and Prosperity

What is the role of Scrutiny?

The Council's Scrutiny Committee's role is to contribute to the development of Council policies, scrutinise decisions of the Cabinet and hold them to account and to consider any matter affecting Melton Borough or its citizens. Dates of these meetings can be found on the Council's website.

Who do I contact, and how?

Each entry on the Plan indicates the names of the people to contact about that item. They can be contacted via the switchboard on 01664 502502

Request to view Background Papers

Should you wish to request copies or extracts of any documents listed under the column entitled 'Background Papers', for items which are considered to be Key Decisions, please contact Democratic Services at, Melton Borough Council, democracy@melton.gov.uk Please note that copies or extracts of documents which contain information of a confidential or exempt nature cannot be disclosed to the public.

Submission of Additional Documents

Additional documents which are deemed relevant to a particular Key Decision item may be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration. Copies of such documents may also be requested under the same process for requesting to view Background Papers.

Confidential and Exempt Information

This list may also include items to be considered which contain confidential or exempt information, but will not disclose any detail of a confidential or exempt nature. Such items will be identified with '(Exempt)' in the report title.

Report Title	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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<p><u>Award of Contract – Lift Refurbishment at Granby House</u></p> <p>To award a contract for the passenger lift refurbishment at Granby House.</p>		Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)	Open
<p><u>Housing Benefit Assurance Process Contract Award</u></p> <p>The Council is required to procure a reporting accountant to undertake an audit of the subsidy claim made to the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) for Housing Benefit granted. This contract is for a reporting accountant to perform the audit in accordance with the Housing Benefit (subsidy) Assurance Process (HBAP) modules for our subsidy claim for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23, with an option for a further 12 month extension to cover the requirements of the HBAP modules for the subsidy claim for the 2023/2024 financial year.</p>		Director for Housing and Communities	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Nick Sach, Revenues and Benefits Manager	Open

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<p><u>Storage Heater Project</u></p>		Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)	Open
<p><u>Award of Contract - Insurance Services</u></p> <p>To award the contract and enter into any necessary documentation in compliance with the contract procedure rules.</p>		Chief Executive	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources David Scott, Corporate Services Manager	Open

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Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
<u>Increase to Fees and Charges 2022/23</u> To approve revised fees and charges for 2022/23		Director for Corporate Services	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources David Scott, Corporate Services Manager	Open
<u>Rattle Market Masterplan Works</u>		Director for Growth and Regeneration	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Lee Byrne, Regeneration Manager	Open
<u>Award of Contract - Fire Alarm Upgrades</u> To award the contract and enter into any necessary documentation in compliance with the contract procedure rules		Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services	Not before 3rd Feb 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager	Open

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<p><u>Omicron Grant Funding</u></p> <p>To approve diverting residual ARG Funding from the ARG Growth Fund to support businesses affected by “Plan B” Restrictions and the Omicron variant and to approve the amended ARG top-up Grant Policy.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>Kevin Thomas, Senior Economic Recovery Officer</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Award of Contract - Re-roofing Properties Project</u></p> <p>To award a contract and enter into any necessary documentation to effect the award.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p> <p>Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Award of Contracts Under the Westworks Building Maintenance and Compliance DPS</u></p> <p>To award the contract and enter into any necessary documentation to effect the award.</p>		<p>Director for Housing and Communities</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p> <p>Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>

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<p><u>Asset Development Programme Phase 1</u></p> <p>To appoint a design and consultant team for the Asset Development Programme, Phase 1.</p>		<p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>James Morris, Corporate Property and Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Sale of Cattle Market North</u></p>		<p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>James Morris, Corporate Property and Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Contract Rates Uplift – Repairs and Maintenance (Axis)</u></p> <p>To approve an uplift in the contract rates and amend the contract documents as required.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p> <p>Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>

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<p><u>Contract Rates Uplift – Electrical Re-wires (Newey)</u></p> <p>To approve an uplift in the contract rates and amend the contract documents as required.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p> <p>Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Award of contract for the appointment of an Interim Assistant Director for Planning and Delivery</u></p>		<p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>Not before 3rd Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>		
<p><u>Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22</u></p> <p>To recommend the approval of the Treasury Management Strategy (Investment Strategy, Borrowing Strategy) which sets a framework for the Council's investment and borrowing activity for 2022/23 to Council.</p>		<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Council</p>	<p>9 Feb 2022</p> <p>24 Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>David Scott, Corporate Services Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>

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<p><u>Revenue Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)</u></p> <p>To advise Members on the Revenue Budget for 2022/23, including the proposed level of council tax for borough council purposes and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26.</p>		<p>Cabinet Council</p>	<p>9 Feb 2022 24 Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>Dawn Garton, Director for Corporate Services</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Capital Programme and Capital Strategy</u></p> <p>To recommend the approval the Council's Capital Programme for 2022/23 to Council.</p>		<p>Cabinet Council</p>	<p>9 Feb 2022 24 Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>Jasvinder Bassan, Accountant (JB)</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Revenue Budget Proposals 2021/22 – Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</u></p> <p>To set the rents of Council dwellings, approve the HRA estimates for 2022/23 and set the working balance for 2022/23.</p>		<p>Cabinet Council</p>	<p>9 Feb 2022 24 Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>Carol King, Accountant (CK)</p>	<p>Open</p>

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<p><u>Grant of Leases at Snow Hill Industrial Estate</u></p> <p>Authority for a new lease pursuant to the terms agreed and authority for Legal Services to draft and complete the necessary legal paperwork.</p>		<p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>Not before 18th Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>Jiten Ravat, Senior Estates Surveyor</p>	<p>Fully exempt 3</p>
<p><u>Grant of Lease at Parkside Offices</u></p> <p>Authority to agree terms and to enter into any associated legal documentation to regularise the matter.</p>		<p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>Not before 18th Feb 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>Jiten Ravat, Senior Estates Surveyor</p>	<p>Fully exempt 3</p>
<p><u>Award of Contract - Learning Management System Project</u></p> <p>To award the contract and enter into any necessary documentation to effect the award.</p>		<p>Director for Corporate Services</p>	<p>Not before 7th Mar 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>Sarah Jane O'Connor, HR & Communications Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>

<p align="center"><u>Report Title</u> and Expected Decision</p>	<p align="center">Background Papers</p>	<p align="center">Decision Maker</p>	<p align="center">Date of Decision</p>	<p align="center">Key Decision?</p>	<p align="center">Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer</p>	<p align="center">Decision to be taken in public or private session?</p>
<p><u>Allocation of Community Grants</u></p> <p>To approve the Panel's decisions on allocation of Community Grants funding following consideration of applications.</p>		<p align="center">Cabinet</p>	<p align="center">9 Mar 2022</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement</p> <p>Ryan Ebdale, Community Policy Officer</p>	<p align="center">Open</p>
<p><u>Melton Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy</u></p> <p>To seek approval of the policy for implementation from 1st April 2022</p>		<p align="center">Cabinet</p>	<p align="center">9 Mar 2022</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services</p> <p>Aysha Rahman, Interim Assistant Director for Communities / People Manager</p>	<p align="center">Open</p>

<p align="center">Report Title and Expected Decision</p>	<p align="center">Background Papers</p>	<p align="center">Decision Maker</p>	<p align="center">Date of Decision</p>	<p align="center">Key Decision?</p>	<p align="center">Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer</p>	<p align="center">Decision to be taken in public or private session?</p>
<p><u>Revenue and Capital Carry Forwards 2020/21</u></p> <p>A number of items from the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Special Expenses are being requested to be carried forward into the next financial year for specific projects and items.</p> <p>This is being undertaken in accordance with section 10 of the Financial Procedure Rules which specifies that Director for Corporate Services will coordinate the submission of requests for Cabinet approval.</p>		<p align="center">Cabinet</p>	<p align="center">13 Apr 2022</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>Dawn Garton, Director for Corporate Services</p>	<p align="center">Open</p>
<p><u>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan</u></p>		<p align="center">Cabinet Council</p>	<p align="center">13 Apr 2022 27 Apr 2022</p>	<p align="center">No</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>Dawn Garton, Director for Corporate Services</p>	<p align="center">Open</p>

SCRUTINY REVIEWS

These are dealt with through a combination of specific evidence gathering meetings that will be arranged as and when required and other activities, such as visits. There should only be a maximum of three reviews considered annually and review topics may be changed throughout the year as topical issues arise. Once considered, these issues will be subject to further development and scoping.

Should there not be sufficient capacity to cover items which are brought to the attention of Scrutiny they could instead be addressed through a “one-off” item at a scheduled meeting of the Committee.

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Suggested Topics	Officer and Member Lead	Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman	Portfolio Holder/Chief Officer consulted on date of report
Asset Development Programme	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Chairman	23 March 2022	Review of the options and identification of objectives and projects which could be funded from capital receipts (e.g. Housing Company.) Review the social and economic benefits/impacts of any change (if any).	22 December 2020 meeting – Proposed by Chairman and approved by Committee	December 2020
Climate Change	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth and Regeneration Member Lead – TBC	TBC	A workshop will be held to give Scrutiny the opportunity to review and discuss any plans.	Agreed by the Chairman on 28 January 2022. Will need to be formally agreed by the Committee to add to the Work Programme at the meeting on 22 February 2022.	N/A – There will be no final report but comments will be fed into plans.
Health, Leisure and Wellbeing	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Chairman	26 April 2022	Through a workshop, Scrutiny will review and discuss the Health, Leisure and Wellbeing plans. This workshop will include the leisure contract with WLC and the upgrading of the site to MV16. Plus Health and Leisure Park Development.	Originally requested at Scrutiny Workshop, June 2021. Requested by Scrutiny Chairman on 25 January 2022.	N/A – There will be no final report but comments will be fed into plans.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Scrutiny Chairman	7 December 2021 2nd meeting – 15 March 2022	A one-off workshop was formed so that Scrutiny could be consulted, at an early stage, in the development of a business plan for the HRA. It was agreed at the Members: Councillors R Child, P Chandler, J Douglas, C Evans, P Posnett and J Wilkinson.	9 November 2021 meeting – Proposed by Chairman and approved by Committee.	N/A – There will be no final report, however comments will feed into the development of the business plan.
Lifeline	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Scrutiny Chairman	TBC	A one-off workshop is to be formed so that Scrutiny can be consulted, at an early stage, on the options.	9 November 2021 meeting – Proposed by Chairman and approved by Committee.	N/A – There will be no final report, however comments will feed into the development of any plans.
Town Centre Masterplan	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth and Regeneration Member Lead – TBC	22 February 2022	A one-off workshop is formed so that Members can contribute to the development of a Town Centre Masterplan.	Agreed by Chairman on 2 February 2022. Will need to be formally agreed by the Committee to add to the Work	N/A – There will be no final report, however comments will feed into the development of the masterplan.

			Members: Councillors P Chandler, J Douglas, M Glancy, P Posnett and M Steadman.	Programme at the meeting on 22 February 2022.	
Waste Strategy	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Scrutiny Chairman	TBC	Having received an update report on the progress of the Leicestershire Waste Strategy at the meeting held on 5 October 2021, it was agreed that the item should be added to the work programme in order to keep a watch brief on the topic.	9 November 2021 meeting – Proposed by Chairman and approved by Committee.	N/A – There will be no final report, however there will be comments which will be fed back to the Cabinet.

ONE OFF ITEMS/FORWARD PLAN(PRE-DECISION)/ANNUAL ITEM

These are dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Committee. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.

Suggested Topics	FORMAT	Portfolio Holder/Officer	Meeting Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman	Portfolio Holder/Chief Officer consulted on date of report
(1) Update on allotments	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Director for Growth and Regeneration	22 February 2022	The purpose of the report is to establish the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they being used appropriately? • Does the Council need more? • What income is being generated? • What is the maintenance cost to the Council? 	Councillor P Chandler / 5 October 2021	Yes
(2) Scrutiny Annual Report	Annual Item	Scrutiny Officer Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	5 April 2022	Report detailing the work of the Scrutiny Committee over the previous 12 months	N/A	Yes
(3) HRA Business Plan	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services Assistant Director for Housing	5 April 2022	Scrutiny Committee are to receive the final HRA Business Plan.	Review agreed: 9 November 2021 Agenda item agreed at workshop: 7 December 2021	Yes
(4) Crime and Disorder	Annual item	Portfolio Holder for People and Communities (Deputy Leader) Director for Housing and Communities	July 2022	Two topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim Support Services • Impact of rural crime and efforts to address 	N/A	Yes
(5) Debt Management Report	Annual item	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Revenues & Benefits Manager	TBC	The report will cover the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) An overview of the Council's historic debt and recommendations on approach to resolution. 2) Assurance of the Council's current arrangements for debt management and recovery. 3) An outline of all outstanding debt, broken down by service, at 1 April 2021. 4) Value of debt written off each month. 	Invitation for investigation made by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources / June 2021	Yes

PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL PRESENTATION – Topic to be confirmed in advance through Scrutiny Chairman

(1) Leader	Chief Executive	June 2021	Summary of delivery of the Corporate Strategy 20/21 and objectives for 21/22. (Presentation has taken place)
(2) Portfolio Holder Questions- Corporate Governance Finance and Resources	Director for Corporate Services	July 2021	Overview of 20/21 and updates to portfolio responsibilities. (Presentation has taken place)
(3) Portfolio Holder Questions- Growth and Prosperity (Deputy Leader)	Director for Growth and Regeneration	September 2021	Overview of portfolio and objectives for 21/22. (Presentation has taken place)
(4) Portfolio Holder Questions- Council Homes and Landlord Services	Director for Housing and Communities	October 2021	Overview of portfolio and objectives for 21/22. (Presentation has taken place)
(5) Portfolio Holder Questions- Climate, Access and Engagement	Assistant Director for Governance & Democracy	November 2021	Overview of portfolio and objectives for 21/22. (Presentation has taken place)
(6) Portfolio Holder Questions- People and Communities	Director for Housing and Communities	April 2022	Overview of portfolio and objectives for 22/23.

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PENDING ITEMS These items are awaiting further discussion or additional research before being added to the work programme

Suggested Topics (One-off or Review Item?)	Officer and Member Lead	Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman
(1) Empty Homes ONE OFF ITEM	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Director for Growth and Regeneration	TBC	To understand the extent and impact of empty homes in Melton and raise awareness. To identify the Council's priority objectives for tackling empty properties in Melton and whether these have been met. To identify what resources and funding is available to tackle empty homes in Melton. To identify best practice used elsewhere in tackling empty homes which can be used in Melton <i>Included in Housing Strategy.</i>	
(2) Housing Allocations- Application of Process and Procedure ONE OFF ITEM	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities Director for Housing and Communities	TBC	To understand the role and purpose of social housing in Melton to understand the current position on housing allocations To ensure the criteria for the allocation of housing is clear and easy to understand, including a consideration of different ways of offering choice To consider types of tenure	Awaiting draft of Revised Allocations Policy
(3) Community-led Council ONE OFF ITEM	Portfolio Holder for People and Communities Director for Housing and Communities	TBC	Post June 2021	Pre-development work to support approach to engagement and community involvement Engagement considered as part of Response and Recovery Task and Finish Groups – agreed to move this item to April 2021 PC 09/10/20 Delay n final reports from R&R Task and Finish – agreed to move to next Municipal Year 21/22 – PC 17/3/21
(4) Country Park – Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) REVIEW ITEM	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity (Deputy Leader) Director for Growth and Regeneration	Dec 2021	The review of the PSPO will commence in December 2021. There will be a briefing session about the PSPO process with interest Members.	Scrutiny Workshop – June 2021
(5) Community Grants Scheme	Cllr Donald Pritchett (Co-opted)	TBC	It was confirmed by the Scrutiny Chairman at the Committee meeting on 5 October 2021 that some preliminary work would be carried out before Members decide on whether to formally proceed with the review.	Referred from the Audit & Standards Committee on 28 September 2021.

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SUGGESTED ITEMS These items are awaiting further discussion, additional research or volunteers before being added to the work programme

Suggested Topics (One-off or Review Item?)	Officer and Member Lead	Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman
(1) Communication – Including front desk enquiries at Parkside.	Portfolio Holder for People and Communities Director for Housing and Communities	TBC		Scrutiny Workshop – June 2021
(2) Youth Services	Portfolio Holder for People and Communities Director for Housing and Communities	TBC	Councillor Bindloss has agreed to undertake some research before presenting a case to the Committee for further investigation.	Councillor Bindloss – July 2021
(3) Car parking charges	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity (Deputy Leader) Director for Growth and Regeneration	TBC	This topic was raised due to concern over MBC’s car parking charges. Councillor Illingworth has agreed to undertake some pre-investigation research.	Scrutiny Workshop – June 2021
Car parking contract	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity (Deputy Leader) Director for Growth and Regeneration	TBC	Would be subject to the timing of contract renewal.	Scrutiny Workshop – June 2021
(5) Complaints about GPs	The Leader Chief Executive	TBC	At the Committee meeting on 5 October 2021, it was agreed that the Chair and the Director for Housing and Communities would compile a list of questions on the topic of GP services for health professions to respond to.	Scrutiny Workshop – June 2021
(6) Dog Warden contract	Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement Director for Growth and Regeneration	TBC	Would be subject to the timing of contract renewal.	Scrutiny Workshop – June 2021
(7) Mayoralty Protocol Document	The Leader Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy	TBC	Aim is to produce a protocol document. Recommend waiting until current incumbent has settled into the role and can then feedback on any issues which need further review. Helpful to wait for the outcome of the Independent Remuneration Panel (due September).	Scrutiny Committee – June 2021

ADVICE ON WORK PROGRAMME

What is a Work Programme?

The Scrutiny Work Programme outlines the areas of work which are expected to be scrutinised over the coming months/year by or on behalf of the Council's Scrutiny Committee and any Working Groups convened for review work.

Topics added to the work programme should have expected outcomes to add value to the services delivered by the Council and its partners and/or improve the quality of lives of Melton's residents.

It is recognised that there is a need for flexibility in the work programme so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise.

Sources of Work Programme Ideas

Numerous sources of information can help to inform topic selection, including:

- Concerns that have been raised by the public relating to Council delivered services
- Issues of community concern – not necessarily services delivered by the Council
- Issues that have been flagged up by reviews, audits or inspections (past and present).
- Issues relating to Councils outcomes, objectives and priorities
- Consultations and interviews
- Underperformance
- "Stakeholders" concerns – raised by the Council's partners or the users of services
- Partnership objectives
- Cabinet Members, Chief Executive or Directors presentations about the pertinent issues that are emerging and any opportunities or threats on the horizon
- Central government priority changes
- Improvement Plans
- Forward Plan
- Budgetary analysis.

Scrutiny is also encouraged to think about external Scrutiny and the monitoring of other public bodies, and how its activities will engage partner organisations, the media and the public.

Selecting a Work Programme Topic

The Scrutiny Committee should use effective processes to select topics that will contribute towards the best possible work programme for Scrutiny. This means looking at the sources of information that may help and using them to choose the right topics.

This involves:

- Drawing out and discussing what matters most to Councillors and to the community at large
- Finding out about any research that has been completed or that is planned
- Prioritising topics
- Considering what added value is expected as a result of Scrutiny involvement
- Considering whether the topic is already being reviewed elsewhere

It is also important to note that Scrutiny has limited time and resources and therefore workplans need to be manageable. It is not possible to include every topic suggested by Members, Directors or the Public in the workplan. In addition Officer capacity may be diverted from projects if a review is added to the workplan without considering the impact on Officer resource and this should be a consideration in adding to work programme.

Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members will need to be selective whilst also being able to demonstrate clear arguments in favour of including or excluding topics.

Risks

A common pitfall for Scrutiny can be the inclusion of topics on the work plan that are unmanageable, of limited interest to the community, purely for informational purposes, have few outcomes and fail to 'add value' to the work of the Council or the wellbeing of the community. As such the selection and prioritisation of topics is critical to the effectiveness of Scrutiny as such processes can ensure clearer focus, particularly in poor or weak areas of performance or major issues of concern to the wider community.



Scrutiny

22 February 2022

Report of: Councillor Rob Bindloss - Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity

Update on allotments

Corporate Priority:	Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton
Relevant Ward Member(s):	All
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No

1 Summary

- 1.1 The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has requested a report providing an update on the allotment service provided by the Council.
- 1.2 The report summarises the location of allotment sites, condition and accessibility, occupancy levels, current charging structure, income from fees and expenditure. It outlines the process for creating a new allotment site or decommissioning an existing site. And finally, it identifies future considerations for members of the Committee to provide steer on.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Committee:

1. Notes the contents of this report
2. Provides comments and steer for future considerations.

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The legislation states the Council shall provide allotments where there is a demand.
- 3.2 Allotments provide important community facility with proven social, physical health and mental health and well-being benefits to the residents of the borough.
- 3.3 Providing quality allotments to our residents aligns with two key priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2020-24:
 - Providing excellent services positively impacting on our communities

- Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth

4 Background

4.1 Allotments are an important service provided by the Council. This report provides a status update on the level of service provided to the residents.

5 Main Considerations

5.1 Currently, the allotments are managed by the Corporate Property and Assets team as part of the wider portfolio of non-HRA (General Fund) assets owned by the Council. There are 92 full plots (250 sq mts) and 101 half plots (125 sq mts) within the borough, all with access to water.

5.2 Locations:

5.3 The Council owns five allotment sites as per the table below:

Name	No. Full Plots	No. Half Plots	Occupied plots	Vacant plots	Managed by
Lake Terrace	30	16	39	7	Melton Borough Council
Redwood Avenue	7	14	21	0	Melton Borough Council
Doctors Lane	44	20	60	4	Melton Borough Council
Victoria Street	1	25	26	0	The Victoria Street Allotment Association
The Crescent	10	26	36	0	The Crescent Allotment Association

5.4 The two managed sites are formally leased (The Crescent from 1st August 2016 for 10 years, and Victoria Street on a lease that is to be renewed) to the allotment associations who collect the income which is used towards the management and maintenance of the allotment sites as per their constitution. No rent or monies are paid to the Council from the managed sites.

5.5 The three council managed sites have information noted on the council website where the enquirer can fill out an online form requesting an allotment and join the waiting list. When a plot becomes vacant, the Council contacts the next person at the top of the list and offers the opportunity to take the vacant plot. If they do not respond after 14 days, the plot is offered to the next person.

5.6 Occupancy levels:

5.7 We understand that COVID-19 has had significant impact on people's ability to use the allotments. Talking to our tenants, we are aware that some plot holders had to shield due to the pandemic and this meant they were unable to tend to their plots. Subsequently, some have chosen to give them up due to the work required to bring it back in to use or due to their own health concerns.

- 5.8 The occupancy rate for the allotment sites is high with number of vacant plots being relatively low. The majority of the vacant plots are due to their overgrown condition and reluctance to be taken up by those currently on the waiting list.
- 5.9 Currently there is approximately 90 people on the waiting list which indicates the provision is in high demand. However, due to the high occupancy rates at present, and low availability of plots, the turnover of plot holders is low. As and when plots are returned to the council, they are offered to the next person on the list, though some waiting on the list are particular about the location and size of plot they require so they may remain on a waiting list for a longer period of time. The current waiting period is around 18months – 2 years, but it can be longer if someone is not willing to take vacant lot due to their preference on a particular size, location within the site.
- 5.10 The Council has recently written to plot holders as part of a review to identify any unused plot(s) and is beginning the process of clearing underused and overgrown plots in order to offer them to those on the waiting list. Where appropriate and subject to capacity, the Council's ground maintenance team helps with this work.
- 5.11 At present we do not hold any further information on plot holders save for names and addresses but a survey could be undertaken, in line with the Equalities Act 2010 to gain more insight in terms of user profiles, user needs etc.
- 5.12 **Condition and Accessibility:**
- 5.13 While most plots are in good condition, there are a few vacant plots that are in need of works in order for them to be brought back to use. The Council recently completed a condition survey of the allotment sites which highlighted works required in the next 1 to 5 years. These surveys identified a potential of £4.5k spend on replacement fencing at Lake Terrace, A circa £25k cost to replace fencing and gates at Doctors Lane and £13k for fencing works at Redwood Avenue.
- 5.14 A budget will be identified based on the priorities set out in the condition survey, which will be reviewed annually, and submitted for approval, as part of the annual budget setting, over the next 5 years. Any small emergency and reactive repairs are undertaken using the repair and maintenance budget annually.
- 5.15 The Council does not presently provide any accessible allotment plots due to lack of demand for such plots. A plot holder may undertake work to create a raised bed, as some have done, for their own requirements.
- 5.16 Any plot that became available can be adapted to accommodate a raised bed, but it will not be truly accessible unless the paths leading to that plot are constructed, widened and re-surfaced to appropriate standard. The most accessible plots on site are near the main entrance and already occupied. This would result in at additional cost and require the reduction in some existing plot sizes to allow for an accessible route.
- 5.17 At Doctors Lane, Melton Community Allotment group near the entrance of the site provide a shared use of an allotment to council tenants who may need easier access.
- 5.18 **Charges, income and expenditure:**
- 5.19 The summary of income and expenditure from allotments over the last 6 years is as below. These costs include annual maintenance and repair costs but exclude officer time spent on managing the sites, any grounds maintenance costs for tidying up unused plots and customer interaction.

	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16
Expenditure	1,133	1,256	632	2,359	9,378	5,130
Income*	-5,058	-5,073	-4,363	-3,329	-5,847	-5,690

*Arrears owing from 31 January 2022 were £822.30. Reminder letters are sent for unpaid sums, and there is a process of escalation if debts remain unpaid, which could result in the Council taking steps to repossess the plot.

5.20 The current pricing agreed in April 2022, of plots is noted in the table below, together with a comparison with other local authorities in the borough and county.

*All costs per annum	Melton Borough Council	Scalford Parish Council	Harborough District Council	Asfordby Parish Council	Leicester City Council	Charnwood Borough Council	North West Leicestershire District Council
Half Plot	£30.60	£6.00 - £7.50		£8.00		£33.90	£17
Full Plot	£51.00	£12.00 - £15.00	£47.64	£23.00	£6.25 - £25.00	£67.80	£29
	Less 33% for those on Pension credit.		Lower rate of £23.82 for senior citizens				

5.21 A review of the fees and charges is due in April 2023 (every 3 years). This is to minimise the administrative burden as a result of meeting the necessary notice requirements. The existing terms and conditions between the council and tenants requires a minimum of 3 months' prior notice if an increase in rent is stated. The CPA team will calculate any increase by September 2022 and advise tenants of any increase, which will take effect from April 2023.

5.22 **Process for establishing a new allotment site or decommissioning a current one**

5.23 The Council may purchase either the freehold or leasehold land or even lease land or convert any suitable land in the Council's ownership that is surplus for service operation to allotment land use. The Council can acquire land within their own areas and, with the consent of the Minister, can also acquire land outside their areas if it can be shown that eventually the land will be needed for allotments (S.5 Allotments Act 1925). This land can be used for other purposes in the meantime provided that it is not a purpose which is in conflict with the idea of an allotment.

5.24 When land is purchased the Council must obtain consent from the Minister including any borrowing to make the purchase. No planning permission is required for actual allotments as the use of land for allotments falls within the agricultural land definition. However, if sheds or a car park are being built on the site, the Council should obtain planning permission for those works.

5.25 Should the Council decide that the allotment land (whether freehold or leasehold) is superfluous to requirements, or that more suitable land is available for allotments, it may sell or exchange the land with the consent of the Minister. The consent may be given unconditionally or subject to conditions (S.32 Small Holdings & Allotments Act 1908).

5.26 **Future considerations:**

5.27 While currently the allotments are managed as part of other corporate assets, it is recognised that there are wider community benefits of this service.

- Use of allotments for building on social capital and community values
- Health and well-being initiatives for residents and allotment plot holders
- Allotments as tool for engagement and empowerment of our local communities- partner with community organisations for future maintenance, enhancement and promotion?
- Link with local food bank/ community kitchen project- link with 'rural capital of food' branding
- Improve accessibility, condition, compliance and attractiveness. Volunteers led event to clear up overgrown and unused plots.
- Communication with plot holders near the entrance for a swap to create accessible plots.
- Promotional events/ competitions/ festivals.
- Consider increased provision or reducing plots.
- Consider shorter term of licence to allow for more people to have access to allotments.
- Financial sustainability of future investment options.

5.28 The above mentioned issues are raised to generate discussion with members and receive steer for direction of travel in future. Any comments received from the members of this committee will be presented to the Cabinet for their consideration.

6 Options Considered

6.1 NA

7 Consultation

7.1 Any amendments to the service provision going forward will be subject to consultation with current and future users and members.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

8.1 Discussion and steer from Scrutiny committee

8.2 Firm up proposals if any for consideration by the Cabinet

9 Financial Implications

9.1 As per para 5.19

9.2 The allotments are a special expenses item and therefore the costs are met from the Special Expenses Melton Mowbray budget and are paid for by town residents only.

Financial Implications reviewed by: To follow

10 Legal and Governance Implications

10.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. The Council is can provide allotments where there is a demand as laid down in s.23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908. The Allotment Acts allow the Council to acquire more land for allotment use however, it would need the consent of the Secretary of State to do so.

10.2 The Council also has the power to lease its allotment land to associations set up for this purpose.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

11.1 Accessibility to all will be considered as part of any amendments to current service provision.

12 Community Safety Implications

12.1 NA

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.1 NA

14 Other Implications (where significant)

14.1 NA

15 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Cost of the service is higher than the income	High	Critical	High Risk
2	Accessibility of plots for all users cannot be achieved	Low	Marginal	Low Risk
3	Council not able to meet the demand and reduce the waiting list	High	Marginal	Medium Risk

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High		3	1	
	4 Significant				
	3 Low		2		
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Expenditure is kept under review as part of annual budget process
2	Demand for such plots is kept under review
3	Steer from members is sought for additional sites

16 Background Papers

None

17 Appendices

None

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