

Minutes



Meeting name	Cabinet
Date	Wednesday, 14 December 2022
Start time	4.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor J. Orson (Chair)

Councillors M. Graham MBE (Vice-Chair) R. Bindloss
R. Browne R. de Burle
A. Freer

Officers Chief Executive
Director for Corporate Services
Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) (via remote link)
Monitoring Officer (via remote link)
Senior Planning Policy Officer
Housing Development Manager
Local Plans Manager
Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services Officer (HA)

Minute No.	Minute
46	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE There were no apologies for absence.</p>
47	<p>MINUTES The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 were confirmed.</p>
48	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillor Orson declared an interest in any items relating to Leicestershire County Council due to his role as a County Councillor.</p>
49	<p>MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES No items had been referred from the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules.</p>
50	<p>CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS REPORT FOR QUARTER 2 FOR 2022-2023</p> <p>The Director for Corporate Services, Mrs Dawn Garton, introduced the report, the purpose of which provided an update on the progress of delivering the aspirations set out in the Council’s Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 and provided details relating to the first and second quarter of the financial year 2022-2023.</p> <p>The Leader thanked Mrs Garton for the report and commented that at the end of quarter 2 it showed the Council in a positive light and performing well across a range of services considering the challenging circumstances of the last two years.</p> <p>The Leader highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the recent resident survey which showed excellent results where satisfaction towards the Borough, the Council and its services has increased compared to the previous survey done in 2019. • the Planning performance had improved over the last two quarters showing the resilience and determination of the team. • the undisputed invoices paid is at over 97% the highest level for the past two years. • staff absence, though unchanged from the last quarter is still higher than expected with long term sickness remaining a key area for the service • Percentage of food hygiene inspections taken within 28 days had fallen due to high number of food hygiene registrations being processed since September 2022 though they remain at a similar level as the same quarter this time last year. <p>The Leader thanked the staff and teams for their hard work to provide high quality services for the people of Melton.</p>

Councillor Graham confirmed his support for the post recently created to support tenants to not only increase rent collection but to highlight those suffering from the cost-of-living crisis in a constructive way.

Cabinet:

- 1) **NOTED** the contents of the report and provided observations and actions to the relevant officers accordingly.

Reasons for Recommendations:

Having established a Corporate Strategy in September 2020, is it important the Council regularly receives and considers performance information to evaluate progress. The Council's Corporate Performance Measures are used to focus on key priority services and projects and seek to help inform the Cabinet, Members and Officers regarding the formation of policy and oversight of delivery. This report will be provided to Cabinet twice a year and will also be provided to the Scrutiny Committee to enable them to consider appropriate areas for their Workplan.

51

PLANNING POLICY MONITORING REPORTS - AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT (AMR) AND INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (IFS)

The Senior Planning Policy Officer, Mr Jorge Fiz Alonso, presented, the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), and the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) the purposes of which provide information about policy performance and a summary of developer contributions respectively.

Mr Fiz Alonso advised Cabinet that these reports would be updated annually by Local Planning Authorities

Mr Fiz Alonso advised that of the 365 completions registered this year 81 were affordable homes with this number expected to increase next year.

Mr Fiz Alonso advised that consideration is being given to addressing the future route for the publication of these reports in consultation with the Local Working Group where necessary.

The Portfolio for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss advised that the Planning Policy monitoring reports are provided on an annual basis and give an overview on how the policies are performing both financially and physically as shown against the Local Plan 2021-22.

Councillor Bindloss highlighted the following:

- the housing delivery rates had been strong with no shortfall
- employment land is still required to meet the necessities to deliver the Local Plan target.
- Footfall in the town is up on previous years though as there is a change in the habits of how people shop now with the trend for online purchasing the Council would need to use innovative ways to develop and grow the footfall of those visiting the town.

- Next year's financial developer contributions are expected to be higher than this year and these contributions enable the Council to support organisations within the town and borough.

The Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services, Councillor Ronan Browne highlighted:

- there is a lack of affordable housing in the borough,
- the Council would need to get more robust on discounts on delivering social housing, as market discount housing is not always reachable for those who need it most,
- the Council should not be foregoing social rent to please developers,
- there is a need to cut expenditure from the general fund with the cost of homelessness going up which is not sustainable to the council taxpayers, and
- the Council would need to proactively engage with registered social landlords to avoid having to find more temporary accommodation.

Cabinet:

- 1) **NOTED** the updated Authority Monitoring Report in appendix 1 and the Infrastructure Funding Statement in appendix 2 and **APPROVED** their publications.
- 2) **NOTED** that in future, these reports would be updated annually by the Local Plans Team in consultation with the Local Plan Working Group (where necessary) prior to publication.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To ensure that the Council meet the legal requirement to update to the Authority Monitoring Report in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as modified by the Localism Act 2011).

To ensure that the Council meet the legal requirement to update the Infrastructure Funding Statement in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019.

To streamline the decision process by engaging with the Local Plan Member Working Group in order to acknowledge the content in future AMRs and IFSS annual updates.

52

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Senior Planning Policy Officer, Mr Jorge Fiz Alonso, presented the report, the purpose of which sets out a work programme for Melton Borough Council's Local Plan review over the period 2022 to Spring 2026 representing the most optimistic of timelines with further updates likely in the coming months.

Mr Fiz Alonso advised Cabinet that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a timetable for the Local Plan review, providing information about existing or expected documents that would influence the Plan and decision-making and that it is a legal requirement to keep the LDS updated.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss, advised Cabinet that there would be a need to consider several uncertainties that could impact on the proposals within this paper including updates to the Levelling Up Bill and the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR), which would be critical in refining the Local Plan review. He advised Cabinet to be aware that there could be some changes to the LDS in the short term.

The Leader advised Cabinet that Leicestershire County Council would be meeting on Friday 16 December 2022 to discuss the funding for the MMDR and if agreed, then work would start in Spring 2023.

Cabinet:

- 1) **APPROVED** the updated Local Development Scheme in Appendix 1 covering the period 2022-2026.
- 2) **NOTED** the Local Development Scheme as presented in Appendix 1 could be subject to change given the challenges surrounding infrastructure provision to support the delivery of the existing Local Plan.

Reasons for Recommendations:

To ensure that the Council acts in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

53

ACQUISITION OF EIGHT HOUSES IN OLD DALBY

The Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive), Ms Michelle Howard, joined remotely and presented the report the purpose of which was to seek Cabinet approval to acquire 8 new build houses from a development at Marquis Gardens in Old Dalby and for them to be added to the stock of council homes and be available for affordable rent.

Ms Howard confirmed that the Council has a capital programme for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the acquisition and development of these homes is contained within that, therefore the proposed acquisition is affordable and would be funded with a combination of Council reserves and the Right to Buy (RTB) receipts.

Ms Howard confirmed that all 8 properties are due to be completed by May 2023 and having identified a need for this type of property they will be easily allocated.

The Portfolio Holder for Council Homes and Landlord Services, Councillor Ronan Browne, made the following comments:

- 40% of the funds for the purchase of these properties is ringfenced within the HRA account,

- the remainder would be paid from the Capital Programme which includes the reinvesting in housing stock and development programme
- reminded Cabinet that it is important that any monies received from the RTB receipts should be reinvested back into providing new social housing for the Council, otherwise that money would be sent back to central government to be handed out to other authorities or housing associations,
- the latest announcement from government regarding rent caps should provide a better financially situation for the Council.
- thanked the Housing Development Manager, Tahir Majid, for the work he had done for the report and the discussions and challenges that had taken place over the previous months to get this far.

The Leader confirmed that the developers had been pleased to work with Melton Borough Council on this development and suggested that Cabinet should go and take a visit once they have been signed over.

Cabinet:

- 1) **APPROVED** the acquisition of 8 new-build houses from the 'Marquis Gardens' development in Old Dalby to be funded from the Housing Revenue Account capital programme as detailed in Appendix A.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The acquisition of these houses will be in line with the Affordable Housing Development Plan 2022-26 which is designed to address the shortage of affordable homes in the Borough.

The proposed acquisition will add 8 affordable two bedroomed properties to the Council's Housing Revenue Account.

This will help to meet the corporate priority of 'providing high quality council homes and landlord services.' The acquisition will also respond to the corporate priority of 'protecting our climate and enhancing our natural environment' as the houses are being built with modern methods of construction to enhance energy efficiency. Energy saving measures will reduce carbon emissions and help to tackle climate change.

The proposed acquisition is affordable to the Housing Revenue Account. There is a budget allocated within the Council's capital programme for the acquisition / development of new affordable homes. Part of the cost of acquisition will be funded with Right to Buy (RTB) receipts. These must be spent within Government set deadlines and this acquisition will help to meet our target.

The meeting closed at: 5.05 pm

Chair