

Agenda

Meeting name	Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee
Date	Tuesday, 22 November 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)
	S. Atherton	S. Carter
	P. Chandler	J. Douglas
	C. Evans	E. Holmes
	P. Posnett MBE	T. Webster

Quorum: 5 Councillors

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

No.	Item	Page No.
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	MINUTES To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 October 2022.	1 - 8
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Members to declare any interest as appropriate in respect of items to be considered at this meeting.	9 - 10
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.	11 - 24
5.	REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23 Members are to review and comment upon the attached Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23.	25 - 30
6.	STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BUSINESS CASE The Strategic Partnership Business Case is to be presented to the Committee. Appendix 1 to follow.	31 - 44
7.	URGENT BUSINESS To consider any other items that the Chair considers urgent	

Minutes

Meeting name	Scrutiny Committee
Date	Tuesday, 18 October 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) S. Atherton
P. Chandler J. Douglas
C. Evans P. Posnett MBE
T. Webster

In Attendance Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services – Cllr R. Browne

Officers Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)
Director for Growth and Regeneration
Housing Asset Manager
Regeneration Manager (via remote link)
Senior Tourism and Events Officer
Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services Officer (CT)

Minute No.	Minute
31	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Glancy and Holmes.</p>
32	<p>MINUTES The Minutes of the meeting held 27 September 2022 were approved.</p>
33	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST A personal interest in respect of Councillor Posnett was noted as being on record for any matter which related to Leicestershire County Council.</p> <p>Councillor Webster declared a personal interest in relation to Minute Number 37 as he is the Town Warden for Melton Town Estate.</p>
34	<p>REVIEW OF THE FORWARD PLAN The Chairman introduced the Cabinet Forward Plan and invited members comments.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if the issue of homelessness could be included as it is likely to become more of an issue with the current cost of living crisis. The Committee unanimously agreed to add the topic onto the Work Programme.</p>
35	<p>REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23 The Chairman announced that the Debt Management Report that was due at the meeting taking place in November has been delayed. The Committee will have an additional meeting to look at this topic. After a short discussion, Members agreed that the additional meeting would take place on 11 January 2023.</p> <p>The Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) apologised for the delay and explained that the team had prioritised responses to Covid and the cost-of-living crisis. The team had just employed an interim manager who would be working on the report to get it completed for the meeting in January.</p> <p>Members were given a brief outline of the position in relation to Council Tax and NNDR collection and also rent arrears and collection. A new Income and Sustainment Officer post has been filled and they will be actively working with tenants with debts. Members were informed that a briefing note would be circulated covering the points raised following the meeting.</p> <p>A Member asked if the Council Tax and NNDR figures could be shown in the report separately. A question was also asked whether any Portfolio Holders had written off any debts in the last 3 years. A member commented that the debt collection does appear to be out of control and needs looking at. Members would like to know whether the legal section has the resources to manage the court cases, as required. The Committee felt this is an area where historically the Council have been poor.</p>

The strategic collaboration with Harborough District Council was discussed. The plans will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in November when they will have opportunity to scrutinise them. Members unanimously agreed to add the topic on to the Work Programme.

In response to a query on whether the plan will have been agreed by the time it is presented to Scrutiny, Members were assured that the Scrutiny Committee will have opportunity to look at the plan and make their comments.

The Chairman requested that the business plan papers be hand-delivered on the day they are published. The agenda is due to be published on 11 November 2022, however as work continues there could be alterations after this date, however Members will be advised of changes verbally at the meeting. It was also confirmed that Harborough District Council Scrutiny Committee will receive the plans at the same time, as they would be published on the same date.

A Member raised the question on whether other collaborations the Council have in place will be included within the report. In response, the committee were informed that this is already being considered. Comments were made that some collaborations do not seem to work well particularly in the more rural areas.

Following a request on whether the Leader of Harborough District Council would attend the meeting in November alongside our Leader, it was confirmed that this would be investigated.

The Chairman asked if the committee felt that the meeting on 22/11/22 should concentrate on the business case as The Leader was also due to make his annual report on this date also. Following a short discussion, it was agreed that the Leader's Annual Report would be deferred from the November meeting to a later date.

36

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

The Housing Asset Manager presented the HRA Asset Management Plan, which is a 5-year capital programme plan. After explaining what the Asset Management Plan is and going through the content of the plan, Members were given the opportunity to ask questions that had arisen.

A Member asked about whether the replacement of storage heaters could be escalated as it was becoming a big issue for tenants with the recent energy price increases and the inefficiency of them to run.

Concerns that 20% of housing stock is below decent homes standard were raised. The Committee was informed that this issue is covered in the plan and the aim is to get rid of the backlog within the 5 years, by this point all homes will meet the required standard.

In response to the question on how many rooms at Gretton Court require showers, Members were informed that a business plan and budget is in place and the intention is to upgrade properties as they become void. All properties once void will have the shower installed before they are re-let. Comments were also made about concerns for increased need for accommodation for the elderly in the coming years.

The comment was made that residents who look after their properties tend to be penalised as they do not get new bathrooms/kitchens replaced as often as those who have not looked after them. In response, the Committee were informed that age determines when replacements are made, but the condition does have to be considered if it is beyond repair.

The comment was made that the business plan was good and well written, however concern was raised that it was too long and there needs to be greater prioritisation. Members were advised that the plan included all actions that need to be done, they have been put into priority order and the list will get reduced as some items will be combined.

Members raised the issue about aluminium windows being replaced, and they were informed that the business plan commits to replace half this year and the remaining the following year and therefore all aluminium windows will be replaced by March 2024.

A discussion ensued on the budget and the Committee were informed the budget is £5.7m which includes the new build programme. It was confirmed that to date £600,000 has been spent. Procurement for contracts are in place and by the end of the year the full budget will have been spent.

Following a question on why the Council does not install solar panels on roofs, Members were informed that fifty properties have had solar panels installed and this was done with funding. The Council continues to seek investment and grant funding is being sought for this and other energy efficiency technologies.

In response to a question on whether there are any benchmark figures to compare against other social housing, the Committee was informed that work with Savills has said we are higher than average, and that the benchmarking data has been included in the action plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services clarified the following:

- The plan needs to be robust so can be delivered.
- The Council now have good staff in place to deliver the plan and systems will be put in place to ensure everything is done correctly.
- The Council are still picking up legacy issues from 2019 and that is why the plan needs to be robust.
- The Council are aware of need to look at energy efficiency as this is a concern for most tenants. There is a need to ensure that all homes are properly insulated. Concerns are also taken into consideration, e.g., air source pumps cost more to run than gas boilers.

- The Council's decent homes standards is higher than other councils.
- Several strategies have now been approved and there would be more going forward. The Council would be able to know what can be done for tenants, and tenants will know what they can expect.
- The Council will need support from Leicestershire County Council to support housing the elderly and to ensure there are enough care homes.

The Housing Asset Manager then resumed the report regarding storage heaters. He asked members whether they thought council should prioritise efforts to reduce bills rather than looking at zero carbon at this moment in time.

Following a suggestion from the Housing Asset Manager, Members agreed that the Council should prioritize tenants' wellbeing and help them to reduce cost in the current economic climate over the carbon zero agenda. Members also agreed that the plans to change all storage heaters in homes within the next five years should be brought forward. The majority will be replaced by gas boilers and the new boilers being installed are Hydrogen ready if this becomes available.

RESOLVED

The Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that the Council:

- 1. works within the remit presented.**
- 2. prioritises reducing tenants' bills over the zero-carbon agenda.**
- 3. removes all remaining storage heaters from Council-owned properties as soon as possible, and**
- 4. continues to prioritise the insulation of properties.**

(Cllr Ronan Browne left the meeting at 7:52pm and did not return.)

37

TOURISM IN THE MELTON BOROUGH AREA

Members were given a joint presentation by the Director for Growth and Regeneration and the Senior Tourism and Events Officer which gave an overview of the Council's Tourism Service and what actions they are taking to increase tourism to the Borough.

The Chairman thanked them for their comprehensive report and asked Members for any questions or feedback.

Members said that they had been talking to tourists visiting the town on several occasions and they had been asked what is there to see or do in the area as they had not been able to find any information as there is no tourist office in the town. Members also said that although the events at the Stockyard are well attended it does not attract them into the town centre as the location is outside of the town centre. It was explained to Members that resources have been spent to make the town centre more attractive and new signs and maps have been installed, there are maps in the Market Place, top of Nottingham Street and in three car parks. There are stands with leaflets displayed showing local attractions and the heritage trail, they are outside the church and Dickenson & Morris. Information is also available

from the council offices, the library, and the Museum. There is information available online under Discover Melton, where there is a borough wide attractions map to promote business throughout the Borough.

Members said all the empty shops do not make the town look attractive and something needs to be done about it. Also, there is a shortage of accommodation in the Borough which discourages visitors. It was mentioned that Eye Kettleby Lakes gets excellent reviews so should be promoted more as a leisure stay.

Members were advised that the town centre has had investment to make improvements, also Melton in Bloom has been encouraged to help make it more attractive, work is in progress with The Bell Centre project and BID are working to encourage more short-term businesses into the town centre with pop up and temporary shops. Work is being done with the town estate about revamping the Market.

The lack of accommodation was acknowledged as an issue, it is difficult to solve as unless hotel operators are willing to come into the area, the Council cannot do anything about it. Other options are being looked at with council owned buildings. A Member commented that Parkside would be an ideal hotel.

A Member said that the map on the website showing attractions in the Borough was out of date and did not reflect the number of places to eat, as only a few were shown. There needs to be an up-to-date comprehensive map. Members were advised that any place can be added with written permission from the business. It was pointed out that members had been asked when the site was developed to advise of any business that potentially could be included. A member mentioned that Churches are not included but was advised that they are all included on the map.

Members made some suggestions such as Heritage walking tours, to promote the history of the town. It was also suggested that a caravan to promote attractions in Melton and the area could be present on market days. Another suggestion was to include tourist information with the council tax bills when they are sent out as would not cost anything to post. A member also mentioned that the MP has applied for Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, but this is not mentioned in the report, and it should be promoted. Another suggestion was to have a presence at the Christmas Tree Festival and give out the leaflets to encourage people to return to the town to visit other attractions.

A member asked if the money received from UKSPF could be spent on the town centre and not the Stockyard and it was confirmed it would be spent on the town centre.

A member asked about the KPIs and if they were monitored as to the impact the campaign had done. Members were advised that figures were in the presentation pack and are monitored regularly.

	<p>The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments and said they would be presented to the Cabinet.</p> <p><i>(Cllr J Wilkinson left the meeting 8:35pm and did not return.)</i></p>
38	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no urgent business.</p>

The meeting closed at: 8.58 pm

Chair

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MEMBER INTERESTS

Do I have an interest?

1 DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPIs)

A “Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” is any interest described as such in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 and includes an interest of yourself, or of your Spouse/Partner (if you are aware of your Partner's interest) that falls within the following categories: Employment, Trade, Profession, Sponsorship, Contracts, Land/Property, Licences, Tenancies and Securities.

A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is a Registerable Interest. Failure to register a DPI is a criminal offence so register entries should be kept up-to-date.

2 OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS (ORIs)

An “Other Registerable Interest” is a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority; or
- b) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

3 NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS (NRIs)

“Non-Registrable Interests” are those that you are not required to register but need to be disclosed when a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing or a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate that is not a DPI.

In each case above, you should make your declaration at the beginning of the meeting or as soon as you become aware. In any other circumstances, where Members require further advice they should contact the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Declarations and Participation in Meetings

1 DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS (DPIs)

- 1.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests which include both the interests of yourself and your partner then:
- a) you must disclose the interest;
 - b) not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
 - c) must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

2 OTHER REGISTERABLE INTERESTS (ORIs)

- 2.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests i.e. relating to a body you may be involved in:
- a) you must disclose the interest
 - b) may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
 - c) must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

3 NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS (NRIs)

- 3.1 Where a matter arises at a meeting, which is not registrable but may become relevant when a particular item arises i.e. interests which relate to you and /or other people you are connected with (e.g. friends, relative or close associates) then:
- a) you must disclose the interest;
 - b) may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter; and
 - c) must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a Dispensation.

4 BIAS

- 4.1 Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or 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):
- a) you should not take part in the decision-making process
 - b) you should state that your position in this matter prohibits you from taking part
 - c) you should leave the room.

In each case above, you should make your declaration at the beginning of the meeting or as soon as you become aware. In any other circumstances, where Members require further advice they should contact the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL Forward Plan

FOR THE PERIOD November 2022 - January 2023

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
- Housing 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 Housing and Landlord Services	Not before 10th Nov 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Housing 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 10th Nov 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Nick Sach, Revenues and Benefits Manager	Open

<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>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 10th Nov 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>Sale of Cattle Market North</u></p> <p>The sale of Council land at the North End of the Cattle market, which comprises an approximate area of 1.69 acres, allocated for housing.</p>		<p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>Not before 10th Nov 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 – 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 Housing and Landlord Services</p>	<p>Not before 10th Nov 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services</p> <p>Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager</p>	<p>Open</p>

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?
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<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>		Director for Corporate Services	Not before 10th Nov 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Sarah Jane O'Connor, Assistant Director, Organisational Development	Open
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<p><u>New Bin Stores to Council Flats Phase 2 - Contract Award</u></p>		Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services	Not before 10th Nov 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager	Open
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<p><u>Contract Exemption – Dog Kennelling Services</u></p>		Director for Corporate Services	Not before 10th Nov 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement Victoria Clarke, Regulatory Services Manager	Fully exempt 4
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<u>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 2022/23</u>		Cabinet	16 Nov 2022	No	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Carol King, Accountant (CK)	Open
<u>General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 2022/23</u>		Cabinet	16 Nov 2022	No	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Natasha Allsopp, Senior Accountant (NA)	Open

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<p><u>Mid-Year Treasury Management Report 2022/23</u></p> <p>An update on Treasury Management performance for 2022/23.</p>		<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Council</p>	<p>16 Nov 2022</p> <p>15 Dec 2022</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources</p> <p>David Scott, Assistant Director, Resources (Deputy s151 Officer)</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Residents' Survey 2022</u></p> <p>A report which represents the findings of the residents' survey which was conducted on behalf of the Council during June/July 2022. The purpose of the residents' survey was to gauge satisfaction with the Council and its services and the area where residents live, as well as asking about preferred methods of communication and engagement from and with the Council.</p>		<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>16 Nov 2022</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement</p> <p>Martin Guest, Senior Corporate Policy Officer, Sarah Jane O'Connor, Assistant Director, Organisational Development</p>	<p>Open</p>

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<u>Melton CCTV Proposal</u>		Cabinet	16 Nov 2022	No	Portfolio Holder for People and Communities (Deputy Leader) Aysha Rahman, Assistant Director, Customers and Communities	Open
<u>Asset Management Plan - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</u>		Cabinet Council	16 Nov 2022 15 Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager	Open

<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>Collaboration Agreement</u></p> <p>Collaboration Agreement for spending the Government allocation on energy projects (known as Sustainable Warmth Competition or LAD3 (Local Authority Delivery phase 3) & HUG (Home Upgrade Grant) initially but will extend to other similar projects.</p>		<p>Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement</p>	<p>27 Nov 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement</p> <p>Christopher Harrison, Climate Change Officer</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>Consideration of Strategic Partnership Business Case and Operating Agreement</u></p> <p>19</p>		<p>Cabinet</p>	<p>6 Dec 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Leader of the Council</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>Open</p>
<p><u>CCTV Contractual Arrangements</u></p> <p>To exercise a delegated authority to finalise and enter into associated contractual arrangements subject to Council approving the investment and agreeing to enter into a partnership arrangement</p>		<p>Director for Housing and Communities</p>	<p>7 Dec 2022</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for People and Communities (Deputy Leader)</p> <p>Aysha Rahman, Assistant Director, Customers and Communities</p>	<p>Open</p>

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?
<p><u>Fire Alarm Upgrade & Communal Area Re-wire at Sheltered Housing Scheme</u></p> <p>To award a contract for fire alarm upgrade and communal area re-wire at a sheltered housing scheme</p>		Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services	7 Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager	Open
<p><u>Corporate Performance and Progress Report for Quarter 2 2022-23</u></p> <p>To report corporate performance data and the current position with regard to delivery against the Council's priorities.</p>		Cabinet	14 Dec 2022	No	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Martin Guest, Senior Corporate Policy Officer	Open
<p><u>Planning policy monitoring reports (IFS and AMR)</u></p> <p>Technical reports that need to be annually updated for noting. The AMR informs about Local Plan policies' performance, whilst the IFS summarises the developer contributions activity for the previous financial year.</p>		Cabinet	14 Dec 2022	No	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Jorge Fiz Alonso, Senior Planning Policy Officer	Open

<u>Report Title</u> 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>Health and Safety Update</u> To provide an update to Cabinet with respect to the Council's Health and Safety activities. This is in relation to current performance and planned actions and activities, as an employer, commercial and residential landlord and a public body, delivering a wide range of services. This report aims to provide assurance to Cabinet that risk continues to be actively and appropriately managed.		Cabinet	14 Dec 2022	No	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Jo Lees, Health and Safety Officer	Open
<u>Approval of the Asset Management Plan (Corporate Assets)</u>		Cabinet Council	14 Dec 2022 15 Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Pranali Parikh, Director for Growth and Regeneration	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>Acquisition of Eight Houses in Old Dalby</u>		Cabinet	14 Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Tahir Majid, Housing Development Manager	Open
<u>Leisure Procurement</u>		Cabinet	14 Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for People and Communities (Deputy Leader) Lee Byrne, Regeneration Manager	Open
<u>Local Development Scheme (LDS)</u> Document outlining the timescales for the production of work relating to the Local Plan and its review.		Cabinet	14 Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Sarah Legge, Local Plans Manager	Open

<u>Report Title</u> 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?
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<p><u>Fees and Charges 2023/24</u></p> <p>To approve the revised fees and charges for 2023/24.</p>		Director for Corporate Services	Not before 31st Dec 2022	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources David Scott, Assistant Director, Resources (Deputy s151 Officer)	Open
<p><u>Housing Management Policies</u></p> <p>To approve updated housing management policies.</p>		Cabinet	25 Jan 2023	Yes	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Christopher Flannery, Housing Asset Manager	Open

<u>Report Title</u> 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?
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<p><u>Waste Strategy</u></p> <p>To consider proposals for the future Waste and Resourcing Strategy for Leicestershire.</p>		Cabinet	25 Jan 2023	Yes	<p>Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement</p> <p>Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	Open
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MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23

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.

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
Climate Change	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth and Regeneration Member Lead – TBC	TBC	A workshop will be held in November to give Scrutiny the opportunity to review and discuss any plans. This may include a presentation from the Climate Change Officer.	Agreed by the Chairman on 28 January 2022. 22 February 2022 meeting – Proposed by Chairman and approved by Committee.	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	May 2022 (Original) New date – TBC	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.
Homelessness	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Scrutiny Chairman	TBC	Following a concern expressed at the potential for an increase in homelessness as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, the Committee decided to review homelessness within the Borough.	18 October 2022 meeting – Proposed by Chairman and approved by Committee	TBC
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.
Strategic Collaboration	Edd de Coverly Chief Executive Scrutiny Chairman	22 November 2022	The Scrutiny Committee will receive the business case for a strategic collaboration between Melton Borough Council and Harborough District Council.	18 October 2022 meeting – Approved by the Committee.	N/A – There will be no final report, however there is expected to be comments to fed back to Cabinet and Council.
Planning Service	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Chairman	TBC	Following concerns from Members regarding the Planning Service, it was decided that the topic should be added to the Work Programme.	Agreed by the Chairman on 5 September 2022.	N/A – There will be no final report, however there is expected to be comments to fed back to Cabinet and the service.

Waste Strategy	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Scrutiny Chairman	11 January 2023	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. The Waste Strategy will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at the meeting on 11 January 2023.	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.
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RECENTLY COMPLETED REVIEWS

These reviews have been completed in the last month.

It must be noted that what is meant by completed is that Scrutiny involvement is complete. The topics may still require consideration by the Cabinet, Council or External Body.

Topic	Notes
Asset Development Programme (ADP)	A Working Group consisting of Cllrs Child, Chandler, Evans, Holmes and Posnett met on 23 March 2022 and again on 3 November 2022. A series of options were presented and Members gave feedback so Officers can further develop the ADP. The next step is that the ADP, with Scrutiny comments included, will be presented to the Cabinet for consideration.
Crime and Disorder	Members met with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on 20 October 2022 for a question-and-answer session on his aims and objectives with a focus on the Borough of Melton. The feedback from the meeting will be presented to the Cabinet by the Scrutiny Chairman at the Cabinet meeting to be held on 16 November 2022.
Tourism Service	At the meeting on 18 October 2022, the Committee received a report and presentation about tourism in the Borough and what the tourism service does to promote tourism. Members provided feedback which will be presented to the Cabinet by the Scrutiny Chairman at the Cabinet meeting to be held on 16 November 2022.

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) Strategic Collaboration	One-off	Leader Chief Executive	November 2022	The potential strategic collaboration between Melton Borough Council and Harborough District Council will be outlined to the Committee.	N/A	Yes
(2) Leader's Annual Presentation	Annual item	Leader Chief Executive	11 January 2023	Summary of delivery of the Corporate Strategy 21/22 and objectives for 22/23.	Scrutiny Workshop, June 2022	TBC
(3) Debt Management Report	Annual item	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Revenues & Benefits Manager	11 January 2023	The report will cover the following: 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
(4) Waste Strategy	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)	11 January 2023	The Leicestershire County Council Waste Strategy will be presented to the Committee. Accompanying the strategy will be a report outlining the effects it will have upon the Council and the Borough.	9 November 2021 meeting	Yes
(5) Budget	Annual item	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources Director for Corporate Services	24 January 2023	Scrutiny of the Budget (All Members) One item only agenda	N/A	Yes
(6) Scrutiny Annual Report	Annual Item	Scrutiny Officer Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	April 2023	Report detailing the work of the Scrutiny Committee over the previous 12 months	N/A	Yes

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) Changes to housing regulatory framework	Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities	TBC	The Director for Housing and Communities suggested presenting an one-off report to the Scrutiny Committee outlining the regulatory changes to the housing sector. Item is pending as no date has been confirmed for the Committee to receive the report.	Scrutiny Workshop, June 2022
(2) Update on MMDR	Chief Executive	TBC	At the Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop in June 2022, Members requested an update report on the MMDR project. Item is pending as no date has been confirmed for the Committee to receive the report.	Scrutiny Workshop, June 2022
(3) Youth Provision	Michelle Howard Director for Housing and Communities	TBC	Members requested a review of youth provision in the Borough of Melton.	Scrutiny Workshop, June 2022

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 work programme. 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 programme 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.

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Scrutiny

22 November 2022

Report of: Cllr Joe Orson
Leader of the Council

Strategic Partnership Business Case

Corporate Priority:	All Corporate priorities
Relevant Ward Member(s):	N/A
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	See section 7
Exempt Information:	No

Summary

- 1.1 Collaboration is commonplace within Local Government and within Leicestershire there is a strong track record of joint working by District Councils and their partners.
- 1.2 On 12th October 2022, Cabinet confirmed their interest in exploring the establishment of a strategic partnership with Harborough District Council (HDC) and provided authority to work with HDC to develop a full business case and set out an approach to operate such an arrangement.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to set out the framework for the business case for establishing a strategic partnership between Harborough District Council and Melton Borough Council. The full business case is being finalised and will be provided to the committee on 18th November. The business case sets out the design principles for the partnership, the intended benefits, and the initial proposition to share a small number of senior roles. It also sets out service delivery opportunities that could be explored if the partnership is established.
- 1.4 The Council's Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and provide feedback to Cabinet on the Business Case.
- 1.5 Alongside this a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA), has been developed which will be considered by the Council's Audit and Standards Committee, who will also provide feedback to Cabinet.

- 1.6 The relevant committees at Harborough District Council will also consider and provide feedback to their Cabinet members on the draft Business Case and draft Memorandum of Agreement.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.0 Note the Business Case and provide comments to be considered by Cabinet before they make a recommendation to Council in December

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.0 To ensure that the business case and associated objectives and opportunities for a Strategic Partnership between Melton Borough Council and Harborough District Council can be reviewed and scrutinised.
- 3.1 Scrutiny committee comments will be considered by Cabinet members and will help inform the final stages of development of the business case ahead of Cabinet consideration and recommendation to Council.

4 Background

- 4.0 Harborough District Council's (HDC's) Chief Executive retired in February 2022. At their meeting in June 2022, HDC's Leader and interim Chief Executive were given authority to undertake a review, and utilising the [criteria set out in their report](#), to identify a preferred strategic partner and to report back to their Council on the suggested way forward at a later date.
- 4.1 The basis for HDC identifying an appropriate strategic partner included three main considerations:
- Strategic Fit – including alignment of objectives, aspirations, areas of commonality
 - Feasibility – into consider how such an arrangement could happen
 - Viability – to consider whether a partnership could be financially viable
- 4.2 Following this analysis, Melton Borough Council were considered the best 'fit' and identified as their preferred partner.
- 4.3 In early September 2022, HDC's Leader invited Melton Borough Council's Leader to explore the opportunity further with them. The main reasons for this included greater similarities in our respective places, broad alignment between our corporate strategies, strong positive relationships, a track record of collaborative arrangements and the initial assessment of opportunities that may exist by our organisations working more closely together.
- 4.4 At its meeting on 10th October 2022, Harborough District Council's Cabinet approved the following recommendations:
- 4.4.1 Note the progress on the strategic partnership review which has identified Melton Borough Council as the preferred partner.

- 4.4.2 Note the outcome of the review and authorise working with Melton Borough Council to develop a full business case, and the potential approach for operating such a partnership, which will be presented to council at a later date.
- 4.5 At its meeting on the 12 October 2022, Melton Borough Council's Cabinet approved the following recommendations:
- 4.5.1 Note that through a strategic partnership review, Harborough District Council has identified Melton Borough Council as a preferred strategic partner and has formally approached the Council to explore this further.
- 4.5.2 Acknowledge the outcome of the review carried out by Harborough District Council and authorise working with them to develop a full business case and approach to operating such a partnership, to be considered by Council in December 2022.
- 4.6 Since then, to enable a comprehensive and robust assessment to be undertaken, within the required timescales, officers have worked alongside external independent experts to assist in developing the business case and legal frameworks.
- 4.7 The business case, which is due to be published on 18th November, will set out the design principles for the partnership, the intended benefits, and the initial proposition to share a small number of senior roles. It will also provide an analysis of potential service opportunities which would then be subject to further review. It does not provide a detailed assessments of proposals for every service area but sets out the service delivery opportunities that could be explored if the partnership is established.
- 4.8 The report seeks comments from scrutiny committee members prior to consideration of the Business Case by Cabinet.
- 4.9 The final version of the business case will be presented to Council for consideration in December 2022.

5 Main Considerations

- 5.0 The Business Case forms Appendix A of this report. The business case document will be provided to Scrutiny Committee members on 18th November 2022. An overview of the Business Case framework is included in this report.
- 5.1 The Business Case is made up of the following chapters:
- 5.1.1 Introduction and approach
- 5.1.2 Executive Summary
- 5.1.3 Learnings from elsewhere
- 5.1.4 Analysis of Councils (demography, deprivation, local businesses and growth, corporate priorities, organisations values, current leadership structures)
- 5.1.5 Mapping of services and collaboration
- 5.1.6 Design principles and intended benefits
- 5.1.7 Strategic Partnership – the proposition including collaborative governance arrangements and shared roles.
- 5.1.8 Phase approach to investigation
- 5.1.9 Strategic Case

- 5.1.10 Economic Case
- 5.1.11 Financial Case
- 5.1.12 Commercial Case
- 5.1.13 Management Case
- 5.1.14 Summary of Findings
- 5.1.15 Operational Implementation Plan

5.2 If the Strategic Partnership is formed, the participating Councils will continue to retain their own sovereignty and democratic accountability to their communities, as well as their own local decision making. This forms a key component of the business case.

5.3 The Business Case has been developed with the support of sector leading consultants and demonstrates the rationale and opportunities for forming the Strategic Partnership. In developing the business case detailed consideration and reference has been given to examples of successful partnerships across the local government sector. It also covers the desirability, viability and the feasibility of establishing a strategic partnership in terms of strategic, economic, financial and commercial management along with a proposed implementation plan.

5.4 Some of the key elements of the business case for members to consider are summarised below:

5.5 **The Proposition**

5.5.1 In developing a business case, it is necessary to have a proposition which can be considered and tested. The proposition for the establishment of a strategic partnership between the two councils would be designed to provide a platform that enables both councils to improve service quality, resilience and efficiency, while also increasing their collective influence and ability to improve outcomes for their communities and businesses.

5.5.2 To establish the required platform, the following changes have been built into the business case to facilitate a stable initial leadership platform for the new partnership. These changes will enable the exploration of further collaboration; however, these changes have no direct impact on the sovereignty, decision making and independence of either council. These changes have been designed to adhere to the required characteristics, qualities and safeguards identified within the design principles which are set out below:

- a) Shared Chief Executive (CEO) and Head of Paid Service
- b) Shared Deputy Chief Executives (x2) with thematic responsibilities
- c) Partnership governance arrangements

5.6 **The Case for Change**

5.7 The business case will set out the case for change. The following drivers apply to both councils:

- a) **Limitations on strategic influence** Due to their scale, both councils experience challenges associated with their ability to influence decisions at a sub-regional, regional and national level. For example, HDC and MBC are two of seven second tier authorities 'trying to get a seat at the Integrated Care Board table'. Individually, HDC and MBC are ranked 259th and 311th respectively (out of 314 councils) in terms of population size.

Combining populations would mean that the councils would speak on behalf of 146,000 residents, making it the 147th most populated area in the country and 92nd in terms of geographical area. By working together both councils could increase their impact, reach and influence, while still remaining connected locally.

- b) **Limited ‘place leadership’ without a single voice** - Both councils are experiencing similar challenges (an ageing population, pockets of deprivation, inequality and isolation, lack of digital and transport connectivity etc.) but currently do not share strategies and approaches to address these challenges. The CEOs of both councils currently spend approximately 30% of their time managing external relations; they both attend many of the same meetings and engage with the same stakeholders separately. The opportunity exists to address shared challenges together, doing things more effectively, once rather than twice.
- c) **Challenges to financial resilience and sustainability** - Both councils are currently experiencing financial challenges. There is uncertainty regarding future levels of government funding, while inflation is already having a significant impact on council finances. Both councils have limited further opportunities for achieving savings and efficiencies by themselves; sharing services, resources, expertise and approaches to common challenges represents a new route to realising new efficiencies and savings, while also representing a significant opportunity to improving the scope and quality of services delivered to communities and businesses. Additionally, HDC’s base budget for 2022/23 and MTFs already include savings associated with the sharing of senior leadership team posts.
- d) **Improving organisational resilience** - Both councils have experienced challenges in terms of recruitment and retention, particularly amongst specialist teams and roles, including Monitoring Officers and director roles. While MBC currently has a stable leadership team, several key HDC roles are subject to interim appointments (Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer). Additionally, single points of failure currently exist across both organisations, as single individuals assume responsibility for statutory roles (safeguarding, health and safety advice, Conservation Officer (planning), equalities and land charges etc.).
- e) **Improving service resilience** - Challenges relating to recruitment and retention extend to individual service areas, including planning and housing services. Recent experience demonstrates that these services are particularly susceptible to disruption given the small size of the respective teams (i.e. annual leave, sickness, resignations etc.). Should sharing and maximising the collective skills, expertise and systems across both councils result in improved service resilience, such steps would realise a highly desirable outcome from the perspective of both councils, their communities, businesses and partners.

5.8 The Draft Design Principles

5.9 It is important that the development and delivery of a strategic partnership is guided by a set of principles. Design principles should:

- a) Determine the characteristics and qualities that any proposed change is required to demonstrate
- b) Provide a blueprint that informs the proposition options to be appraised within the business case
- c) Be both desirable and realistic (viable and feasible)

5.9.2 A number of design principles have been developed for the proposed Strategic Partnership, which are supported by a range of further proposed commitments, shown in the table below:

<p>Design Principle 1 (DP1):</p> <p>To enhance each councils' ability to address common issues and challenges for the benefit of residents, communities, and business, through a common purpose, whilst maintaining democratic accountability</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable both councils to develop joint strategies/approaches on issues where an at scale or collaborative 'place leadership' response would add value (net zero, inclusive growth, health and wellbeing, prevention and early intervention, cost of living support etc.) - Each council remains responsible for identifying and assessing the needs of their residents, communities and local businesses - All proposals for change must demonstrate the positive impact the change will have on residents, communities and/or businesses - Ensure each council retains the democratic accountability that exists between elected members and their communities - Ensure that all stakeholders understand the partnership arrangements and relationships between partners

<p>Design Principle 2 (DP2):</p> <p>To enable both councils to maximise influence, reach and impact; locally, regionally and nationally, particularly on shared opportunities and challenges</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enable both councils to operate with a stronger voice on local and regional issues as and when appropriate

<p>Design Principle 3 (DP3):</p> <p>To enable greater financial sustainability, deliver resilience and maximise opportunities to secure external funding</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A structure that enables shared learning and good practice, resulting in realisation of savings, efficiencies or increased value for money - Exploration of approaches to joint mitigation of financial risks - Ensure that external funding opportunities are maximised through wider geography and joint bidding

Design Principle 4 (DP4):**To attract and retain workforce talent through the opportunities for shared learning, job enrichment, new experiences and progression**

- A structure and approach that identifies, respects and maximises the strengths and capabilities of each council's workforce, partnerships and relationships with their communities
- Building on existing examples of collaboration across services, to provide opportunities for job enrichment and progression, thus supporting recruitment, retention and development of current staff ('employer(s) of choice')
- Create a joint approach to workforce strategy and vacancy management

Design Principle 5 (DP5):**To create a mechanism that allows the effective and equitable deployment of resources**

- The appointment of a senior officer (Shared Chief Executive Officer & Head of Paid Services - 'Shared Chief Executive') who is ultimately accountable to the elected members of each council
- A fair and proportionate structure that enables both councils to explore opportunities for service improvement, reduced duplication and increasing capacity, all of which could realise savings or increased value for money
- Exploration of opportunities to jointly commission, procure or deliver common services.

Design Principle 6 (DP6):**To consider and embrace future collaboration options and to review and evaluate existing arrangements**

- Co-designed and agreed arrangements in place that enable the ongoing review and evaluation of partnership performance and collaboration activity involving both councils (and external partners, if appropriate)
- Ongoing review and evaluation of partnership benefits and collaborative activity to be informed by a robust review process
- Proposals to changes a council's services will be informed by an evidence-based review undertaken by the council(s)
- Each organisation is required to agree to any recommended/proposed change to services prior to implementation in line with agreed delegations

Design Principle 7 (DP7):**To ensure that council sovereignty and clear lines of accountability are maintained**

- Retain the councils' responsibility for identifying, agreeing and implementing corporate strategies, policies and priorities
- Each council will remain accountable for the decisions taken in line with their own constitution and governance arrangements
- Elected members retain oversight and scrutiny over council policy and key decisions in line with delegations and governance arrangements
- Elected members retain all current decision-making powers in relation to council budgets and investments

Design Principle 8 (DP8):**To create a mechanism that ensures a fair, equitable and proportionate allocation of costs**

- Elected members have open, fair and proportionate access in line with their roles to Shared officers
- A clear, transparent and agreed mechanism is in place exists to ensure that the time of Shared officers are fairly allocated to each council.
- A clear, transparent and agreed mechanism exists to ensure that the costs associated with the role of the Shared officers are fairly allocated to each council.
- Where financial arrangements are shared (i.e joint budgets or shared services), a clear process is agreed for managing local variance (need and demography, demand for services etc.).

5.10 The Intended Benefits

5.11 The business case sets out a number of intended benefits. These include:

5.11.1 Strategic Place Leadership

- a) Collective strength; working together to respond to and address shared and common challenges and opportunities at a local, corporate and sub-regional level.
- b) Maximising our influence; speaking on behalf of East Leicestershire, increasing our collective influence regionally and nationally through a stronger, more united voice
- c) Futureproofing both councils; cementing a solid and flexible foundation for partnership working ahead of the potential for devolution and local reform.

5.11.2 Communities and Businesses

- a) Increased levels of inclusive growth, reduced deprivation and improved outcomes; doing more for our local communities and businesses

- b) Maximising external investment; enabling the future prosperity for our communities and businesses
- c) Maximising impact by jointly addressing shared challenges, including net zero, cost of living, health and wellbeing, digital connectivity, housing affordability etc.
- d) Increased impact realised through collective campaigns and public awareness initiatives.

5.11.3 Organisational effectiveness

- a) Increased service resilience, sharing resources, learning and good practice.
- b) Improving organisational effectiveness – a joint approach that reduces duplication, increases service quality and improves outcomes
- c) Accelerating the pace of progress/improvement and increasing the impact realised by both councils – a joint approach that reflects the best of both councils.

5.11.4 Workforce

- a) Increased opportunity for job enrichment, development and progression
- b) Improved recruitment and retention rates
- c) Both councils being viewed as ‘employers of choice’

5.11.5 Financial resilience

- a) Improved financial sustainability – through growth, efficiency/removal of duplication and the realisation of savings
- b) Improved value for money through sharing capabilities, resources and working practices
- c) Increased purchasing power – improved value for money and the ability to shape, influence and support local/regional markets
- d) A new financial benefit to the councils – ongoing savings, efficiencies and added value outweigh the costs of change.

5.12 The business case chapters as set out in section 5.1 and the full analysis of the opportunities, risks and potential benefits will be set out in detail within the business case published on 18th November.

6 Options Considered

6.0 The Council could choose not to consult with the Scrutiny Committee. This is not recommended. Scrutiny committee comments and feedback form a key part of the business case development process. All comments will be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

6.1 It would not be appropriate to enter into a strategic partnership without a business case in place. Scrutiny committee comments form a vital part of this process.

7 Consultation

7.0 Communication, consultation and engagement has been wide ranging and has been carried out on an ongoing basis. Some key examples relevant to Melton Borough Council are included below:

- Chief Executive and Leader emails to all members and staff on 21st September 2022
- All staff briefing on 26th September 2022
- All Member briefing as part of the State of Melton Debate on 28th September 2022
- Emails to the Chair of Audit and Standards and Scrutiny on 30th September 2022
- Report to [Cabinet](#) 12th October 2022
- All staff emails on 7th and 14th October 2022
- All member briefing 2nd November 2022
- All staff briefing 11th November 2022
- Scrutiny Committee to consider and provide feedback on the business case on 22nd November 2022
- Audit and Standards Committee to consider and provide feedback on the Memorandum of Agreement on 23rd November 2022
- Ongoing opportunity for members to provide comments prior to Council agenda release on 12th December 2022
- Cabinet to consider business case and MoA on 6th December 2022
- Council to consider recommendations from Cabinet on 20th December 2022

7.1 Communication with stakeholders has also been carried out. This includes:

- Letters to key stakeholders on 30th September 2022 and Parish Councils on 5th October 2022, with a further letter to stakeholders on 9th November 2022.
- Parish Council liaison session to be held on 28th November 2022.
- Updates to the MP and Police and Crime Commissioner

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

8.0 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) developed and circulated to staff and elected members

8.1 Opportunity for members to hear from another strategic partnership

8.2 Further briefings to staff and elected members to be arranged as appropriate

8.3 Draft final Business Case and MoA for consideration and comment for Cabinet Meeting 6th December 2022

8.4 Present final Business Case and MoA to Council on 20th December 2022

8.5 Communication and engagement plan to support implementation will be developed should a decision to proceed be taken.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.0 In exploring a strategic partnership there was a clear ambition for both Councils to become more financially efficient and resilient in the way they operate through greater collaboration.
- 9.1 If the new partnership were adopted exploring wider service integration where it makes sense to do so will reduce pressure on the Councils' budgets in the years ahead whilst also creating capacity to invest in local priorities to achieve better outcomes for communities whilst retaining local sovereignty.
- 9.2 In addition, the successes in each Council provide opportunities for further joint exploration and development looking forward.
- 9.3 Significantly, the Councils as a partnership would collectively have a stronger voice locally, regionally and nationally, when seeking resources to further their priorities.
- 9.4 The Business Case includes a focus on finance, commercial and economic opportunities. The Business Case sets out a proposal for changes to a small number of senior roles as an initial step whilst looking forward to the indicative savings that could be made from further sharing opportunities over the next five years. Any service delivery changes will be subject to a full business case before any financial implications and opportunities can be confirmed.
- 9.5 The Memorandum of Agreement includes a number of financial principles relating to the strategic partnership and its operation. This includes the equal sharing of costs relating to shared senior leadership officers unless otherwise agreed, as well as including further rationale for how costs could be shared should other services be considered for sharing in the future. Also included is provision for the accounting, reporting and review of the finances relating to the partnership. Provision is also made relating to the liability and apportionment of costs in the event of termination or the withdrawal of a partner from the partnership.

Financial Implications reviewed by: **Director for Corporate Services**

10 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.0 The Business Case for the strategic partnership between Harborough District Council and Melton Borough Council sets out the design principles for the partnership, the intended benefits, and the initial proposition which is to share a small number of senior roles.
- 10.1 The Council is under a duty pursuant to s.3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999, to: "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness".
- 10.2 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables a local authority to enter into an agreement with another local authority to place an officer of one at the disposal of the other for the purposes of discharging the latter's functions. Any officer placed at the disposal of a Council other than his/her employer must first be consulted on the proposal. Once placed at the disposal of the non-employing authority, the officer is classed in law as an officer of that authority and is able to exercise powers delegated to them.
- 10.3 The Business Case also sets out service delivery opportunities that could be explored if the partnership is established. These legal implications will be considered on a case-by-case basis as individual business cases are developed.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

11.0 None arising directly from this report. However, a screening process will be carried out to determine whether a full Equalities Impact Assessment is required prior to Cabinet and Full Council consideration.

12 Community Safety Implications

12.0 None arising directly from this report. However, opportunities to collaborate at service level include the progression of a collaborative approach to CCTV which will be referred to within the business case.

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

13.0 New technologies and ways of working provide the opportunity to reduce travel-based carbon emissions across the proposed Partnership.

13.1 The proposed partnership also has the potential to deliver greater climate change and environmental outcomes for the Councils and the communities they serve. This would be an opportunity which could be explored further if the partnership is approved.

14 Other Implications (where significant)

14.0 HR Implications

14.1 It will be critically important to ensure we continue to support our officers and ensure they are kept well informed, engaged and consulted of developments.

14.2 Our staff are our greatest asset and we need to ensure they are fully supported during any change processes.

14.3 Where there is a potential for impact on or changes to any roles, normal HR processes must be followed.

15 Risk & Mitigation

15.0 Key strategic risks are included within the business case document. Additionally, a risk register is in place and will continue to be updated and maintained. There are a number of categories within which risks have been considered to date. These include:

- Leadership and Governance
- Capacity, Resource and Resilience
- Financial
- Workforce, culture and communication
- External factors

16 Background Papers

- 16.0 Harborough District Council Cabinet Report 10th October 2022 – Opportunity to explore establishment of a strategic partnership with Harborough District Council
- 16.1 Melton Borough Council Cabinet Report 12 October 2022 – Opportunity to explore establishment of a strategic partnership with Harborough District Council

17 Appendices

- 17.0 Appendix 1 – Business Case (To follow, 18th November 2022)

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