

# Minutes



<b>Meeting name</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, 15 November 2023</b>
<b>Start time</b>	<b>4.30 pm</b>
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH</b>

## Present:

**Chair** Councillor P. Allnatt (Chair)

**Councillors** M. Glancy (Vice-Chair) S. Cox  
P. Cumbers

**In Attendance** Councillor M. Brown

**Officers** Chief Executive  
Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)  
Director for Corporate Services  
Interim Assistant Director for Governance & Democracy  
Director for Growth and Regeneration  
Assistant Director for Housing Management  
Housing Development Manager  
Democratic Services Officer (HA)

Minute No.	Minute
39	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> An apology was received from Councillor Butcher.</p>
40	<p><b>MINUTES</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 were confirmed and authorised by the chair.</p>
41	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> There were no declarations of interest.</p>
42	<p><b>MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES</b> In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, this item had been referred from the Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime and Disorder</li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Mike Brown, introduced the report advising members that the Scrutiny Committee had met on 19 October 2023 and considered the Crime and Disorder Annual update and advised the new Police Inspector for Melton, Inspector Darren Richardson, was present at this meeting.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods thanked the Scrutiny committee for their feedback and praised the working relationship of the partnership with family engagement and the improvement of rural crime prevention.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources thanked Scrutiny Committee for the report advised members that she would feed back any information from the Police and Crime Panel in relationship to the frustrations around the reporting of crime and anti-social behaviour which had been noted by a number of other districts. She also highlighted that the council had been awarded the Safer Streets Funding and thanked the team involved for securing this. This funding would be used to tackle some of the issues raised in the report.</p> <p>Cabinet <b>AGREED</b> to have regard to the Scrutiny Committee’s feedback.</p> <p>In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, this item had been referred from the Scrutiny Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Ombudsman. Annual Report 2022/23</li> </ul> <p>The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Mike Brown, introduced the report advising members that the Scrutiny Committee had met on 19 October 2023 and discussed the Housing Ombudsman, Annual report 2022/23.</p>

The Director for Housing and Communities, Deputy CEO, advised members that complaints are taken seriously and is always under review analysing trends and performances. She informed Cabinet that a self-assessment report would be brought forward to the December Cabinet meeting providing further detail.

Cabinet **AGREED** to have regard to the Scrutiny Committee's feedback.

43

### **PLANNING ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

The Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services (Deputy Leader) introduced the report the purpose of which was to seek approval for the adoption of a Planning Enforcement Policy that would help the Council in managing the planning enforcement function in a consistent, effective, and compliant way.

The Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services (Deputy Leader) advised the committee that there were some minor typographical errors, which do not alter the content of the policy, in the report, and these would be rectified before the Policy is published.

The Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods thanked the team for the document stating that it would give the public clear understanding on when and how to make a complaint on Planning.

The Leader of the Council thanked the officers for the report.

Cabinet

- 1) **APPROVED** the Planning Enforcement Policy for adoption and publication on the Council's website.
- 2) **DELEGATED** authority to the Director for Growth and Regeneration (in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder) to make any further changes to the Policy, arising from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act.

#### *Reasons for the Recommendations*

*'Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton' and 'Protecting our built and natural environment' are key corporate priorities for the Council. Planning enforcement is an important tool available to the Council in achieving these priorities.*

*Melton Borough Council, as a local planning authority, is a responsible body for planning enforcement within the Borough.*

*The purpose of the Planning Enforcement Policy is to ensure effective and proper enforcement of planning controls is in place to protect the local environment and interests of the residents, visitors, and businesses from the harmful effects of unauthorised development and breaches of planning control. It is important and necessary to ensure ongoing public trust in the planning system.*

44

### **QUARTER 2 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL**

**BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide information on actual expenditure and income incurred on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1 April to 30 September 2023 for revenue and capital budgets.

The Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services, Deputy Leader, thanked officers for the higher returns on the investments which had led to the forecast underspend.

The Assistant Director for Housing Management confirmed to members that the backlog in receiving the energy bills for Gretton Court had now been resolved and that this has now been added to tenants' rent payments, the increase had not been too significant.

Cabinet **NOTED** the financial position on the Housing Revenue Account as at 30 September 2023 and the year-end forecast for both revenue and capital.

*Reason for recommendation*

*The Council, having set an agreed budget at the start of the financial year needs to ensure that the delivery of the budget is achieved. Consequently, there is a requirement to regularly monitor progress so that corrective action can be taken when required, which is enhanced with the regular reporting of the financial position.*

45

**QUARTER 2 GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance Property and Resources introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide financial progress information on the General Fund and Special Expenses for period 1 April to 30 September 2023.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance Property and Resources highlighted to members that though the forecast currently is good for this year's budget, that is due to the grant income received, which is a one-off, and high interest rates yielding good returns on our investments, which are due to drop by the end of next year. Along with the uncertainty of funding from central government, Members need to be aware there could be some tough decisions needed to be made for next year.

Cabinet:

**NOTED** the year end forecast and financial position for the General Fund both general and Special Expenses at 30 September 2023 for both revenue and capital.

*Reason for recommendation:*

*The Council, having set an agreed budget at the start of the financial year needs to ensure that the delivery of this budget is achieved.*

*Consequently, there is a requirement to regularly monitor progress so that corrective action can be taken when required, which is enhanced with the regular reporting of the financial position.*

46

**MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2023/24**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources introduced the

report, the purpose of which was to provide a summary of the treasury activities to the end of September 2023 and inform Members of the actual position to date on the Prudential Indicators in accordance with the Prudential Code.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources thanked the Finance team for their excellent work and confirmed that Melton Borough Council was the top of the benchmarking group in the East Midlands in terms of our investment returns which had resulted in the Council meeting its objectives this year.

Cabinet recommended to Council that:

- 1) **NOTED** The mid-year position on treasury activity for 2022-23.
- 2) **NOTED** The mid-year position on Prudential Indicators for 2022-23.

*Reasons for recommendations:*

*The Prudential Code requires the Council to monitor and report performance on Treasury Management activities at least quarterly. As a minimum Council need to receive an annual report on the strategy and plan for the coming financial year, a mid-year review and an annual report on performance of the treasury management function. In addition, monitoring reports should be received at least quarterly alongside revenue and capital monitoring by the Cabinet, as the body delegated responsibility for treasury management functions.*

*To facilitate the decision-making process and support capital investment decisions, the Prudential Code requires the Council to agree and monitor a minimum number of prudential indicators.*

47

## **ACQUISITION OF AFFORDABLE HOMES TO SPEND RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS**

The Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) introduced the report, the purpose of which was to advise of the need to spend Right to Buy receipts for 2023/24, to enable the acquisition of affordable homes and propose that Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services to purchase houses in accordance with the Right to Buy budget.

The Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) advised Cabinet a report would be provided at the start of the next financial year detailing the amount available to spend for the year, the number of homes that could support to purchase and the proposed locations that this could take place.

The Leader of the Council thanked officers for their work on the report and confirmed that Cabinet would be included in the decisions made on the purchase of properties with the Right to Buy receipts.

Cabinet:

- 1) **NOTED** the need to spend Right to Buy receipts for the 2023/24 spending requirement, to enable the acquisition of affordable homes.
  
- 2) **DELEGATED** authority to the Director for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services to purchase homes in accordance with the budget for spending Right to Buy receipts to meet the 2023-24 spending requirement.

*Reasons for recommendations*

*Delivering new council homes with RTB receipts will help to meet the corporate priority of providing high quality council homes and landlord services.*

*The Government imposes deadlines for spending RTB receipts. A certain amount of funds has to be spent each financial year in order to avoid receipts being sent back to the Treasury with an interest penalty.*

*Cabinet approval was obtained in December 2022 to purchase 8 new houses from a developer in Old Dalby. Expenditure on this scheme would have ensured that the RTB spend target for this financial year was achieved. Unfortunately, there have been delays due to the developer having issues with planning permission and construction. This means 6 of these homes will not be ready until the end of December 2023. There is a concern that if there are further delays in delivery, alternative purchases and associated Cabinet approvals will need to be made. As the Cabinet approval process takes time, there is a risk that the deadline for spend by the end of March 2024 may not be achieved.*

*Delegating authority to spend RTB receipts to the Director of Housing and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services will save time and ensure that receipts are spent within deadlines.*

*The homes will be acquired according to the Housing Development Plan 2022-26 which was approved by Cabinet in July 2022. All new homes will be purchased in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services, and in accordance with the budget for spending RTB receipts.*

The meeting closed at: 4.57 pm

Chair