

Agenda

Meeting name	Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee
Date	Tuesday, 17 September 2019
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 invited to attend the above meeting to consider the following items of business.

Edd de Coverly
Chief Executive

Membership

Councillors	P. Cumbers (Chair)	R. Bindloss (Vice-Chair)
	R. Browne	R. Child
	J. Douglas	C. Evans
	C. Fisher	E. Holmes
	R. Smedley	J. Wilkinson

Quorum: 5 Councillors

Meeting enquiries	Catherine Richards
Email	democracy@melton.gov.uk
Agenda despatched	Monday, 9 September 2019

No.	Item	Page No.
1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	MINUTES To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2019.	1 - 14
3.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Members to declare any interest as appropriate in respect of items to be considered at this meeting.	15 - 16
4.	REVIEW OF THE SCRUTINY ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND THE FORWARD PLAN To consider the Forward Plan and identify any relevant items for inclusion in the Scrutiny work plan, or to request further information. Copies of the latest Forward Plan will be available at the meeting. It can be found on the website using the following link:- Forward Plan	17 - 26
	FOR SCRUTINY	
5.	QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE, ACCESS AND ENGAGEMENT Presentation to be provided, setting out current performance, focus and challenges for the portfolio.	
6.	COMMUNITY GRANTS REVIEW - PRESENTATION Presentation to be provided by the People Manager on proposals to review the current policy for allocation of community grants.	
	FOR APPROVAL	
7.	UPDATE ON TASK AND FINISH GROUP - HOUSING VOIDS MANAGEMENT AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee to submit a report updating the Committee on the progress of the Task and Finish Group for Housing Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation.	27 - 36
8.	URGENT BUSINESS To consider any other items that the Chair considers urgent	



Minutes

Meeting name	Scrutiny Committee
Date	Tuesday, 23 July 2019
Start time	6.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor P. Cumbers (Chair)

Councillors R. Bindloss (Vice-Chair) R. Browne
 J. Douglas C. Evans
 R. Smedley J. Wilkinson

Observers P. Chandler

Officers Deputy Chief Executive & Director for People & Communities
 Director for Law and Governance
 Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services
 Democratic Services Officer (CR)

Minute No.	Minute
10	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Child, Fisher and Holmes.</p>
11	<p>Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2019 were approved and authorised to be signed by the Chair.</p>
12	<p>Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.</p>
	<p>For Scrutiny</p>
13	<p>Questions to Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Higgins:</p> <p>(a) gave a presentation (copies of which had been circulated at this meeting and is attached), setting out current performance, focus and challenges for the portfolio around:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Centre, Tourism, Events and Place Promotion • Economic Growth and Inward Investment • Planning Policy and Housing Delivery • Major Developments <p>(b) asked Members if the format of the presentation had been useful and advised that more in-depth information would be provided as the portfolio grew.</p> <p>Members commented that the presentation had been helpful and they looked forward to receiving more information in due course.</p> <p>A Member asked if it was viable for the Council to set up a housing company to tackle housing needs. The Councillor Higgins provided a brief overview of how a housing company would work and the Director for Growth and Regeneration, Mrs. Parikh advised that there was an appetite for this. The Council had approved it in principle last year and an outline business case has been prepared. Drafting a detailed business case was the next stage, once development information was in place.</p> <p>A Member queried if there had been any progress on car parking charges, in relation to pay on departure. Councillor Higgins confirmed that he had raised this with Mrs. Parikh. This could increase revenue for the Council.</p> <p>Another Member asked if developers would find it more viable to build if the</p>

'builder's contribution' was ended. Councillor Higgins advised that the contributions were required to provide community facility but viability was taken into account.

Referring to the Council's five year land supply, a Member asked how many new homes could be built during that time. The Assistant Director for Strategic Planning and Regulatory Services, Mr. Worley advised that the Council's supply was just under eight years and this equated to approximately 2,500 new homes which could be built.

Another Member commented that tourism formed part of this portfolio and enquired whether the Council should recruit a Tourism Officer. Councillor Higgins advised that as yet it was unclear what the remit of such a position would be and there was no money available to fund this role. It was highly likely that if the Council did wish to recruit a Tourism Officer, the position would be funded through the revenue it created and should be partly supported by the businesses it would be involved with.

[The meeting adjourned at 19:35.]

[The meeting reconvened at 19:45.]

14

Consultation on Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy

The Committee received a report on the Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy from the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People and Communities.

Mr. Aubrey, Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People and Communities, provided a brief overview of the report, advising that Cabinet had approved the commencement of an eight week consultation period for the Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report. The Committee were invited to provide comments as consultees. Mr Aubrey highlighted that details about sundry debts had been circulated to Members via email (for background information) and hard copies of the email were available at this meeting;

A Member asked how much debt had been written off by the Council and how performance had improved since the Debt Officer post had been in place.

Mr. Aubrey advised that the amount of debt would have to be confirmed outside this meeting, as the information was not on hand. Bad debt provision had been increased and the Debt Officer post had been in place for around two years. The focus had been on collecting current debt and in year performance on collecting the current debt had improved from around 77% to around 85%.

During discussion the following points were noted:-

- Over half of the Council's debt was in respect of housing benefit overpayments. Members raised whether this was in any way as a result of Universal Credit problems. It was important to be realistic about the likelihood of recovering this debt.
- Members queried whether there had been an increase in council tax support to vulnerable people and if this had contributed to them having greater debt

arrears.

- Members wanted to be reassured that the Council provided help, support and intervention for vulnerable people and were pleased that this had been addressed in the Policy.
- A Debt and Income Maximisation Policy was needed. However, consideration should be given as to why the Council's level of debt was so high and this in turn needed to inform the Policy, to ensure it was fit for purpose.
- Members enquired about the Council's debt, whether it had been growing and whether officers had been chasing the debt or if it would be written off. The Council should put every effort into recovering monies owed to it. (The Chair highlighted that the Council aimed to maximise its debt recovery and that this was the purpose of the Policy).
- Payment up-front and withdrawal of service, as detailed at paragraph 3.6 of the report was positive. It was noted that payment up-front was not appropriate for the Lifeline service and withdrawal of service only applied to discretionary services.
- Members noted that the Council had a high number of debtors opting to make payments via direct debit and that the Council aimed to increase this number further.
- The 'balanced approach', as detailed at paragraph 3.7 of the report was welcomed. Help and support must be given to people but action, including court action should be taken when necessary. In certain cases, it would not be cost effective to pursue a debt.
- The Council needed to understand the reasons why people found it difficult to make payments on time and whether this was caused by poor money management. Consideration should be given to make it more accessible and easier for payments to be made throughout each month (such as through a phone app), as it appeared that money was being spent before direct debit due dates.
- Prioritisation of the recovery of debts, which related solely to the Council, as detailed at paragraph 3.5 of the report was noted. This aimed to maximise the Council's debt income.
- Most Members agreed that writing off the debt of a deceased person was appropriate. The Director for Corporate Services had delegated authority to write-off irrecoverable debts up to a limit of £2,500 (in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder). Debts over £2,500 would be reported to Cabinet.
- Members noted the six years limitation which applied to much of the Council's debt.
- Members raised the current review of the Council's financial system Oracle, commenting that the system had cost a lot of money and requested further information regarding the value for money test in relation to moving to an upgrade/new system. Members were advised that the system had been procured by four of the Council's five partner councils. Further information would be provided to Members outside this meeting.

Mr. Aubrey commented that Universal Credit had possibly had an impact on

Council debt. The position may worsen, as Universal Credit was yet to be rolled out fully. One of its aims was to prepare people for work and for managing their money, paying their rent etc, which was why the rent money was being paid to the person rather than to the landlord directly.

The Council had in the past considered selling its debt but this would not be possible for housing benefit debt, which was subject to statutory requirements.

RESOLVED

The Committee's comments on the proposed Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy be assessed and built into the Policy where appropriate.

For Approval

15

Establishment of Task and Finish Group

The Committee received a report on the Establishment of a Task and Finish Group from the Director for Law and Governance.

Mrs. Wylie, Director for Law and Governance introduced the report by highlighting that at the last meeting of this Committee, Members had considered the Workplan and had indicated that they would like to undertake a review of Housing Management Voids and Temporary Accommodation. Mrs. Wylie drew Members attention to Appendix 1 of the report (Terms of Reference), advising that the scoping exercise could be used to determine if these were appropriate. Any revisions would be proposed at the next meeting of this Committee and would not inhibit the Task Group from starting the review. The revised Scoping Document and an update on the work of the Group would be presented at the next meeting.

A Member commented that they did not want to lose focus on Homelessness. The impact of registered social landlords and private landlords needed to be considered.

RESOLVED

- (1) To **APPROVE** the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review Housing Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation. The review will support the organisational review of service quality and will give Members the opportunity to understand the systems thinking methodology currently being deployed for service improvement;
- (2) To **APPROVE** the Terms of Reference (which included the scope of the review) and **NOTE** that revisions may be proposed to the next meeting of the Committee, as scheduled in the Annual Calendar of Meetings, once a Scoping Document has been completed by the Group. Any revisions shall not inhibit the Group from commencing the review;
- (3) To **NOTE** that the Scoping Document shall include a timetable for

completion of the review and shall be presented to the next meeting of the Committee, as scheduled in the Annual Calendar of Meetings;

- (4) To **APPROVE** the membership of the Task and Finish Group to be no more than four Members, which shall include the Chair of this Committee and three other Members, as determined by the Chair (one place to be offered to the Opposition Group).

For Review Only

16

Review of Forward Plan and Annual Work Plan

Mrs. Wylie

- (a) asked Members to consider what they would like to include in the Work Plan. Comments should be submitted to the Chair and Vice Chair;
- (b) confirmed that currently, there were no consultation items on the Forward Plan (for the period August 2019 to October 2019). Relevant items would be brought to Members attention accordingly;
- (c) highlighted that the new Democratic Services Manager would be in post on Monday (29 July).

A Member asked Mrs. Wylie, Director for Law and Governance to clarify that the Members were able to request that the Leader of the Council attend a Committee meeting to answer questions and she confirmed that Members were able to do this.

Other Members asked if it would be possible to invite partner organisations, such as the Police and Crime Commissioner. Mrs. Wylie highlighted that the Leader was the Council's link to the Police and Crime Commissioner and confirmed that the Committee was able to invite any partner agency to attend a meeting if they wished.

Any relevant items for inclusion in the Work Plan should be submitted to the Chair for further consideration at the next meeting of this Committee (on 17 September 2019).

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Review Updates

There were no review updates.

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Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at: 8.30 pm

Chair

Growth & Prosperity

July 2019

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Cllr Leigh Higgins

Growth & Prosperity:

- Town Centre, Tourism, Events and Place Promotion
- Economic Growth and Inward Investment
- Planning Policy and Housing Delivery
- Major Developments (development of council assets)

Update:

- Accomplishments so far
- Status update since last quarter
- Planned actions for the next quarter
- Key risks and dependencies

Portfolio: GROWTH & PROSPERITY

Reporting Date : _____

Portfolio Holder : CLLR L HIGGINS

Lead Officer : _____

Estimated End Date _____

↔				
Define	Design	Build	Consultation	Deploy
Stakeholders	G	Resources	A	
Budget	G	Risks	A	
Scope	B	Issues	A	
Work & Schedule	R			

GROWTH AND PROSPERITY – (1) TOWN CENTRE, TOURISM, EVENTS AND PLACE PROMOTION	
<p>Last month's accomplishments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Established the Place Board and 3 sub-groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • animation and events • regeneration and infrastructure • skills, business support and inward investment 2) Engagement with Rural Pubs in order to understand barriers to their sustainability and prosperity 3) Tenders for Country Park café leases 	<p><i>Next 3 Month's Goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Meetings of each Place Board sub group and agreeing future agendas. This will set out directions and actions going forward for all partners.</i> • <i>Report to Cabinet- support for rural pubs</i> • <i>Conclusion of tender exercise- Country park cafe</i>
<p>Differences from planned accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p>Risks / Dependencies / Other comments:</p> <p>Risk:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Quality of tender documents not satisfactory. 2) Competing and conflicting views from Place Board partners <p>Dependencies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Planning Policy for digital infrastructure. 2) Financial implications

Portfolio: GROWTH & PROSPERITY

Reporting Date : _____

Portfolio Holder : CLLR L HIGGINS

Lead Officer : _____

Estimated End Date _____

↔				
Define	Design	Build	Consultation	Deploy
Stakeholders	G	Resources	A	
Budget	G	Risks	A	
Scope	B	Issues	A	
Work & Schedule	R			

GROWTH AND PROSPERITY – (2) ECONOMIC GROWTH AND INWARD INVESTMENT	
<p>Last month's accomplishments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Business engagement – work commenced using the Manufacturing Zone (MAZ) grant 2) Nottingham Rail connectivity – consultants appointed 3) Ongoing work on LEADER assessments 4) Signing the A46 Trade Corridor Pledge and joining the A46 Partnership (route planning) 	<p><i>Next 3 Month's Goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Procurement of consultants for development of Manufacturing Zone employment sites</i> • <i>Participation in A46 Partnership meetings as they travel eastwards to our boundary</i>
<p>Differences from planned accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<p>Risks / Dependencies / Other comments:</p> <p>Risk:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Quality of tender documents for not satisfactory. <p>Dependencies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Local Industrial Strategy

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Portfolio: GROWTH & PROSPERITY

Reporting Date : _____

Portfolio Holder : CLLR L HIGGINS

Lead Officer : _____

Estimated End Date _____

↔				
Define	Design	Build	Consultation	Deploy
Stakeholders	G	Resources	A	
Budget	G	Risks	A	
Scope	B	Issues	A	
Work & Schedule	R			

GROWTH AND PROSPERITY – (3) PLANNING POLICY AND HOUSING DELIVERY

Last month's accomplishments:

1. Planning SPDs
- **Pages 18** Masterplans for Northern and Southern SN's
 - Design Guidance SPD out to consultation
 - Developers Contributions out to consultation
 - Affordable Housing SPD adopted on 9th July
 - Housing Delivery Test and Action Plan showed increase in delivery circa 60% Delivery Test 84% required Action Plan - approved 9th July:2018/19
2. Planning service review
3. Ab Kettleby neighbourhood plan
4. MMDR

Next 3 Month's Goals

- **Masterplans for Northern and Southern neighbourhoods** : consultation complete and responses reviewed
- **Design Guidance SPD** out to consultation : Expected Completion – autumn 2019
- **Developers Contributions SPD:** Prioritisation of all the (growing) calls made on developments when viability issues are present. Includes LCC, NHS, Parish, Police and other requests. **Completion estimated Autumn 2019**
- **Ab Kettleby Neighbourhood Plan:** referendum process to start

Differences from planned accomplishments:

- **None**

Risks / Dependencies / Other comments:

Risk:

- 1) Reliance on private sector and external forces for delivery

Dependencies:

- 1) Planning service review, MMDR, development of council owned sites

Portfolio: GROWTH & PROSPERITY

Reporting Date : _____

Portfolio Holder : CLLR L HIGGINS

Lead Officer : _____

Estimated End Date _____

↔				
Define	Design	Build	Consultation	Deploy
Stakeholders	G	Resources	A	
Budget	G	Risks	A	
Scope	B	Issues	A	
Work & Schedule	R			

GROWTH AND PROSPERITY – (4) MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Last month's accomplishments:
Planning SPDs

1. Major Development secured and progressed: Significant upturn in the number of permissions and sites available (land supply approx 8 years). Permissions granted for major sites (**Bottesford, Waltham sites underway**)

2. Development of Council owned sites – Cattle Market, Leisure sites etc: stakeholder engagement of development options and opportunities started.

Next 3 Month's Goals

- Major Developments:** Many more in the pipeline – see agendas for 1st August (700 houses and significant infrastructure at Melton North) and 29th August (Melton South (550), Asfordby (70) and Melton Spinney Rd (200) anticipated)
- Development of Council owned sites :** Masterplans and development appraisals for all Council owned sites for a range of uses.

Differences from planned accomplishments:

- None**

Risks / Dependencies / Other comments:

Risk:

- Stakeholders expectations, viability, funding

Dependencies:

- Planning Policy

Any views/ comments?

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Thank you 😊

Advice on Members' Interests

PERSONAL AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

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

PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

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

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

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

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

BIAS

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

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

*There are some exceptions – please refer to paragraphs 13(2) and 13(3) of the Code of Conduct

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SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

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 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
Housing Voids Management	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)	Task and Finish Group Commenced August 2019	<p>To consider the Voids Process using a systems thinking methodology, which will review the process end to end</p> <p>To consider current performance</p> <p>To understand costs associated with void properties</p> <p>To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless.</p> <p>To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation</p> <p>To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value</p> <p>To understand the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act</p>

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

<p>Temporary Accommodation and best value</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)</p>	<p>Task and Finish Group Commenced August 2019</p>	<p>To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless.</p> <p>To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation</p> <p>To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value</p> <p>Impact of Homelessness Reduction Act</p>
<p>Rent arrears and the link to universal credit and Me and My Learning.</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Director for People and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>To understand how the Council collects income and the arrears management process.</p> <p>To understand internal signposting services.</p> <p>To understand how Universal Credit is explained to customers.</p> <p>To understand what methods of communication we use to engage with our customers.</p> <p>To understand what impact Universal Credit has on customers and colleagues</p> <p>To understand what support is available to our most vulnerable customers.</p>
<p>Empty Homes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>To understand the extent and impact of empty homes in Melton and raise awareness.</p> <p>To identify the Council's priority objectives for tackling empty properties in Melton and whether these have been met.</p>

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

			<p>To identify the main drivers for increasing social housing and to reduce housing register numbers and those in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>To identify what resources and funding is available to tackle empty homes in Melton.</p> <p>To identify best practice used elsewhere in tackling empty homes which can be used in Melton</p>
Community Engagement including review of Community Forums	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement</p> <p>Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)</p> <p>Director for Law and Governance</p>		<p>Access to local democracy</p> <p>To understand how Melton engages with its community</p> <p>Engaging with hard to reach residents- equalities considerations</p> <p>Voting and elections</p> <p>Tools for engagement, e.g.- consultation</p>
Housing Allocations- Application of Process and Procedure	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)</p>	TBC	<p>To understand the role and purpose of social housing in Melton</p> <p>To understand the current position on housing allocations</p> <p>To ensure the criteria for the allocation of housing is clear and easy to understand, including a consideration</p>

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

			of different ways of offering choice To consider types of tenure
Climate Change			
<p>FORWARD PLAN ITEMS Items may be referred to Scrutiny by Cabinet for pre scrutiny or as a consultative body. Not all items will be considered by Scrutiny but it will be beneficial for some items to have Scrutiny involvement.</p>			
Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy	Portfolio Holder for Growth & Regeneration Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)	23 rd July 2019	On 4 th September 2019, Cabinet will consider the Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy. Consultation will be undertaken prior to consideration. Scrutiny to provide comments as a consultative body to feed into decision making considerations by Cabinet.
Community Grants Review	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People and Communities	17 th September 2019	Scrutiny to receive a presentation on the proposals to revise the policy on allocation of Community Grants in order to provide comments on feedback and to feed into decision making considerations by Cabinet.
<p>ONE OFF ITEMS These are dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Committee. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.</p>			
Implementation of Workforce Strategy	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Resources	12 th November 2019	Following approval by Council in March 2018, Scrutiny to receive an update on the implementation of the Policy and the impact it has had on the organisation.

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	Director for Corporate Resources		
Report of the Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group		January 2020 (Date TBC)	To receive the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group for approval and referral to Cabinet.
Budget Scrutiny		21 st January 2020	To play a full and active part in the development of the 2019-20 budget.
Debt Management Policy	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Resources Director for People and Communities	3 rd March 2020	Scrutiny to receive an update after 6 months as to how the Policy has been implemented and whether this is having an impact on debt management.
Crime and Disorder Scrutiny		3 rd March 2020	<p>To consider actions undertaken by the responsible authorities on the community safety partnership.</p> <p>To make reports or recommendations to the local authority with regard to those functions.</p> <p>To consider Councillor Calls for Action</p> <p>To consider actions undertaken by the responsible authorities on the partnership</p> <p>The role of the panel should be as a 'critical friend' of the partnership providing constructive challenge at a strategic rather than operational level.</p>

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Implementation of Intensive Housing Management Support	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities Director for People and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)	TBC	Scrutiny to receive an update following a restructure in 2018.
Housing Repairs	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities Director for Growth and Regeneration	TBC	A systems review has been commissioned and will be undertaken in the coming months. Scrutiny to receive an update on work being undertaken to improve performance.
PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES			
Portfolio Holder Questions-Growth and Prosperity	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Director for Growth and Regeneration	23 rd July 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis
Portfolio Holder Questions-Governance, Access and Customer Engagement	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement Director for Law and Governance	17 th September 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis
Portfolio Holder Questions-Planning and Environmental Services	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services	12 th November 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

	Director for Growth and Regeneration		
Portfolio Holder Questions-Housing and Communities	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources Director for Corporate Resources	3 rd March 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis

ADVICE ON WORKPLAN

What is a Work Plan?

The Scrutiny Work Plan 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 plan 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 plan so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise.

Sources of Work Plan 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

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

- 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 Plan Topic

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

This involves:

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

It is also important to note that Scrutiny has limited time and resources and therefore workplans need to be manageable. It is not possible to include every topic suggested by Members, Directors or the Public in the workplan. In addition Officer capacity may be

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

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 workplans.

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

Risks

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

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Scrutiny Committee

17 September 2019

Report of:

**CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

UPDATE ON TASK AND FINISH GROUP - HOUSING VOIDS MANAGEMENT AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

1.0 Summary:

- 1.1 Report to update the Scrutiny Committee on the progress of the Task and Finish Group for Housing Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Scrutiny Committee note the update from the Task and Finish Group for Housing Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation.**
- 2.2 **That Scrutiny Committee note the Scoping Document (Appendix A) and approve the timetable for completion of the review and the corresponding revisions to the Terms of Reference (Appendix B).**

3.0 Report Detail

- 3.1 On 23 July 2019 the Scrutiny Committee approved the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to review Housing Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation.
- 3.2 On 28 August 2019 the Task and finish Group met for their preliminary scoping meeting. At that meeting the Group were provided with some background information and performance measures on Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation processes. The Group identified issues and areas that they would like to explore further and also discussed the timetable for the review. The discussion at the meeting on 28 August 2019 is reflected in the Scoping Document (Appendix A)
- 3.3 The Group felt that the original timeline to present to Cabinet in November was unachievable and agreed that it was important that the review was thorough and the Group had ample time to complete their enquiries and deliberations; as such a completion date of January 2020 was agreed to be more realistic. Minor revisions have been made to the Terms of Reference agreed by Scrutiny Committee on 23 July 2019 (Appendix B) to reflect changes to frequency of meetings and the completion date.
- 3.4 The Group will commence the review by establishing an evidence base which will include performance statistics, review of current policy and process and draw on the experiences of customers, officers and other stakeholders. Evaluation of this evidence base will clarify the issues and will also lead to the identification of the underlying causes. The Group, with Officer support, will then move on to consider options for improvement, feasibility of options for future delivery and the way in

which outcomes could be measured and monitored. This will be translated into a set of recommendations which will be presented to Scrutiny Committee for approval and following review by the Chief Executive, further recommendation to Cabinet in January 2020.

3.5 Scrutiny Committee will be kept updated as the review progresses and may contact any member of the group for an update between meetings.

4.0 Consultation and Feedback

4.1 A list of stakeholders and expert witnesses have been identified in the scoping document and the group are keen to hear the views of any other individuals/organisations who would like to feed into the review.

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 Meetings of the Task and Finish Group will continue in accordance with the timetable in the Scoping Document.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 Support for the Task and Finish Group will be contained within existing resources.

7.0 Legal and Governance Implications:

7.1 The Task and Finish Group will operate and report to the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet within the rules set out in Section 8 and 9 of Chapter 2, Part 10 of the MBC Constitution.

8.0 Equality and Safeguarding Implications:

8.1 There are no equalities implications in this report.

9.0 Community Safety Implications:

9.1 There are no community safety implications in this report.

10.0 Other Implications

10.1 There are no other implications.

11.0 Risk & Mitigation:

11.1 There are no implications associated with this update report.

Background Papers:

Report to Scrutiny Committee 23 July 2019

Appendices

Appendix A – Task and Finish Scoping Document
Appendix B – Task and Finish Group Housing voids Management and Temporary Accommodation Terms of Reference (Revised)

Report Timeline:

Equalities Check & Challenge	N/A
SLT Sign off	N/A
Previously Considered by Cabinet	N/A
Director Approval	06.09.19
Chief Finance Officer Sign Off	N/A
Monitoring Officer Sign Off	09.09.19

Report Author & Job Title
Natasha Taylor (Democratic Services Officer/Scrutiny Officer) in consultation with Cllr Pat Cumbers (Chair Scrutiny Committee/Task and Finish Group)
☎: 01664 502441

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Scrutiny Housing Management Voids and Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group Scoping Document

1. Topic

- 1.1 Review of Voids and Temporary Accommodation current processes and performance to identify efficiencies and improvements to service delivery.

2. Purpose/Scope (As agreed Scrutiny Committee – 23/7/19)

- 2.1 To consider the Voids Process using a systems thinking methodology, which will review the process end to end;
- 2.2 To consider current performance;
- 2.3 To understand costs associated with void properties;
- 2.4 To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless;
- 2.5 To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation;
- 2.6 To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value;
- 2.7 To understand the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

3. Members

- 3.1 4 (Councillors – Cumbers (Chairperson), Bindloss, Browne, Holmes)

4. Rationale

- 4.1 The objective of the review is to identify inefficiencies and issues with the current processes in order to make recommendations for improving performance and service delivery and creating efficiencies where possible focusing on best value.
- 4.2 The review will focus on improving the customer experience, streamlining current processes and identifying areas where efficiencies can be made without impacting on the delivery of the service.
- 4.3 The review will identify benchmarks and performance indicators and a reporting process so that the impact of recommendations can be measured and monitored over time.

5. Background

- 5.1 The review has come about as a response to identified issues within the voids and temporary accommodation services both in terms of performance, costs and customer satisfaction.
- 5.2 The review will look at existing policy and consider the formation of new policy where gaps are identified.
- 5.3 The review will consider existing agreements (Contracts/Tenancy Agreements etc..) and will consider any proposals for revisions.
- 5.4 The review will consider how the voice of the customer can be heard and the complex issues faced by customers who use the services.
- 5.5 The review will consider the multi-disciplinary nature of the service and how the Council services involved can work collaboratively to improve delivery and outcomes.
- 5.6 It is accepted that the voids management processes and temporary accommodation each warrant separate consideration, as such the Group will consider voids management initially, followed by temporary accommodation.

6. Methodology/Approach

The enquiry will take the form of:

- Desk-based review of papers
- Site visits / observations
- Comparisons with other authorities
- Workshops / Focus Groups
- Interview officers and stakeholders
- Calling witnesses to give evidence

7. Evidence Sources

- Information on service processes and costs of current provision
- Models of alternative delivery for temporary accommodation
- Research and evidence
- Views from a variety of stakeholders including Officers and Portfolio Holder/s

8. Witnesses/Technical Experts

May include:

- TFEC
- Housing Association
- County Council – to provide evidence/information on accommodation strategies for mental health and learning disabilities
- Allocations Team – to provide information/evidence on trends, why housing refused etc...
- Peer Local Authority
- Contractor
- Internal Audit (If fits with the work plan)

9. Other considerations

- Support for the meetings will be provided by Democratic Services
- Technical support and expertise will be provided by the Directorate for Growth and Regeneration
- Site visits will be arranged between meetings of the Group

10. Timetable

Date	Actions	Officers/Members	Notes
28 August 2019 – 3pm	First meeting: Summary/Background Review Terms of Reference Agree Timetable	Cllr Cumbers Cllr Bindloss Cllr Browne Cllr Holmes Pranali Parikh – Director for Growth and Regeneration Albert Wilson – Housing Manager Natasha Taylor – Scrutiny Officer	
20 September 2019 – 2pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree dates (early October) and schedule of evidence/witness sessions • Review current process/model of delivery (Flowchart to be provided in advance of meeting) • Review draft revised tenancy agreement 	Cllr Cumbers Cllr Bindloss Cllr Browne Cllr Holmes Pranali Parikh – Director for Growth and Regeneration Albert Wilson – Housing Manager Natasha Taylor – Scrutiny Officer	
25 October 2019 – 2pm (TBC)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of evidence sessions • Review Draft Standards Policy • Review Draft Allocations Policy • Member feedback on Show and Tell Sessions 		
29 November 2019 – 2pm (TBC)*	Discussion: Voids Policy (Opportunity for Task and Finish Group to feed into the new policy) Discussion: Expectations regarding Performance Measures and monitoring		
13 December 2019 – 2pm (TBC)*	To agree the final recommendations and report for Scrutiny Committee - January		
January 2020	Report to Scrutiny Committee (Special Meeting – 10 Jan TBC) Review by Chief Executive Report to Cabinet – 22 January 2020		

* Dates TBC.

Note – Additional dates will be set for evidence sessions and informal meetings where necessary.

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Scrutiny Committee

Task and Finish Group- Housing Management Voids and Temporary Accommodation

TERMS OF REFERENCE

<p>Purpose of the Group</p>	<p>To consider the Voids Process using a systems thinking methodology, which will review the process end to end</p> <p>To consider current performance</p> <p>To understand costs associated with void properties</p> <p>To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless.</p> <p>To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation</p> <p>To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value</p> <p>To understand the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act</p>
<p>Anticipated Outcomes</p>	<p>Provide members with a view as to how the voids process works and whether it could be improved.</p> <p>Provide Members with an understanding of the systems thinking methodology, currently being used as part of the organisation review supporting service improvement</p> <p>Provide members with a view as to whether temporary accommodation presents best value for the Council</p> <p>Provide options and recommendations to Cabinet</p>
<p>How often will the Group meet</p>	<p>Every month or as required to support effective progress</p>
<p>Anticipated timescale for completion</p>	<p>January 2020</p>
<p>Membership of the Group</p>	<p>Chair of Scrutiny Committee 3 other members</p>
<p>What information shall be required to inform the Group</p>	<p>Information on service processes and costs of current provision Models of alternative delivery for temporary accommodation Research and evidence Views from stakeholders including Officers and Portfolio Holder/s</p>
<p>What support arrangements are required?</p>	<p>Officers within the Housing and Communities team, SLT, Housing and Commercial Assets, Democratic Services</p>
<p>How often will the Group update Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>As and when decisions are made by the Task and Finish Group</p>

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