

Minutes



Meeting name	Cabinet
Date	Wednesday, 13 July 2022
Start time	4.30 pm
Venue	Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH

Present:

Chair Councillor J. Orson (Chair)

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

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

Minute No.	Minute
8	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE There were no apologies for absence.</p>
9	<p>MINUTES The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2022 were confirmed.</p>
10	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillor Orson declared an interest in any items relating to Leicestershire County Council, due to his role as a County Councillor.</p>
11	<p>MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2022-2052 <p>In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules this item has been referred from Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Robert Child introduced the report, thanking officers for their work. Scrutiny Committee had considered a presentation on the HRA Business Plan on 14 June 2022 (having previously considered the Plan at 2 workshops). He highlighted comments from Scrutiny Committee and summarised that this work had helped to produce a solid Plan for the next 30 years, although it could be amended annually.</p> <p>The Leader thanked Scrutiny Committee for their work.</p> <p>Cabinet AGREED to have regard to Scrutiny Committee’s feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing Development Plan 2022-2026 <p>In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules this item has been referred from Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Robert Child introduced the report, advising that Scrutiny Committee had considered a presentation on the Affordable Housing Development Plan on 14 June 2022. He highlighted comments from Scrutiny Committee, including queries and concerns raised and answered during the Committee meeting.</p> <p>The Leader thanked Scrutiny Committee for their work, commenting that a shortage of affordable homes had been an issue in Melton (particularly in the south) for some time. The Council’s Plan would encourage the availability of affordable homes for those who needed them.</p> <p>Cabinet AGREED to have regard to Scrutiny Committee’s feedback.</p>

- Draft UKSPF Investment Plan Development

In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules this item has been referred from Scrutiny Committee.

The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Robert Child introduced the report, advising that Scrutiny Committee had considered a presentation on the UKSPF Investment Plan Development on 27 June 2022. He highlighted comments from Scrutiny Committee, including concerns raised and answered during the Committee meeting.

The Leader acknowledged the work of Scrutiny Committee on the UKSPF Investment Plan Development.

Edd de Coverly, Chief Executive confirmed that the deadline for submission for the UKSPF Investment Plan remained as 1 August 2022.

In response to a query raised by the Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement, on Scrutiny's Feedback, Councillor Child confirmed that he would provide further information on which local authorities were more successful at informing their residents and how they did this.

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

12

EXTENSION OF THE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)

Pranali Parikh, Director for Growth and Regeneration introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval to go to formal consultation on the extension of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), relating to dogs (following initial consultation with the Police), in accordance with the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the Act).

Ms. Parikh highlighted that the Public Spaces Protection Order was approved by Council in December 2019. The deadline for review was the end of this year and a consultation was proposed to extend the Order for a further 3 years, as PSPOs were a useful tool for the Council in managing and maintaining it's local environment.

David Walker, Community Safety Lead provided detail of the consultation process, advising that the Council's current PSPO had worked as a good deterrent to dog fouling. However, the Council had sufficient reason to apply for the extension, due continued reports of dog fouling from the public etc. He advised that subject to approval, the consultation would start on 15 July for a period of 12 weeks, via the Council's website, Leicestershire Police, Members, the Dogs Trust, etc. Findings from the consultation would be assessed in view of the current Order ending on 14 October.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement, Councillor Alison Freer thanked Mr. Walker for his work, commenting that the proposed extension would

cover the entire borough. Today, the consultation to extend the PSPO was being proposed. Should this go ahead and depending on its findings, the renewal would start at the beginning of next year. If the PSPO extension was refused, the Council would not have the protection it had over the past 3 years to deal with dog related issues. Parish councils specifically would be contacted for their views during the consultation.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- The Council had invested heavily in this area of work.
- A large number of responses to the proposed consultation was anticipated and it would be interesting to see the results.
- A Member suggested that it should be mandatory that dogs in public areas be kept on leads at all times, to ensure the owner had control of the dog.
- There were major dog fouling problems in the villages, as well as the town centre. PSPOs were a vital tool for the Council to deal with this issue.

Cabinet

- (1) **APPROVED** formal consultation for the extension of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

13

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUSINESS PLAN 2022-52

Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities introduced the report, the purpose of which was to introduce the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2022-52.

Mrs Howard highlighted that as well as being considered by Cabinet this evening, the HRA Business Plan (2022 to 2052) would be considered by Council later this month. The plan set out how money available for the Council to maintain and improve council homes would be spent. It showed that the HRA was sustainable over the period but also acknowledged like any other business plan of its nature that it was vulnerable to factors such as inflationary pressures.

Mrs Howard advised that the plan prioritised compliance (landlord health and safety) and set out how the Council could maintain a focus on meeting the required Decent Homes Standard across all its housing stock. There were other housing improvements that were more a matter of choice, affordability and prioritisation within the remaining budget available.

Mrs Howard confirmed that the Business Plan showed that after meeting obligations, there was an average annual of sum of £796k remaining. Resources needed to be managed carefully through a detailed 5 year Asset Management Plan, to be brought forward for Cabinet consideration later this year and also through taking account of risks and pressures, such as inflation or changes to the Decent Homes Standard (government consultation to be announced). The Plan would be supported by an Affordable Housing Development Plan (on the agenda for today) and Asset Management Plan and there were commitments to listen to tenants throughout delivery of the plan, which would be updated annually.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services, Councillor Ronan Browne thanked Mrs. Howard and her team for producing a very thorough piece of work and a robust Plan. It was important for the Council to maintain its housing stock

well, as new government regulations would require this. Funding and compliance works would help ensure the safety of tenants. There may be some changes when the Decent Homes Standard would be reviewed. The Plan had been stress tested and tenant engagement and scrutiny would be robust. He acknowledged that the cost of living crises would affect tenants but noted that the Council had some of the lowest rents for its good quality, affordable council homes.

The Leader thanked Councillor Browne, Mrs Howard and her team for their work, commenting that good progress had been made towards ensuring that the Council had effective control of compliance and health and safety issues. There was still much work to be done but the HRA Business Plan would help the Council to deliver excellent homes for tenants.

Cabinet:

- (1) **ENDORSED** the HRA Business Plan 2022 to 2052;
- (2) **RECOMMENDED** to Council that:
 - (a) The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2022 – 2052 and associated policy recommendations be approved;
 - (b) Delegated authority be given to the Director for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Director for Corporate services and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services to review and update the financial modelling within the HRA Business Plan on an annual basis to reflect the most up to date stock condition data;
 - (c) Delegated authority is given to the Director for Housing and Communities in consultation with the Director for Corporate services and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services to access the HRA Development and Regeneration Reserve to progress projects and activities in support of the HRA up to a limit of £100k per project and up to a maximum of £500k in any one year subject to the financial viability of the HRA Business plan not being undermined;
 - (d) The target working balance of the HRA be revised to £1m with effect from 1 April 2023;
 - (e) That the affordability of new borrowing be measured using industry standard indicators, and these be tracked alongside the HRA business plan;
 - (f) That the current policy of not providing for the repayment of debt within the HRA be continued in respect of existing and any new borrowing;
 - (g) The rent for re-let properties is set to the 5% upward tolerance allowed on formula rent;
 - (h) That the Director for Housing and Communities is designated as the nominated person with responsibility for compliance with landlord health and safety on behalf of the Council;
 - (i) That the Assistant Director for Housing Management is designated as the nominated person with responsibility for ensuring that the consumer standards, as set out by the Social Housing Regulator are met;
 - (j) That the following finance principles set out at Section 9.8 are agreed
 - that overhead recharges remain as is with annual uplift for inflation
 - that any growth in management and maintenance costs is met by reductions elsewhere within the HRA
 - that actual rent increases are in line with Government policy to maximise income to the HRA.

Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities introduced the report, the purpose of which was to introduce the Affordable Housing Development Plan (2022 – 2026).

Mrs Howard advised that the Plan 2022 was a mechanism through which the HRA Business Plan would be delivered. There was a shortage of affordable homes in Melton and to help address this need, this plan set out the criteria for how new council homes would be delivered in the borough. The Plan details considerations, such as sustainability and energy efficiency, high standards of design and properties that are fit for the future, tenant safety, security and the environments in which people live, accessibility and funding options, the importance of business cases for each proposal, and options to build, convert or acquire homes or land in the future.

Mrs Howard highlighted that the plan provided an important framework for the Council to deliver on its commitments to provide high quality homes and landlord services and to do so in a planned and managed way, which took account of circumstances, in line with the resources available.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services, Councillor Ronan Browne thanked Scrutiny Committee for its feedback on both the HR Business Plan and the Affordable Housing Development Plan. He thanked Mrs Howard and her team, noting that officers had ensured that Members had been well engaged. This had assisted gaining cross part support.

Councillor Brown highlighted the following key areas:

- The Council would use some developer funding to help deliver affordable social rented housing
- The Council would consider purchasing new energy efficient homes, which would meet the green agenda in line with its climate emergency position
- The work would be focussed in rural villages, as well as the town.

Cabinet:

- (1) APPROVED** the Affordable Housing Development Plan 2022-26, which would confirm the Council’s approach for the delivery of additional homes to add to its housing stock.

15

TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Dawn Garton, Director for Corporate Services introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide a summary of the treasury activities in 2021-22. The report also covered the actual position on the Prudential Indicators in accordance with the Prudential Code. It would be submitted to Council for approval under the Prudential Code requirements, with Cabinet performing the scrutiny function.

Mrs Garton confirmed that appendix A provided full details of activities and the current position. Highlights were provided in the report. The key areas to note were that there was no new borrowing undertaken in the year and that borrowing remained within the Council’s statutory borrowing limit. The investment return for

the year was 0.82%, compared to 0.81% in 2020-21. However, as the Council had a higher level of balances than originally estimated, due to underspending on the Capital Programme, an extra £35k of income was generated. This had benefited both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources, Councillor Ronnie de Burle, commented that when benchmarked against the peer group, in what is still a volatile arena, the results achieved by the Council's Treasury Management Team were excellent. This success would help to 'balance the books' at the end of the year. He thanked Mrs Garton and the Corporate Services Manager for the training Members had received on Treasury Management.

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED** to Council that

- (1) The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2021-22 be approved;
- (2) The actual position on Prudential Indicators for 2021-22 be noted.

16

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS REPORT FOR QUARTER 4 2021-22

Dawn Garton, Director Corporate Services introduced the report, the purpose of which was to update Cabinet on progress for delivering the aspirations set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020-24.

Mrs Garton advised that the report set out the performance for the last quarter of the last financial year, with much detail in appendix 1, showing progress and historic data. The report showed (at paragraph 5.3.4) that 66% of measures had been on track against targets. Key areas to note were People Services - the focus on housing had been generating results on both homelessness in temporary accommodation and also work on Council stock and work continued on improving performance in the area of voids management. Concerning Place Priority - work continued on the large scale projects around asset development and the report detailed progress to date and plans for the future. Regarding Great Council – there had been a large increase in social media followers and work would continue with teams, managers and staff to improve staff sickness absence.

The Leader, Councillor Joe Orson commented that monitoring performance was important to the Council and the recent Internal Audit on Performance had issued 'good assurance', with no recommendations for improvement needed. The Council was transparent and accountable for the services it provided, celebrating successes and open about those areas where improvement was needed.

Councillor Orson highlighted the following:

- Two thirds of Corporate Performance measures were on track to meet targets.
- Self-service via the Council's website had increased (approximately 30% of demand was through a digital channel. This provided a better customer experience and better value for money.
- Gas safety checks continued to be maintained at 100%. This was monitored regularly, alongside other areas of compliance.

- There had been a reduction in the number of people staying in temporary accommodation each quarter (down from mid 40s to 18) and also a reduction in the length of time people remained in temporary accommodation. This was pleasing but more work was needed to increase the emphasis on preventing homelessness.
- In line with its aspirations for growth, the Council continued to prioritise improvements in the Planning Service. More homes had been built in Melton in the last year than at any time in the last 30 years. A key part of supporting housing growth was an effective Land Charge Service. Average turnaround time for applications remained at under 3 days.
- Colleagues across the Council had worked to secure the Gold Award in the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. This was an achievement, demonstrating committed support for all those who had served in the armed forces.

Councillor Orson highlighted the following areas for improvement:

- Focus on housing improvement would be maintained to bring long term voids into stock and improve turnaround times.
- The Council reiterated its commitment to deliver on the Decent Homes Standard, with the HRA Business Plan being recommended to Council for approval.
- Environmental Quality was a key issue. Fly-tipping had increased but was an area of focus and the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Consultation would support action to tackle environmental crime.

Cabinet

- (1) **NOTED** the contents of the report and **PROVIDED** any observations or actions to the relevant officers accordingly.

17

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2021-22 PROVISIONAL YEAR END POSITION

Dawn Garton, Director for Corporate Services introduced the report, the purpose of which was to set out the provisional year end position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), subject to External Audit approval, for 2021-22 and providing information on the Council's balances and reserves.

Mrs Garton confirmed that the accounts for 2021-22 had been published in draft form but notification of the date of the audit was yet to be given. The figures in the report remained provisional until after that audit had been conducted and finalised. Regulations this year required the audited accounts to be published by a later date (end of November). However, the date had not been agreed for the audit of those accounts. The audit for the 2020-21 accounts was now being finalised therefore the accounts for this year had not been published as audited accounts. This was a national issue, as a result of External Audit resources and was a challenge for the Council.

Mrs Garton advised that the report detailed comparison of the previous provisional outcome with the original budget, which was set at the rent setting meeting in February 2021, as well as the latest approved estimate, which incorporated in year approvals and budget holder comments on significant variations. The overall

position was an underspend against the approved budget of £695k, £150k of which would be carried forward into the new financial year. The underspend was primarily due to a large underspend on repairs and maintenance and also vacancies and that were offset by reduced income from voids. Concerning capital and revenue, the budget was based on the Council's Housing Improvement Programme. However, the budget for the next financial year (2023-24) would be based on the new Asset Management Plan, following approval of the Business Plan at Council later this month. This would provide a more accurate position financially and more accurate financial planning, which could be monitored and performance assessed.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources, Councillor Ronnie de Burle commented that this was a comprehensive and wide ranging report and he highlighted the following:

- Moving forward, the HRA Business Plan and Affordable Housing Development Plan would inform both revenue and capital budgets.
- This was an important step in seeing the end of a budget based on the Housing Improvement Plan (HIP) and the start of true financial planning based on quantifiable data from stock condition surveys and tenants consultations.
- The provisional outturn and accounts were backward looking and it was pleasing to see an underspend and that the reserves and balances had been boosted. There were opportunities offered by the more informed and accurate budgets, in which the financial and business performance can be more accurately assessed.

Cabinet

- (1) **NOTED** the provisional year end position variations to the 2021-22 approved year end position and the resultant effect on the Council's balances and reserves for the HRA for both revenue and capital.

18

COST OF LIVING - SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

Michelle Howard, Director for Housing and Communities introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide an initial overview of the things which were in place and set out what was proposed over the next 3 months, as part of a Corporate Cost of Living Action Plan.

Mrs Howard advised that the Council was committed to supporting its communities. To guide its Plan consideration was given to who may be most affected by the cost of living pressures (at risk groups, situational risk factors which would impacted on communities etc). The Plan was a live document and the Council would be proactive, agile and flexible to respond the impacts on communities. The work spanned a range of teams and Council partner organisations. Tomorrow, a meeting would be held with the Helping People Partnership (a range of stakeholders) to discuss plans and how to work better together. The Plan has 3 themes, set out in the report:

- Insights and evidence – engaging with residents. Some work had been undertaken using the customer feedback tool, Govmetric , which had provided valuable data and insight to help shape plans.
- Communication and information – including a communication campaign, which would be carefully branded and promoted widely through the web and other documentation to help residents find and access support.

- Support – ensuring households know that the Council can help and that they know how to access that support when they need it.

Mrs Howard highlighted that paragraph 5 of the report covered actions which were completed, those currently underway and those planned to be undertaken, including linking the cost of living response with the draft UK SPF Investment Plan (on the agenda later this evening). It is proposed that an All Member Briefing and stakeholder briefings be held before a further to Cabinet in October.

The Portfolio Holder for People and Communities, Councillor Malise Graham, commented that the Council had been proactive in putting together a plan, which would provide help to households across the borough, at a time when their budgets would be stretched. The plan constructively considered what could be done now and in the future and would evolve in line with any changes to need. It was important to communicate the plan effectively to ensure all were aware of the help available. The Council was liaising with stakeholders, tenants, parish councils etc. and welcomed further input from them and others on how the Council's response could be more meaningful. The Council would continue to help people out of crisis and reduce the demand on food banks and this plan will hopefully reduce the risk of people falling into hardship.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- It was agreed that Councillor Graham and Councillor Browne would write to Alicia Kearns, Member of Parliament for Rutland and Melton and to the Greg Clark, Secretary of State to reiterate concerns and why the government needed to do more to help people.
- Those living in houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) were more likely to be on lower incomes, encounter financial difficulty and other social issues. It was suggested that a discretionary fund and other suitable help be made available to them, as they were not eligible for the £150 council tax rebate.
- The proposed local supermarket was welcomed.
- Councillor Graham and Councillor Browne would work together to mitigate any significant impacts relating to rent rises etc. while recognising that Council income was essential to be able to maintain Council homes.

Cabinet

- (1) **NOTED** the contents of the report and **ENDORSED** the proposed areas of focus and associated programme of work to mitigate the impacts of cost-of-living increases;
- (2) **NOTED** and **ENDORSED** the work the Council would do with partners to secure additional external funding and deliver appropriate community support, for example through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

19

5 YEAR'S HOUSING LAND SUPPLY AND HOUSING TRAJECTORY

Sarah Legge, Local Plans Manager introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide information in relation to the current housing delivery and housing supply situation in the Borough and explore different scenarios to respond to changes in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated guidance

Mrs Legge advised that the report and accompanying appendix showed that the Council were in a good position to demonstrate 8.4 years of housing land supply against the government requirement for 5 years supply. Last year, we delivered 365 homes against the target of 245. The Local Plan covered 2011 to 2036. This was the first year since 2011 that a cumulative surplus of homes could be demonstrated and the most homes delivered in any financial year in the last 30 years.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss, thanked officers for their work, commenting that 8.4 years of housing supply and delivery of 365 homes (49 of which were affordable) was a great achievement.

That Cabinet

- (1) **APPROVED** the publication of the report in accordance with the requirements established in paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021);
- (2) **NOTED** that the minimum required in terms of housing delivery is not only met, but widely surpassed;
- (3) **NOTED** that the number of years' worth of housing supply identified in future annual reports is likely to decrease in the next years;
- (4) **NOTED** that the short-term impact as consequence of Covid-19/Brexit and other external factors were negligible for this exercise.

20

LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND ON HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT NEED

Sarah Legge, Local Plans Manager introduced the report, the purpose of which was to outline the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground on Housing and Employment Need.

Mrs Legge advised that Leicester City Council's unmet need for both housing and employment land had recently been quantified at approximately 18,700 homes and 23 hectares of employment land (up to 2036). The Council had signed a Statement of Common Ground with the other authorities in June 2021, which set out the process for apportioning those unmet needs etc. The Council was proactive in preparation of its local plan, in acknowledging that Leicester City's unmet need would need to be dealt with in the coming years. The evidence demonstrated that the Council needed to deliver a further 69 dwellings per annum, towards unmet need up to 2036 and was confident that the current housing land supply trajectory could deliver this within existing housing allocations.

Mrs Legge confirmed that the Council was not being asked to accommodate any of the unmet employment need. However, the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) confirmed that the Council needed to find a further 10 hectares of employment land to meet its own needs up to 2036. It was important that the Council signed the Statement of Common Ground to allow the progression

of all local plan work across Leicester and Leicestershire and to ensure that planned development continued across the housing market area.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity Councillor Rob Bindloss commented that this proposal highlighted that the Council was progressive and forward thinking. It was important that the Council signed the Statement of Common Ground to allow progression of local plan work across Leicestershire authorities and to ensure that the planned development across the housing market in Melton progressed.

Cabinet

- (1) **APPROVED** the signing of the Leicester & Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs, June 2022.

21

GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2021-22

Dawn Garton, Director for Corporate Services introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide Members with information on the provisional year end for General Fund services and the subsequent implications on the Council's balances and reserves.

Mrs Garton advised that the report showed a comparison of the provisional outturn to the latest approved budget, originally set in February 2021. There was a £94k underspend on General Expenses, due to the prudent decision to carry forward a Covid contingency of £162k from underspends in 2020-21. A new £1m target for the working balance was agreed and Council approved that any underspend for 2021/22 be added to the working balance to achieve the new approved level. It was recommended that during 2022/23 a further amount of £116k be moved from Corporate Priorities to the working balance, to result in a new balance of £850k, with consideration to the remaining amount required to reach the new target to be considered at budget setting for 2023-24.

Mrs Garton confirmed that the report showed the impact in the last financial year of the pandemic. This resulted in a surplus of £50k, which contributed to the overall underspend of £94k. This was the last specific Covid financial impact reporting, as this was now mainstreamed as part of the main budgets, which would be reflected in service costs etc.

Mrs Garton confirmed that Special Expenses Melton Mowbray had an overspend of £11k, which increased to £28k with approved carry forwards. The impact of the provisional outturn on key reserves showed that the corporate priorities reserve had remained relatively stable. The business rates equalisation reserve was at a healthy level and there could be scope to release some of the funds elsewhere from other areas of business. However, business rates remained a difficult area to predict. The collection fund had ended the year in a deficit position which would need to be addressed using the reserve. The level on the reserve would be considered further at budget setting 2023-24. With regard to capital anty

underspends funded from the council's own resources will be added back to the reserves as appropriate.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance and Resources, Councillor Ronnie de Burle commented that the report provided a comprehensive overview of the Council's year end position. The year had ended with a small underspend and this was always welcome. It must be noted that this was only possible because of the prudent decision taken this time last year with a general carry forward of £162k from the previous financial year's Covid Contingency Reserve. The Council's position remained precarious and such prudent decisions were needed until the Council's finances were certain. A boost to reserves by increasing the working balance would greatly assist in meeting unexpected challenges. Certainty was needed to invest confidently in ongoing projects and activities. An assessment of the inflationary pressures on the Council's finances was underway and this would feed into a high-level review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. However, restraint was needed until the outcome of the 2 year settlement was known.

Cabinet

- (1) **NOTED** the provisional year end position variations to the 2021-22 approved budget and the resultant effect on the Council's balances and reserves for the General Fund and Special Expenses for both revenue and capital;
- (2) **APPROVED** the transfer of £116k in 2022-23 from the Corporate Priorities Reserve to the General Fund Working Balance to bring the level to £850k.

22

DRAFT UKSPF INVESTMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Lee Byrne, Regeneration Manager introduced the report, the purpose of which was setting out the latest proposals for incorporation into the Investment Plan.

Mr Byrne advised that the UK SPF was a key element of the government's levelling up agenda. The Council had an allocation of funds, which it needed to develop an investment plan for (how best to utilise £1.19m of funding over a 3 year period up until March 2025). The funding could be used for a mixture of capital and revenue projects. There were three overarching investment priorities identified:

- Community and place
- Supporting local business
- People and skills.

Key areas considered throughout the development of this plan was that it needed to be evidence led, to link to national and local strategies and have wide stakeholder engagement. The stakeholder engagement within Melton had been significant (engagement with working groups, Scrutiny Committee, all Members, via all Member Briefings and with Council partner organisations).

Mr Byrne confirmed that a Stakeholder Advisory Board had been established to help ensure strategic fit with local challenges. The Board met on 11 July and were broadly supportive of the proposed plans (as detailed at appendix 2 of the report) and some suggestions from the Board would be included in further refinement of

the UK SPF Investment Plan. In addition, a meeting would be held tomorrow with the Helping People Board and feedback would be included in the Plan, for submission by 1 August.

The Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, Councillor Rob Bindloss thanked officers for their work, commenting that the UK SPF was an opportunity for the town and the borough to benefit. To understand where the funding would be best used, workshops and discussion with Council partner organisations and stakeholders had been held. The Plan was drafted in line with their wishes, concerns and ideas and their input would ultimately develop and empower the borough and town centre. It was important to be realistic and mindful as to the limitations that the funding could be used for and this remained an evolving document.

Cabinet

- (1) **NOTED** and **ACKNOWLEDGED** the significant ongoing progress to develop the UKSPF Investment Plan;
- (2) **SUPPORTED** in principle the proposals set out in the latest version of the plan but recognised that development and refinement of the plan would continue prior to the submission deadline of 1 August 2022;
- (3) **APPROVED** submission of the UKSPF Investment Plan and **DELEGATED** authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity, to finalise the plan prior to submission.

The meeting closed at: 6:25pm

Chair