



**Melton
Borough
Council**

Capital Strategy 2023/24

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Capital Strategy

1.1.1 The main purpose of the Capital Strategy is to define how Melton Borough Council will maximise the impact of its limited capital resources to deliver its key aims and priorities. It considers future capital investment needs, especially in relation to regeneration and the growth agenda, and ensures the optimum impact of those investments. It also helps the Council to be clear on its priorities for bidding for external funding.

1.1.2 In managing its Capital Strategy, the Council will have regard to its statutory obligations within the context of a changing operational environment, the longer-term impact of its decisions, the delivery of value for money and the risks associated with any course of action.

1.1.3 The strategy is designed to fully comply with the [Prudential Code of Practice for local authority capital investment](#) by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) in parallel with guidance to local authorities from the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) (MHCLG). The main purpose of the Code is to ensure that capital investment proposals are affordable, prudent, and sustainable.

1.1.4 By the very nature of capital investment, it is necessary that this strategy takes a longer-term view. However, the strategy also focusses on the medium term to fit in with the [Medium-Term Financial Strategy](#), the latest version of which covers the period from 2023/24 to 2026/27.

1.2 Key Strategies and Plans

This Capital Strategy is also underpinned by a few other key strategies and plans.

- Corporate Strategy - The Council's aims and priorities are set out in the [Corporate Strategy](#), the latest version of which covers the period 2020 to 2024.

The key priority themes set out in the [Corporate Strategy](#) are:

1. Excellent services positively impacting on our communities
2. Providing high quality council homes and landlord services
3. Delivering sustainable and inclusive growth in Melton
4. Protect our climate and enhance our natural environment
5. Ensuring the right conditions to support delivery (inward)
6. Connected and led by our community (outward)

- Local Plan - The [Local Plan](#) was formally adopted in October 2018 and therefore its strategic objectives will start to be considered and their potential influence on our Capital Strategy. The Council approved the commencement of the Local Plan Review on 26th April 2022. The Members' Working Group agree five key areas of focus- climate change, affordable housing, leisure, employment land and Melton south sustainable neighbourhood. The Local Development Scheme setting out the timetable for the review until the Spring of 2026 was approved by the Cabinet in December 2022.
- Melton Town Centre Vision - The [Town Centre vision](#) is an important framework document for Melton and the collaborative process taken to develop it has led to the development of an action plan. It was approved by the Cabinet in June 2022. It is a live document that will be updated on an annual basis and will allow the Council and its partners to utilise it as an evidence-based framework for future funding and investment opportunities. As well as setting a Vision, the final document provides a pipeline of proposed projects and activities through which the Council will be able to proactively seek funding and investment (both public and private) to achieve the agreed aim of securing, enhancing and promoting Melton Mowbray's position as being the 'Rural Capital of Food'.
- [UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan](#) – Melton's investment plan for £1.19million to invest in our local communities and economy was submitted to the Government in August 2022. It is now validated following the assessment and the Secretary of State has allocated funding for 2022/23 with indicative allocations for the further two financial years up until March 31st 2025. This money will have a positive impact on our local communities and economy and the Council are now setting up processes and governance arrangements internally to enable us to deliver these projects and programmes effectively to our local communities. This will all be in adherence to the Council's obligations for the UKSPF as the designated Accountable body for Melton Borough and will be delivered by, and draw upon, expertise from across the council. In addition to the UKSPF, the Council has also submitted proposals for £400,000 Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) in November 2022. We are yet to hear back on this which is a rural top up to the UKSPF programme but will update members once we have been notified of the outcome.
- General Fund Asset Management Plan and Capital Strategy - The current Corporate Property and Assets Portfolio comprises of a wide range of property types and assets, each with its own considerations, challenges, and opportunities. These include operational offices, commercial units, leisure centres, community centres, parks and open spaces, car parks, footpaths, bridges, and public toilets. Condition surveys have been undertaken for all assets now with costs identified for works over the next 5 years. A risk-based approach is taken in prioritising the works and allocation of resources.

Contractors have been procured through framework arrangements for undertaking works identified to mitigate against health and safety and high-risk property safety items. The team is now fully recruited to, and a detailed Asset management Plan is being prepared, informed by the condition works and risk analysis for planned maintenance programme. This work also informs the Council's Asset Development Programme partly funded by the Business Rate Pool grant funding from Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership (LLEP). The Phase 1 of works focus on the disposal of North Cattle Market site, refurbishment of The Cove Community Centre to accommodate Me and My Learning and partners and future development options for Phoenix House and Parkside.

- [Housing Revenue Account Business Plan](#) This was approved by Council in July 2022 and sets out the Council's expectations and plans for council homes for the next 30 years (2022 – 2052) and the financial sustainability of the Council's housing services. It looks at the money available for the Council to maintain and improve council housing and ensures that Council homes remain safe and meet decent homes standards. It also sets out what other housing improvements and investment choices can be made within the budget available, examines how the Council can build new council housing in an affordable and sustainable way to meet the needs of residents in Melton, and considers the implications of the changing regulatory context for the housing sector.
- [HRA Asset Management Plan 2023-2028](#). This was approved by Council in December 2022 and provides a framework for capital investment planning. The Asset Management Plan will be used to set budgets each year and will be updated on an annual basis. This will ensure that it remains current and relevant in line with a changing financial context and regulatory environment. The Asset Management Plan is an evidence led document. It is informed by a comprehensive condition survey of almost 90% of the Council's housing stock and by consultation with residents as part of the development of the HRA Business Plan. It provides responses to policy recommendations arising from the HRA Business Plan, ensures an emphasis on decent and safe homes, and is set within the context of regulatory change to enable continued compliance and tenant safety.
- [Risk Management Framework 2022/2025](#) - It is important for us to apply the corporate Risk Management Framework principles to the risk approach adopted in our Capital Strategy. Our Capital Strategy includes a high-level risk assessment, which will be linked to our corporate risk assessment. The Capital Strategy risk assessment matches the corporate scoring approach and takes into consideration the CIPFA Prudential Code 2017 requirements for the assessment of risk on investments.

- Treasury Management Strategy - The Treasury Management Strategy sets out how the Council's treasury management service will support the capital decisions taken, the day-to-day treasury management activity and the limitations on activity through treasury prudential indicators.

1.1.5 There are also external partnership boards we work through to drive the shape of Melton, these are:

Melton Helping People Partnership Board (looking to change to Melton Community Health and Wellbeing Partnership) - The Council has always had strong working relationships with its statutory and voluntary sector partners at both an operational and strategic level. The strength of these established partnerships has been especially evident during the COVID crisis when organisations pulled together to provide an extraordinary community response for the residents of Melton across all age groups and for a wide range of needs. We want to build on the learning this has provided and continue to develop with our Partners. Accordingly, the Helping People Partnerships (HPP) Board provides a strategic forum for Partners delivering services within the Borough of Melton to collaborate and develop an effective Partnership Offer that will result in better outcomes for the residents of Melton. The partnership has been reviewed to ensure it can respond to the needs of our communities in Melton as we emerge from the pandemic and embrace new challenges associated with the cost-of-living crisis. It is also well placed to support delivery of local community health and wellbeing plan, aligned to the countywide health and wellbeing strategy.

Melton Place Board - A Place Board has been established including relevant local stakeholders who are keen to be involved in shaping the future of Melton. The Board has been instrumental in sharing information and joining hands to support businesses and retain town centre vitality during the lockdown periods. The purpose of the Place Board is to work together to promote & develop the 'rural capital of food' brand and establish Melton as the place to live, work, visit and invest in. Key objectives are:

- Working with our partners to promote Melton, increase tourism and deliver the promise of Rural Capital of Food
- Regenerate our town centre, promote events, encourage inward investment, and create jobs
- Deliver inclusive growth by improving access to higher paid jobs, improving skills, and tackling the low wage economy

1.3 Principles on which the Capital Strategy are based

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) published an updated [Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities \(2021 Edition\)](#), which strengthens the basic principle that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for commercial return. Following the Prudential Code and guidance from [MHCLG Investment Strategy](#) which needs to be read in conjunction with the [Guidance on local government investments.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#). This strategy is also cognisant of the latest guidance issued by CIPFA on Prudential Property Investment.

2 The Context of the Capital Strategy

2.1 Corporate Rationale

The [Corporate Strategy](#) outlines the Council's aims and priorities setting out under the key priority themes as highlighted earlier date in the document. Of course, all that the Council does is set within a legislative context, so meeting its statutory obligations is a key component determining the actions it takes in the context of the capital strategy.

2.2 Growth and Demographic Change in Melton

2.2.1 In Melton, the population size has increased by 2.8%, from around 50,400 in 2011 to 51,800 in 2021. This is lower than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800. At 2.8%, Melton's population increase is lower than the increase for the East Midlands (7.7%). In 2021, Melton ranked 305th for total population out of 309 local authority areas in England, moving up one place in a decade. As of 2021, Melton is the fifth least densely populated of the East Midlands' 35 local authority areas. Overall, in England, there has been an increase of 20.1% in people aged 65 years and over, an increase of 3.6% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and an increase of 5.0% in children aged under 15 years. In Melton, there has been an increase of 29.6% in people aged 65 years and over, a decrease of 4.0% in people aged 15 to 64 years, and a decrease of 3.6% in children aged under 15 years.

2.2.2 We set out in our [Housing Strategy](#) the need for further housing growth. We regularly undertake local assessments of housing need, these recommend the long-term provision of at least 70 additional affordable homes every year to meet local needs, a mixture of affordable homes to rent as well as to own. Our assessments show that even with ambitious house building targets this level of affordable housing delivery is not likely to be achieved through housing growth. Planned housing growth, as set out in the Melton Local Plan (2018-2036), is estimated to only be able to provide around two-thirds of the affordable housing needed. This is due to a variety of factors, including lower house prices and higher infrastructure costs for some developments, particularly for the sustainable neighbourhoods planned to deliver housing growth around Melton Mowbray. This makes delivering affordable homes in the town more difficult, despite this being where demand is greatest. Developer contributions to provide affordable housing as part of new housing developments need to be rebalanced to meet local needs better, to ensure sufficient affordable housing is delivered in Melton Mowbray as well as in the Borough's rural areas.

2.3 Post-Covid Landscape/Cost of Living Crisis

2.3.1 The Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on the national and local economy and a necessary change to the working arrangements of the residents of Melton, with people working from home wherever possible, including a significant proportion of the Council's own staff.

2.3.2 All public sector bodies are under financial pressure as well as there being a need to offer the public a more coherent means of accessing services, and the [One Public Estate \(OPE\)](#) project aims to achieve the rationalisation of publicly held assets. The Council will work closely with its strategic partners to look for opportunities to utilise our collective assets to improve public services and generate savings.

2.3.3 The financial pressures on local authorities, caused in large part by cuts in Government grant funding, but also significant increases in demand for services and more recently inflationary pressures, led to the exploration of alternative sources of income. The increase in surplus assets provides an opportunity for the Council to invest in the repurposing of assets to be able to generate additional income and help the Council to shape the post-Covid recovery in Melton from a regeneration and economic recovery perspective. The Asset Development Programme – Council approved the phase 1 of the Asset Development Programme (ADP) in January 2021. The ADP seeks to maximise the value of the Council's assets, generating additional revenue or capital income, whilst also creating jobs, building homes and strengthening community facilities.

2.3.4 Cost of living increases are impacting households across the country. Melton is concerned about the impact on households and associated financial resilience and wellbeing of our communities. Whilst there are some measures to mitigate the impacts being implemented at a national level, it is important that the Council also considers how it can advise and support households and communities across Melton. The Council will need to be dynamic in its response in response to local need and impacts.

3 Capital Investment Objectives and Areas for Investment

3.1 Priorities for 23/24

The following sections map out our capital investment ambition by Corporate Priority, including the expected outputs and outcomes from the delivery of this ambition. It is important to explain what we plan to achieve from our capital investment plans in terms of the clear priorities and delivery plan that we have put in place to meet the needs of our area, to support our unique brand, to address our community consultation feedback and to ensure that we manage our resources on a value for money basis.

Shaping Places

Ongoing key strategic projects are:

1. Asset Development Programme- In April 2020, Cabinet agreed to formalise acceptance of the successful bid; with £500,000 of Business Rate Pool (BRP) funding secured from the LLEP to support proposals for the development of Council owned sites. Cabinet also approved the provisional allocation of £375,000 from the Capital Programme on the proviso that it was subject to further business cases and formal approvals before confirming specific allocations. This will cover the potential diversification of Parkside offices following the adoption of hybrid Way We Work strategy in December 2021.
2. Food Enterprise centre- The Council has approved plans for establishing a Food Enterprise Centre in Melton with initial phase of activities centred around the southern cattle market site. £100k grant funding from the LLEP has been secured, matched by the Council's investment of £50,000 to support a range of activities including strengthening infrastructure for holding events in a -safe way, providing temporary development kitchen facilities for supporting start-ups and creating a cluster of on-site food production businesses. This work will inform a detailed business case for future capital funding bids.
3. Health and Leisure provision - In April 2020, the Council approved acceptance of grant funding for £100,000 from LLEP, matched by the Council's investment of £50,000 to develop detailed proposals for best utilisation of the Waterfield and Melton Sports Village sites and the future of leisure provision in Melton. Discussions are ongoing with CCG and other health providers for a joined-up approach in delivering community facilities for health and leisure; including the potential for a second GP surgery. This work will inform a business case for future capital investment in this project.

4. Country Park- A sum of money has been allocated from the health and leisure project to prepare a masterplan of the Country Park to explore outdoors leisure provision within the park. A draft masterplan is being produced following stakeholders' engagement activities and will be shared with members for comments before conclusion in March 2023.
5. Cattle market – As part of the Asset development programme, the Council approved the disposal of north cattle market site for capital receipts to enable it to be developed for residential use as per the allocation in the Local Plan. Following a successful marketing exercise, a preferred bidder is now identified, and terms of reference are being agreed for the disposal. £1m from this capital receipt is proposed to be ring fenced as match funding to support the Council's bid for Levelling Up Funding for the development of the South cattle market site (Stockyard). An outcome on the bid is expected by the end of January 2023.
6. Lake Terrace – The Council has approved disposal of access road to the Lake Terrace waste collection depot to enable the development of 90 affordable homes on the adjacent vacant site. This disposal will generate capital receipt, get the road adopted by LCC and remove maintenance liability for the Council in future.
7. Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR) – The Council has worked in partnership with developers and landowners to prepare masterplans for the Southern and Northern Sustainable Urban Neighbourhoods to deliver over 4500 homes as per Local Plan allocation. The Council continues to support the Leicestershire County Council and Homes England to deliver the much needed highways infrastructure in form of Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR) as well as 4 primary schools, 2 secondary schools and develops over 70 ha of employment sites. In November 2021, the Council entered an infrastructure funding agreement with the County Council to facilitate delivery of the southern section of the road. It is anticipated the north and east sections will commence construction in Spring 2023.
8. Town Centre Enhancements – The Council is working collaboratively with Place Board partners such as Business Improvement District (BID) and Melton Mowbray Town Estate (MMTE) to draw up plans to deliver the action plan for the Melton Mowbray Town Centre Vision. A range of activities from this plan are proposed to be funded from the UKSPF grant programme over the next two years.

9. Climate Emergency – The Council has declared climate emergency and pledged to ensure Council operations are carbon neutral by 2030 and promote sustainability within the Borough. The Council has been successful in receiving grant funding from a range of government sources to improve energy efficiency on private as well as council owned homes. 16 council homes benefitted from improvements to external wall insulation, and 49 homes received solar PV installations, which will enhance thermal performance. The council used over £200,000 of grant funding to install solar panel systems to 26 privately owned homes, that met the required criteria and were most in need of energy efficiency improvements, supporting households most impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.

Following the broad range of work that is currently being undertaken during the next 12 months, the Council will continue to update and refine the capital programme where projects can be taken forward for development.

All these activities, along with the delivery of the Local Plan by working with private and public sector partners, developers and landowners will help in delivering growth in housing, business activities and leisure provision that would contribute to creating and shaping the place that Melton is aspiring to be.

Alongside maintaining our property assets, the Council also has responsibility for ensuring wider public realm assets are effectively managed and maintained; as well as maintaining and renewing the vehicles used to undertake various environmental services. The Council has made provision through an annual revenue contribution to a number of repair and renewal funds which enables the capital costs associated with these to be met from an existing fund, rather than through borrowing or the use of capital receipts. The level and contribution made to these funds is currently under review to ensure it is appropriate and following the adoption of the Local Plan the 106 developer contributions SPD will potentially create opportunities for alternative funding sources.

Helping People

The following have been identified as strategic projects:

1. Deliver the commitments set out in the **Housing Revenue Account Business Plan** and associated **Asset Management Plan** to ensure investment and improving of council homes, including investment in properties, neighbourhoods and assistive technology. Both plans will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure they remain relevant, reflective of local and financial context and incorporate updated stock condition data (20% stock will be surveyed each year).

2. Meet **Decent Homes Standard** – through significant capital programmes as referred to above, focusing on new kitchens, bathrooms and heating improvements to ensure our properties remain safe and meet the Decent Homes Standard – to be profiled and planned in response to the stock condition surveys. The Council will keep a close eye on future changes to the Decent Homes Standard and will update its investment plans accordingly. Further development of the Councils housing and asset management system will enable robust data capture, monitoring and reporting. Continued improvements to the councils' voids process will form part of this work. The Council will also deliver commitments to improve energy efficiency in tenants' homes where possible and will seek external funding to support these ambitions.
3. Provide **new high quality council homes** – through delivery on the Council's own sites and working in partnership with developers and other partners to improve the numbers and quality of the Council's own housing stock including using capital receipts to support development opportunities. An Affordable Housing Development Plan has been agreed and will guide this work, led by the Councils Housing Development Manager. Core principles of the plan include energy efficiency and high standards of design.
4. Development of new **Anti-Social Behaviour** case management arrangements in Housing through the implementation of a specific module within the Housing Management System. This will enable the Council to manage, report on and analyse antisocial behaviour in line with new Regulatory Requirements,
5. **Lifeline Services** support residents to remain safely and independently at home. Customers pay to receive this service. The equipment used to deliver the service needs to be upgraded / digitally enabled in order to transition to the digital switchover (through which all analogue technology will become obsolete) and this work has begun. A capital allocation to support the compatibility of Lifeline Units as part of the Digital Switchover was incorporated in the Budget proposals for 2022/23 (non-MBC properties) and provision also be made within the HRA business plan (MBC properties). The Council is reviewing its assistive technology offer and will bring forward a single, customer-focussed and commercially viable, assistive technology offer across Melton, irrespective of tenure in 2023/24.
6. The Thorpe Road **Cemetery** has an estimated 3-5 years operational viability remaining due to available plot space for burials and cremations. In 2022/23 an assessment of options was undertaken to review the viability of a crematorium for Melton, options to expand capacity at the current cemetery and options to develop a new cemetery. It has been confirmed that a crematorium is not viable based on current projections. Expansion of capacity at the current site will be costed into the budget for 2023/24. An options appraisal regarding future cemetery provision will be discussed with Cabinet in 2023/24 which may require an in-year update to the capital programme.

7. The Council's current **leisure contract** is due to come to an end in March 2024. Development of a leisure procurement strategy has commenced, and a contract specific will be developed early in 2023. The leisure sector continues to experience financial pressures, largely due to high energy costs and a new contract is not likely to be on the same terms as the current contract. Additionally, the council has ageing facilities, with one site projecting a continued financial deficit. A procurement solution with variant bids is likely to be explored, to assist the council to consider the most effective and financially viable service and facility options. As part of this procurement, the option of creating a modest capital investment (spend to save) fund on leisure centres will be considered.
8. The **Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022-2050** has been developed through a collaborative approach by the Leicestershire Waste Partnership. It has been finalised further to an extensive public consultation and sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership intends to manage municipal waste up until 2050. The strategy contains a range of pledges. Some of the pledges contained within the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy can only be implemented if sufficient ongoing additional funding is provided by Government to cover the costs incurred by both the waste disposal and collection authorities respectively. Further information from Government is awaited.
9. The Environmental Maintenance Team require vehicles to carry out many of their duties and a programme of **cyclical vehicle replacement** is required. A vehicle replacement policy is in development, which will inform the capital programme, through which the council will need to consider optimum replacement cycles and opportunities for green procurement where possible and appropriate.
10. A cyclical replacement programme for **Play Equipment** is required. Officers will commence a review of the Council's play equipment replacement policy to assess lifespans, replacement requirements and associated investment required.

Great Council

Our Great Council priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan focus on ensuring we have in place the right conditions to support service delivery and that we are connected to and led by the community. We aim to maintain a personal approach but also harnessing appropriate technology to make our services more accessible and fit for the digital economy. This latter aim in terms of capital requirement does necessitate investment in ICT where we have a clear roadmap as expressed in our ICT digital strategy and action plan, although following the move to an in-house service and the loss of one local authority partner this does need to be updated and developed further.

ICT Digital Strategy and Action Plan

The current ICT Digital Strategy Action Plan has been developed in line with the ICT Service Technology Roadmap, Partner Business Planning Activities and Strategic Board prioritisation. The Strategy identifies a programme of activity for each of the Partner organisations (Hinckley and Bosworth, Blaby, Melton or the Leicestershire Revenues and Benefits Partnership). Objectives are aligned to those prioritised in the LICTP Digital Strategy 2018-2022. The focus for 2022-23 has been on embedding the new in-house ICT Service Contract following a review of the strategic direction of the partnership and the technology each council needs to support more hybrid ways of working following the pandemic. A diagnostic review is to be undertaken to validate the current infrastructure roadmap and opportunities to expedite this as required to improve users experience and ensure improvements are made to digital services.

ICT General Principles

The current estate is deployed into a single data centre hosted at Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC), with an additional data centre at Melton Borough Council (MBC) acting as a Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery location. The majority of the estate of all three councils is virtualised onto VMware hosts in the HBBC data centre with a small number of Solaris servers that support line of business applications. Citrix end user compute is the primary desktop solution provisioned through thin client devices, laptops and remote desktop services. A common Mobile Device Management solution has been deployed across all partners providing Wi-Fi and management of mobile devices such as iPad and iPhone.

As the LICTP has matured it has taken opportunities to consolidate solutions and / or co-terminate support and maintenance- for example there are common solutions in place for Antivirus, Web and Mail security, approved builds for End User Devices (EUD) and shared Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) arrangements. The LICTP works with partners to identify common business solutions and align version control, to benefit from efficiencies in upgrade testing and economies in supplier management.

The focus of the Capital Strategy for ICT over the coming years is to consolidate and develop the ICT infrastructure, strengthen security and maintain a supported environment that will be able provide a robust and reliable service for our Staff and their Customers. Alongside this further embedding the future ICT service arrangements from 2022 to improve operational performance and exploit strategic opportunities will be a key action undertaken in the coming year alongside the development of web and digital services to the public.

3.2 Action Plan

An updated action plan is included in the table below covering progress made over the past 12 months and the targets for the forthcoming year relating to capital programme and strategic development of Council assets:

Influence	Action	Responsibility	Progress against timescale
Update the General Fund Asset Management Plan (AMP)	Current AMP is out of date and therefore needs updating. Condition surveys have been undertaken for all assets now with costs identified for works over the next 5 years. A risk-based approach is taken in prioritising the works and allocation of resources. Contractors have been procured through framework arrangements for undertaking works identified to mitigate against health and safety and high-risk property safety items. The Asset management Plan is being prepared, informed by the condition works and risk analysis for planned maintenance programme.	Director for Growth and Regeneration	April 2023
HRA Business Plan (Full review) including AMP	Following the adoption of the Interim Business Plan in January 2020, a full HRA Business Plan has been undertaken during 2022/23 including a detailed update of the Housing Asset Management Plan to ensure the long-term financial viability of the HRA is understood and associated capital investment.	Director for Housing and Communities	Complete

Influence	Action	Responsibility	Progress against timescale
ICT Service Delivery	Undertake a diagnostic review of the service to inform a review of the infrastructure and digital road map for the development of the service moving forward.	Director for Corporate Services	April 2023

3.3 List of Investments

3.3.1 - Our 5-year capital investment plan incorporates the 2021-2025 Capital Programme and a forecast of capital investment requirement up to 2026-2027, based on our capital investment ambition. It has been prioritised in line with our corporate plan and Treasury Management Strategy to ensure that the 5-year position is affordable, and deliverable as planned. Our risk assessment examines the risk against the affordability and deliverability assumptions and this will inform the ongoing review of performance and update of the investment plan to ensure that it is effectively managed.

The Capital Programme is not only for maintaining core assets to ensure Melton can continue to do business but also to positively intervene in key investments areas which require borrowing but this would be focused by the outcomes of the asset and transformation development appraisals where it would be expected that any borrowing to generate a return.

The following tables provide an overview of the 5-year investment plan from an investment and financing perspective, an affordability perspective and in terms of the contribution to the achievement of our Corporate Priorities, our community improvements and our growth targets. More detailed capital plans are included in Appendix A.

GENERAL FUND

5 YEAR	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2025/26</u>	<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>Total</u>
INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	
GREAT COUNCIL	38	-	12	79	68	197
PEOPLE	345	345	345	345	345	1,725
PLACE	632	75	585	4	-	1,296
Total Programme	1,015	420	942	428	413	3,218

5 YEAR FUNDING PROGRAMME	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2025/26</u>	<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	
REPAIRS & RENEWAL /SINKING FUNDS	73	75	97	83	68	396
INTERNAL BORROWING	-	-	500	-	-	500
GRANT FUNDING	684	345	345	345	345	2,064
CAPITAL RECEIPTS	253	-	-	-	-	253
REVENUE FUNDING	5	-	-	-	-	5
Total Programme	1,015	420	942	428	413	3,218

As can be seen from the tables above at the current time it doesn't appear that the Council has an overly ambitious capital programme but as outlined in the previous sections of the strategy there are some significant items which could significantly impact on the forward capital projections – including:

- Asset management plan – the asset management plan for the general fund has is under development but has not yet been finalised and will be a key document in outlining the council's required for managing and investment in its assets going forward. At present we are undertaking annual stock condition surveys to look at the essential / necessary works the yearly refresh could result in additional annual costs that cannot be covered through existing planned financing.
- Progression of the Asset Development Programme to inform the ongoing management of assets linked to future disposals and developments which may be required to help generate capital receipts to be invested in existing or new assets. This would cover key areas such as Cattle market, Parkside, Leisure and housing.
- UKSPF and levelling up grants – these awards provide significant funding that the council can use to invest in the local area to support economic development and recovery post pandemic.

As these areas become further developed and financial analysis becomes available the capital strategy with be refined as an up to date living document.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Alongside the General Fund the council also maintains its own housing stock. The figures in the table below are based on the new business plan recently approved and the associated Housing Asset Management Plan strategy document. The plan is a rolling 5- year programme with the recently approved plan running from 2022/23 to 2026/27.

5 YEAR INVESTMENT PROGRAMME	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2025/26</u>	<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>£'000</u>	
HRA Funded by						
Major Repairs Reserve	1,712	1,840	3,714	2,470	TBC	9,736
HRA Capital Receipts	880	325	346	388	TBC	1,939
Development and Regeneration Reserve	0	58	80	136	TBC	274
Total Programme	2,592	2,223	4,140	2,944	TBC	11,949

3.3.3 The following sections examine the evaluation and prioritisation of our 5-year capital investment plan, the additional analysis that informs our Capital Strategy principles, our capacity to deliver and the potential options for addressing our capital investment ambition gap.

GENERAL FUND

Within the General Fund there are various funding sources. The Council takes a prudent approach through the use of Replacement and Renewal funds which have been established to make annual revenue contributions into a reserve to fund future capital expenditure on areas such as vehicle, ICT and playgrounds. Alongside this the Council is highly effective in securing external funding to access grants in order to minimise the draw and the remaining source of funding in terms of Capital Receipts.

The table below summaries the current and future forecasts for the Capital Receipts reserve and shows there is limited capital receipts available to fund future schemes;

Financial Year	Expenditure	Balance on Reserve
2021-22	-	£817k
2022-23	£238k	£579k
2023-24	£253k	£326k

There may be the opportunity to generate further capital receipts, but the council only owns a limited amount of sites / assets some of which may be used to support other key projects such as the Asset Development Programme. Therefore, once the future capital programme becomes more developed the future funding requirements will need to be reviewed which may lead to a borrowing requirement on the general fund which is currently debt free although there are proposals to fund a contribution to LCC for education infrastructure funded from borrowing. Therefore, the prioritisation of capital schemes will be key with limited capital resources. As such utilising borrowing to fund such investments would mean these would need to be affordable in revenue terms through reductions in net expenditure or through generating sufficient returns on investment to offset the cost of borrowing.

The establishment of a specific Property Repairs / investment fund was established as part of the 2022/23 budget process to provide greater resilience to deal with unexpected costs relating to the councils' property / assets. The expected balance on this reserve at the end of 2022/23 financial year is £127k. This will be used to support the funding requirements of the General Fund asset management plan when it is developed but this may not be sufficient.

Alongside this there is a provision of £650k earmarked to support delivery of any future leisure vision projects.

Housing Revenue Account

In the main the HRA programme is funded from the three main reserves which are utilised in a priority order:

1. Major Repairs Reserve
2. HRA Capital Receipts
3. Regeneration and Development Reserve (this is built up from contributions from the revenue account in line with the interim HRA Business Plan).

The capital programme is integrally linked to the Treasury Management Strategy in terms of informing future cashflow, interest returns, borrowing requirement and medium-term financial sustainability. The 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy has been prepared based on the information contained within this Capital Strategy to ensure the two documents are aligned and any associated implications taken into account when setting the prudential indicators. Both strategies will be presented to Full Council for approval at the annual budget setting meeting in February 2022 where further information can be found.

SPECIAL EXPENSES – MELTON MOWBRAY

As outlined within the Helping People priority area Thorpe Road Cemetery (which falls within the Melton Mowbray Special Expense) is going to need an expansion in capacity due to an estimated operational viability period of 3-5 years remaining. An options appraisal regarding future cemetery provision will be reviewed with Cabinet to develop the future capital programme requests. Initial costs are in the region of £2m which will need to be funded from borrowing and will place pressure on the special expense area to create sufficient headroom in the revenue budget to afford the capital repayments.

3.4 Financial Investments

3.4.1 Financial Investments can fall into three categories, as defined by the Statutory Guidance issued under section 15(1)(a) of the [Local Government Act 2003](#): Specified Investments; Loans and Non-specified Investments

3.4.2 Specified and non-specified investments are only likely to be undertaken on either a short, or a long-term basis as part of managing the council's cash flows and are therefore covered by the Treasury Management Strategy rather than here.

3.4.3 Loans may also be used for treasury management purposes, but where they are used in support of service delivery objectives this is covered by the Loans and Guarantees Financial Instruction.

3.5 Non-Financial Investments

3.5.1 For the purposes of this strategy a non-financial investment is a non-financial asset held by the authority primarily or partially to generate a surplus. This might be through an anticipated appreciation in the capital value of the asset, or by way of delivering a regular income stream, or a combination of both. However, in the current financial climate the emphasis is likely to be on assets that generate a regular income stream.

3.5.2 Although the Council remains open minded to consider a range of opportunities the high likelihood is that non-financial investments will involve property assets, however, it will not involve the investment in property assets purely for yield. This could include the impact that the Coronavirus pandemic will have on future office capacity requirements and the need to mitigate the revenue impacts on post-coronavirus income levels, the Council may look to repurpose some of its portfolio to produce an income stream and meet its corporate objectives, especially in respect of regeneration, affordable housing, and economic development.

3.5.3 In addition, on occasions the Council may choose to purchase land or property for strategic reasons rather than just for a return and therefore expected rates of return may be narrower than a pure investment. This might be to protect existing service provision but will most likely be linked to its community leadership role in accommodating and facilitating regeneration, economic development, and housing growth. This will require well documented business cases and formal decisions.

4. Funding Capital Investment

4.1 Sources of Funding

There are several potential sources of financing for the capital programme. These can be described as follows:

4.1.1 Grant Funding - often specifically for capital purposes and often from central government, but they may come from, or through, other agencies.

4.1.2 Capital Receipts - receipts arising from the disposal of existing assets are constrained to only be useable for the purposes of funding new assets. Such funds when generated are held in a Capital Receipts Reserve until such time as used. The use of surplus land to deliver additional council priorities such as affordable housing, key worker housing, supported living etc can have an impact on the residual capital receipt value to the Council. These impacts will be reflected in the financial implications of reports and there is close monitoring of the delivery of capital receipts to ensure they are in line with the capital programme funding assumptions.

4.1.3 Developer Contributions - S106 agreements effectively impose a tax on new development to fund infrastructure required because of the development. S106 agreements tend to relate to specific capital investment projects, but where it is more generic, the Council will use this funding to meet its capital investment priorities where these satisfy the conditions of the s106 agreement.

4.1.4 Prudential Borrowing - the Council can borrow to fund its capital expenditure provided that the revenue financing costs of such borrowing are affordable and sustainable. Prudential borrowing will be considered as a source of capital funding in accordance with the Government's guidelines and with regard to the [CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities](#).

4.1.5 Revenue Contributions to Capital - the Council can use its revenue resources to fund its capital expenditure, but obviously this then reduces the funding available for recurrent expenditure.

4.1.6 Use of Earmarked Reserves - essentially this is just a mechanism for deferring the application of one of the sources listed above, e.g. revenue contributions, or capital receipts. A typical example is the use of a Repairs and Renewals Fund.

4.1.7 Leasing - essentially this is a specialised form of borrowing linked directly to the rental of an asset.

4.1.8 RTB Receipts – the receipts from the sales of Right to Buy properties are used to fund further investment on affordable homes with the HRA. Local authorities have 5 years to spend any receipt which can be used to fund up to 40% of the cost of new home.

4.2 Availability and Constraints on Funding

The choice of funding for the capital programme and projects within it will depend upon the overall availability of resources and any constraints applicable to sources:

- Wherever possible external resources such as partner contributions, or grants will be the first preference for funding projects. It is likely that developer or partner contributions will only be available for specific projects. It is also possible that some grant funding is ring-fenced for specific purposes, although this tends not to be the case in recent times.
- Secondly, the Council's own resources (capital receipts and revenue contributions) will be used where available and affordable.
- Prudential borrowing will be the final choice of funding but will only be used where there is a strong business case offering an appropriate rate of return.

The Council will consider arranging borrowing via Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). This borrowing route will be subject to approval by Council before it is undertaken.

The Council will aim to maximise its funding for capital expenditure by bidding for grant funding, disposing of surplus assets to generate capital receipts, seeking to maximise its leverage with partners in respect of joint funding opportunities, etc. Indeed, the ability to respond to the very substantial growth agenda will be heavily dependent upon the ability to attract additional resources. This may come in the form of additional funding from Government, such as [Levelling up Fund bid with Rutland](#) and [UKSPF Fund](#), developer contributions, or working in partnership with other bodies.

5 Risks

5.1 Key Risks

The following summarises the key risks that will impact on the development and delivery of our Capital Strategy:

- **Cost Inflation** – Currently inflation stands at around 12% in Nov 2022 which increases the delivery costs for schemes. Where a scheme was approved in the previous capital programme but is delivered later in the year the delay in timelines can result in large increases in capital requirements.
- **Capital Maintenance** – Our assets will deteriorate if we do not invest sufficient capital maintenance in our existing assets. An assessment of the maintenance needs and provision will be made, and expenditure closely monitored in the meantime for our property and housing assets. The absence of general fund asset management plan increases this risk.
- **Capital Receipts** – A shortfall in the generation of capital receipts would impact on the available investment in the capital programme. Realisation of capital receipts is closely monitored and if there was any shortfall the programme would be reviewed for reductions to future years when looking at future years' capital programmes if alternative funding could not be found. This is a key risk for the council with limited surplus assets from which to generate receipts.
- **Government Capital Grants** – Although the grant funding assumptions in the capital programme are prudent and realistic. Again, any shortfall in grant funding would be adjusted for when reviewing the capital programme each financial year if alternative funding could not be found
- **Capital Slippage** – If capital expenditure isn't profiled accurately then there is the risk of significant underspend against the programme. The profile of expenditure is reviewed and challenged each year to try and get it as accurate as possible. This is much more of a service delivery risk than a financial risk, but there can be financial implications from the delay in the delivery of benefits.
- **Interest Rate Increases** – A prudent assumption is made for the likely interest rates for any borrowing costs in the programme or bids for prudential borrowing. The biggest impact could be on those capital schemes that the Council would like to support but which are only marginally viable, where any rise in interest rates may make a bid against the Prudential Borrowing facility unviable.

5.2 Sector Risk Profile

The Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) published its sector risk profile in October 2022. Although primarily intended to inform the Boards of Private Registered Providers (housing associations), it contains some useful risk summaries in relation to the Council's landlord function. In relation to its asset management function, these are summarised below:

New supply and development:	Providers play a key role in delivering much needed new homes for both social rent and low-cost home ownership and this is frequently a crucial strategic objective for both providers and stakeholders. Providers also invest in the development of homes for market sale to cross subsidise strategic objectives. However, both the sale and development of new homes can carry significant financial risks and boards of developing providers will need to manage these carefully. Current high inflation, skills shortages, and supply chain disruption continue to increase costs of development, while decreasing household incomes and rising interest rates increase the risk of falling house prices and slowing sales. Providers will need to consider carefully how to assess and prioritise investment in new development, ensuring that investment appraisal approaches remain up-to-date, and projects are tightly managed. It is also imperative that providers understand how the crystallisation of risks arising from participation in joint ventures, leasing arrangements, and other investment vehicles could affect the core social housing business and its finances.
Stock decency and safety:	Failing to maintain adequate investment in existing stock can have significant consequences for tenants, as well as potentially leading to deterioration that requires greater expense in the long run. Providers' stock is a long-term asset and boards must ensure that an effective system for repairs and maintenance is in place to meet minimum standards. Boards must ensure they understand how the condition of stock relates to current and evolving requirements, from changing energy efficiency standards and the government's decarbonisation and net zero agenda. Boards must also ensure that they understand the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022 and the new regulatory regime being introduced by the Building Safety Regulator. Understanding performance against requirements requires a detailed knowledge of stock condition, and boards will need to ensure this is underpinned by accurate, up-to-date, and robust data.

Macroeconomic risk and viability:	<p>The economic environment remains particularly uncertain, with the risk of further downside shocks. Providers are facing significant cost inflation, resulting from the current tight UK labour market, high energy costs, and continuing supply chain disruption. Providers' cost of borrowing is expected to increase, with interest rates expected to continue to rise over the next year and the potential for impacts to credit ratings. Providers' income could be constrained, with the government currently consulting on a draft direction on the rent standard that includes several proposed options for capping rents increases in 2023/24. Declining real household incomes may mean tenants increasingly struggle to pay even capped rents. Rapidly increasing interest rates and declining real household incomes increase the likelihood of a material housing market downturn. These factors will inevitably weaken financial performance and reduce capacity to manage downside risk. Providers are now implementing mitigation plans to ensure continued delivery of strategic objectives as far as possible while maintaining viability. As boards make choices on priorities, they will need to continue to undertake stress testing to maintain mitigation plans that remain robust to possible future shocks.</p>
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6.Capital Governance and Processes

6.1 Developing proposals

Individual proposals are developed by each Director which includes development bids for their services in line with priorities. This may be informed by the reviews being carried out within the service, or the outcome from specific public consultation(s).

Business cases are reviewed by the relevant Programme Board who if they approve a project, will then undertake an exercise to prioritise all the projects submitted for the annual budget process. Any capital projects will then need to be approved appropriately or included in the annual budget process for approval by council as part of the budget.

Each project will be assigned to a Programme Board whose role is to implement and monitor the project. Highlight reports are provided to the relevant board and summary reports provided to SLT and Members. Any movements or changes on the capital programme need to be in line with relevant delegations contained with constitution. The Council's project management toolkit sets out the requirements at each stage of the project management process

6.2 Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team have responsibility for ensuring options for funding are considered by Cabinet and Council as part of the budget setting process. SLT provides a forum to ensure that capital expenditure on projects is allocated and prioritised through a structured corporate business planning process which aligns with our Corporate Priorities. Whilst projects are approved at Full Council each February, schemes can be considered in year by Cabinet and Council as appropriate. SLT are also supported in the review by providing guidance during the budget process via the relevant internal review boards which have been developed as part of the Councils new ways of working. There are Programme Boards set up which are aligned to directorates and priority themes that oversee the delivery of key projects. SLT will then overseeing project progress by reviewing highlight reports from the boards on a quarterly basis

A summary of the main tasks allocated to the SLT are as follows:

- To implement our prioritisation process for Capital Expenditure.
- To monitor the delivery of our approved Capital Programme
- To develop and evaluate proposals for service delivery assets.

Projects are also taken through the necessary approval process via Cabinet and Council inline with the committee approval process and in accordance with our project appraisal process.

6.3 Consultation and stakeholder engagement

The Governance review identified that greater stakeholder engagement is required by the Council. A Residents Survey took place in 2022. The results of the [Residents Survey 2022](#) will be used to inform the Capital Strategy.

Stakeholder and tenant engagement have shaped the priorities set out in the HRA Business Plan and Asset Management Plan. Alongside this, housing experts have reviewed and validated our plans. Tenants and scrutiny committee members have been consulted and have been able to identify priorities, which are included within the plans and associated capital programme.

7. Skills and Knowledge

7.1 In house Resources

The successful implementation of the Capital Strategy necessitates the availability of people with the necessary experience of:

- developing capital projects
- acquiring and selling properties
- commissioning partners to deliver the capital programme
- managing properties as a landlord
- sourcing suitable opportunities that match the criteria set under the adopted strategy
- Project management
- Contract management

The Council has resources allocated across three Priority areas to support key streams of work:

Growth and Regeneration Directorate (supporting Place priorities) which manages the current operational and non-operational asset portfolio but will also lead on any property investment and de-carbonising work supported by the finance team and others. Key officers included in this team are:

- Director for Growth and Regeneration
- Corporate Asset Manager
- Assistant Director for Regeneration & UKSPF Delivery
- Building Surveyor

Housing and Communities Directorate (Supporting People priorities) this team has responsibility for the management of the Council's Housing Stock. Key Officers in this area are:

- Director for Housing and Communities
- Assistant Director, Housing Management
- Assistant Director, Customer and Communities
- Housing Asset Manager
- Tenancy Services Manager
- Housing Development Manager

Corporate Services Directorate (Supporting Great Council) this team has responsibility for the providing key support and form part of the project delivery teams as well as oversight around the elements of finance, legal and project support and programme management. ICT also resides in this directorate which forms an integral part of an ongoing investment programme with the strategy. Key officers in this area are:

- Director for Corporate Services
- Assistant Director for Resources
- Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy
- Assistant Director for Organisational Development
- ICT Manager (ICT Partnership)
- ICT Programme manager

7.2 Externally Available Resources

The Council also makes use of external advice in developing projects or undertaking due diligence including external valuers, property condition experts, market appraisers etc. Other advice will be commissioned as and when required. This may also include working with its Treasury Advisors as appropriate to support any associated Treasury implications.

7.3 Members

Members are familiar with the budget process and approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Budget. Any additional training requirements will be discussed with the Cabinet including the Portfolio Holder leads for key priority projects.

Appendix A – General Fund Five Year Capital Programme

The tables below are indicative figures based on latest available data and subject to Cabinet / Council approvals.

GENERAL FUND FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2023/24 TO 2027/28							
PROJECT	PRIORITY						
		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Network Access Controller	GREAT COUNCIL	-	-	-	-	17	17
Privilege Access Management	GREAT COUNCIL	-	-	-	-	12	12
Network refresh	GREAT COUNCIL	-	-		79		79
Wi-fi Upgrade	GREAT COUNCIL	-	-	-	-	30	30
Service Desk	GREAT COUNCIL	-	-	12	-		12
Load balancers	GREAT COUNCIL	6	-	-	-	-	6
Certero Patching module	GREAT COUNCIL	6	-	-	-	-	6
Multifactor Authentication	GREAT COUNCIL	4	-	-	-	-	4
Power Security	GREAT COUNCIL	22	-	-	-	-	22
Service Asset management	GREAT COUNCIL	-	-	-	-	9	9
DFG's	PEOPLE	345	345	345	345	345	1,725
EMT Vehicle/Service Machine Replacement	PLACE	40	75	85	4	-	204
Asset Development Programme Phase 2	PLACE	592	-	-	-	-	592
LCC Education Infrastructure	PLACE	-	-	500	-	-	500
		1,015	420	942	428	413	3,218
FUNDING		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
Repairs and Renewal Funds / Sinking funds		73	75	97	83	68	396
Grant Funding		684	345	345	345	345	2,064
Revenue funding		5	-	-	-	-	5

Capital Receipts		253	-	-	-	-	253
Capital Receipts - Leisure Vision		-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Borrowing		-	-	500	-	-	500
Total Funding		1,015	420	942	428	413	3,218
CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY PRIORITY		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
GREAT COUNCIL		38	-	12	79	68	197
PEOPLE		345	345	345	345	345	1,725
PLACE		632	75	585	4	-	1,296
Total Programme		1,015	420	942	428	413	3,218

Appendix B – HRA Five Year Capital Programme

HRA FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2023/24 TO 2027/28							
PROJECT	PRIORITY	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT</u>							
Aids & Adaptations	Place	280	286	292	298	TBC	1,156
Replacement Kitchens Bathrooms	Place	789	1013	2730	1312	TBC	5,844
Central Heating	Place	7	10	7	243	TBC	267
Replace Exterior Doors & Windows	Place	254	166	227	200	TBC	847
Rewire Council Properties	Place	146	92	93	95	TBC	426
Re-Roofing Works	Place	0	0	0	0	TBC	0
Capitalisation of Housing Inspector Costs	Place	180	184	187	191	TBC	742
Affordable Housing - Gretton Court Extra Care	Place	400	0	0	0	TBC	400
Affordable Housing (Use Of RTB Monies)	Place	0	97	134	226	TBC	457
Boiler Replacements	Place	224	260	355	310	TBC	1,149
Void Catch Up Repairs	Place	112	115	115	119	TBC	461
Fire upgrade works	Place	200	0	0	0	TBC	200
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT TOTAL		2,592	2,223	4,140	2,994	0	11,949
FUNDING		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Major Repairs Reserve		1,712	1840	3714	2470	TBC	9,736
Capital Receipts		880	325	346	388	TBC	1,939
Development and Regeneration Reserve		0	58	80	136	TBC	274
Total Funding		2,592	2,223	4,140	2,994	-	11,949

