

# Minutes



<b>Meeting name</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, 13 November 2024</b>
<b>Start time</b>	<b>4.30 pm</b>
<b>Venue</b>	<b>Parkside, Station Approach, Burton Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. LE13 1GH</b>

## Present:

<b>Chair</b>	Councillor P. Allnatt (Chair)
<b>Councillors</b>	M. Glancy (Vice-Chair)                      S. Cox
<b>In Attendance</b>	Councillor M. Brown, Scrutiny Committee Chair Councillor A. Thwaites, Planning Committee Chair
<b>Officers</b>	Chief Executive Director for Housing and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive) Director for Corporate Services Assistant Director for Governance and Democracy (Monitoring Officer) – via remote link Housing Development Manager Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer

Minute No.	Minute
33	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Butcher and Cumbers.</p>
34	<p><b>MINUTES</b> The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024 were confirmed.</p>
35	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> No declarations of interest were received.</p>
36	<p><b>MATTERS REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES</b> In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the following item had been referred from the Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p><b>Scrutiny feedback on Crime and Disorder</b> The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Brown, introduced the report advising Members that the Scrutiny Committee had met on 12 September 2024 and considered the Crime and Disorder Annual Report and advised that Leicestershire Police’s Neighbourhood Policing Area Commander for Melton and Rutland, Inspector Darren Richardson, was present at the meeting.</p> <p>Cabinet was informed that Scrutiny had highlighted that there is a disconnect between reported crime and the public’s sense of crime. It was recognised that there is crime and it needs reporting but there is a need to be careful in order to not inflate crime. The Scrutiny Committee Chair stated that, on the whole, Melton is a safe place.</p> <p>Councillor Cox, who also holds the role of the Chair of the Safer Melton Partnership, thanked Scrutiny for their input on this.</p> <p>It was recognised by Cabinet that the Scrutiny Committee has an important role as the Council’s designated Crime and Disorder Committee.</p> <p>The Leader thanked the Police and all partners involved in the delivery of the annual report and fighting crime in the Borough.</p> <p>Cabinet noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner has informed residents and businesses to report crime when they experience or witness it. The reason for this is that the Police will have a true picture in order to apply budgets appropriately.</p> <p>Cabinet <b>AGREED</b> to have regard to Scrutiny Committee’s feedback.</p>
37	<p><b>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET MONITORING 1 APRIL 2024 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2024</b></p>

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources, Councillor Cox, introduced the report. Cllr Cox moved the recommendations and Cllr Allnatt seconded the motion.

During the debate the following comments were made:

- Cabinet noted the importance of learning from what has happened in order to move forward. The Council has achieved a lot, however it was recognised that a number of issues were inherited.
- Members recognised the need to keep monitoring the situation.

### **RESOLVED**

Cabinet **NOTED** the financial position on the Housing Revenue Account at 30 September 2024 and the year-end forecast for both revenue and capital.

(Non-key decision)

#### *Reason for recommendation*

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

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### **GENERAL FUND AND SPECIAL EXPENSES - BUDGET MONITORING 1 APRIL 2024 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2024**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources, Councillor Cox, introduced the report. Cllr Allnatt moved the recommendations and Cllr Glancy seconded the motion.

During the debate the following comments were made:

- It was recognised that the cost of providing weekly food waste collections is something other Leicestershire Authorities are also struggling with. In addition, Members acknowledged that there is not just an issue in terms of funding but also the practicality of delivering the service.

### **RESOLVED**

Cabinet **NOTED** the year-end forecast and financial position for the General Fund and Special Expenses at 30 September 2024 for both revenue and capital.

(Non-key decision)

#### *Reason for recommendation*

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

39	<p><b>TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2024/25</b></p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources, Councillor Cox, introduced the report. Councillor Cox moved the recommendations and Councillor Glancy seconded the motion.</p> <p>Members had no comments to add.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>Cabinet recommended to Council that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The Mid-Year position on treasury activity for 2024/25 be noted.</li> <li>2) The Mid-Year position on Prudential Indicators for 2024/25 be noted.</li> </ol> <p>(Non-key decision)</p> <p><i>Reasons for recommendations</i></p> <p><i>The Prudential Code requires the Council to monitor and report performance on Treasury Management activities at least quarterly. As a minimum full Council need to receive an annual report on the strategy and plan for the coming financial year, a mid year review and an annual report on performance of the treasury management function. In addition monitoring reports should be received at least quarterly alongside revenue and capital monitoring by the cabinet as the body delegated responsibility for treasury management functions.</i></p> <p><i>To facilitate the decision making process and support capital investment decisions the Prudential Code requires the Council to agree and monitor a minimum number of prudential indicators.</i></p>
40	<p><b>CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE OF THE STOCKYARD REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT</b></p> <p>The Leader introduced the report. Councillor Allnatt moved the recommendations and Glancy seconded the motion.</p> <p>During the debate the following comments were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet welcomed that the proposal would include the trader hall event space.</li> <li>• Officers were thanked for the report and their efforts in delivering the project.</li> </ul> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>Cabinet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <b>DELEGATED AUTHORITY</b> to the Director for Growth and Regeneration, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Director for Corporate Services, to award the Stockyard Redevelopment Project (including the trader hall event space), main contract works to GF Tomlinson for a contract</li> </ol>

sum of no more than £11,197,422.08, with authority to subsequently draw on the Contingency Construction of £228,518 as required and subject to planning permission being obtained.

- 2) **AGREED** to enter into a JCT Design & Build 2016 Contract with GF Tomlinson as the construction partner for the Stockyard Redevelopment Project subject to planning permission being obtained.

(Key Decision)

*Reasons for recommendations*

*The approval to award the contract to GF Tomlinson as the principal contractor for the main contract works will provide a seamless transition from the design stages of the project to the construction phase, once planning permission has been achieved.*

*It has been programmed to start the construction phase in early 2025 and this approval will allow the project to progress to this stage in line with the programme and LUF Funding requirements.*

*This will avoid programme delay allowing the LUF Funding requirements to be met and the Council will be able to maximise the funding source available from Central Government.*

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**FEES AND CHARGES 2025-26**

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources, Councillor Cox, introduced the report. Councillor Cox moved the recommendations and Glancy seconded the motion.

Councillor Cox informed Members that in respect of catering provision at Gretton Court, Cabinet are minded to cap the increase to midday meals for tenants at 10% for 2025/26 and to remodel the costs of meals provided to non-tenants and lunch clubs. This is aimed to support vulnerable tenants with costs pressures. The modelling and implications arising would be managed under delegation as outlined in the amended recommended.

During the debate the following comments were made:

- The Leader noted that the Council are not currently introducing fees on free car parks throughout the Borough.
- Members acknowledged that, unlike other Districts, the Council are not charging for parking on evenings or Sundays and are not charging blue badge holders.
- Cabinet welcomed the balanced approach to Gretton Court.

**RESOLVED**

Cabinet

- 1) **APPROVED** the proposed fees and charges for 2025-26 as outlined in the attached appendices A-E with the exception of those relating to catering at Gretton Court which are delegated to the Director for Housing and

Communities in consultation with the Director for Corporate Services and Portfolio Holder for Housing, Leisure and Landlord Services.

- 2) **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** to the Director for Growth and Regeneration (or the Director of Place and Prosperity once commenced) to undertake the necessary legal steps to finalise the introduction of the updated car parking charges to take effect as soon as practically possible.

(Key decision)

*Reason for recommendations*

*To agree changes to the Council's fees and charges to operate from 1st April 2025 with the exception of car parking which is to be applied as soon as practically possible once the relevant legal and practical steps have been undertaken.*

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### **ACQUISITION OF AFFORDABLE HOMES TO SPEND RIGHT TO BUY RECEIPTS 2024-25**

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services, Councillor Allnatt, introduced the report. Councillor Allnatt moved the recommendations and Councillor Glancy seconded the motion.

Members had no comments to add.

### **RESOLVED**

Cabinet

- 1) **APPROVED** the purchase of two houses from a new housing development in Melton.
- 2) **NOTED** the intention to progress the purchase of eight new houses from the development in Marquis Gardens, Old Dalby.
- 3) **NOTED** that in progressing these purchases, the Council will have achieved its Right to Buy receipt spending requirements up to 2027/28.

(Key decision)

*Reasons for recommendations*

*Delivering new council homes with RTB receipts will go towards meeting the corporate priority of providing high quality council homes and landlord services.*

*Increasing the Council's stock of new homes will help to address the shortage of affordable homes in the Borough and reduce the number of applicants on the register for council housing.*

*The Government imposes deadlines for spending RTB receipts. A certain amount of funds has to be spent each financial year in order to avoid receipts being sent back to the Treasury with an interest penalty. The purchase of these homes will ensure that RTB receipts are spent on time.*

*The proposed acquisitions are affordable to the Housing Revenue Account. There is a budget allocated within the Council's capital programme for the acquisition / development of new affordable homes.*

*The delivery of the new homes will be managed within existing staff resources.*

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### **PLANNING PRODUCTIVITY PLAN**

The Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services, Councillor Glancy, introduced the report. Councillor Glancy moved the recommendations and Councillor Allnatt seconded the motion.

During the debate the following comments were made:

- It was noted that the money which will be drawn from reserves can be used over the course of this or the next financial year.
- Cabinet recognised that some details can be finalised when the board is established
- Members noted that any Constitutional changes that would need to be undertaken would have to follow the usual process before implemented.
- Cabinet recognised that this was a big piece of work and thanked all those involved.
- The Chair of the Planning Committee was invited to speak and thanked the efforts of officers and the Cabinet to bring forward the planning productivity plan.

### **RESOLVED**

Cabinet

- 1) **RECOGNISED** the importance of the service to the Council and residents of the Borough, and the significant demand and pressure on the service at present.
- 2) **NOTED** the paper and the need for improvements in the planning process and **APPROVES** the establishment of a Planning Productivity Plan (PPP), with a Project Oversight Board established to include the relevant Portfolio Holder and Chair of the Planning Committee to maintain effective oversight on progress (terms of reference to be agreed with the Leader, and aforementioned members).
- 3) **NOTED** any proposed changes to procedure rules arising from workstream 6 would follow the normal process for constitutional changes.
- 4) **DELEGATED AUTHORITY** to the Interim Director for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Director for Corporate Services to approve a supplementary estimate of up to £150,000 to the Growth and Regeneration budget from the Regeneration and Innovation Reserve.

(Key decision)

*Reasons for recommendations*

*The planning service is under pressure and that is impacting on its reputation and its ability to turn applications in a timely manner.*

*Changes are required to overcome the issues that are causing backlogs of planning applications and damaging the reputation of the service, and council, as a result. If these issues are not resolved the planning service could fail and that would result in government intervention. If this happens, Melton Borough Council would lose the ability to both receive and determine planning applications and would not receive the income from them.*

*This is a standard improvement project that will require process, people and technology changes and will involve staff and members in order to improve customer service. It cannot be delivered without additional funding for project management, releasing capacity to deliver the project and the training, development and technology improvements required to improve the service.*

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**BIODIVERSITY DUTY FIRST CONSIDERATION**

The Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services, Councillor Glancy, introduced the report. Glancy moved the recommendation and Allnatt seconded the motion.

During the debate the following comments were made:

- Cabinet noted that they have previously highlighted the importance of local green space and that the plan is welcomed.

**RESOLVED**

Cabinet **NOTED** the contents of the report and approves the First Consideration Report at Appendix A.

(Key decision)

*Reason for recommendation*

*To enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty in accordance with the Environment Act 2021 to make its First Consideration in respect of biodiversity.*

The meeting closed at: 5.22 pm

Chair