

DATE: 02 April 2024  
MY REF: Scrutiny Commission  
YOUR REF:  
CONTACT: Democratic Services  
TEL NO: 0116 272 7640  
EMAIL: [committees@blaby.gov.uk](mailto:committees@blaby.gov.uk)

**To Members of the Scrutiny Commission**

Cllr. Nick Brown (Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)  
Cllr. Roy Denney (Vice-Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)

Cllr. Nick Chapman  
Cllr. Luke Cousin  
Cllr. Susan Findlay


Cllr. Janet Forey  
Cllr. Antony Moseley  
Cllr. Ande Savage

Cllr. Tracey Shepherd  
Cllr. Matt Tomeo  
Cllr. Neil Wright

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMISSION** will be held in the Council Chamber on **WEDNESDAY, 10 APRIL 2024 at 5.30 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business and your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully



**Louisa Horton**  
**Monitoring Officer**



## **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Disclosures of Interests from Members  
To receive disclosures of interests from Members (ie. The existence and the nature of those interests in respect of items on this agenda).
3. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)  
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2024 (enclosed).
4. Cabinet Executive response to Scrutiny Recommendations: Administrations 2024-25  
Draft Budget Proposals (Pages 7 - 12)  
To consider the report of the Senior Democratic Services Officer (enclosed).
5. Update on Transformation  
Members will receive a presentation from the Transformation & Projects Service Manager and the Transformation & ICT Group Manager.
6. Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 13 - 16)
7. Consideration of Forward Plan Items (Pages 17 - 20)
8. Further Actions for Scrutiny arising from Meeting

## **SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

**WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2024**

### **Present:-**

Cllr. Nick Brown (Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)  
Cllr. Roy Denney (Vice-Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)

Cllr. Nick Chapman  
Cllr. Janet Forey  
Cllr. Antony Moseley

Cllr. Ande Savage  
Cllr. Tracey Shepherd  
Cllr. Matt Tomeo

Cllr. Neil Wright

### **Officers present:-**

Louisa Horton	- Executive Director - Communities and Monitoring Officer
Lisa Boland	- Transformation Group Manager
Annette Groark	- HR Service Manager
Katie Brooman	- Elections and Governance Manager
Sandeep Tiensa	- Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Nicole Cramp	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Isaac Thomas	- Democracy Support Officer

### **Apologies:-**

Cllr. Luke Cousin and Cllr. Susan Findlay

#### **1. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS**

No disclosures were received.

#### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023, as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

### 3. **GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2023**

Considered – Report of the HR Service Manager.

The HR Service Manager provided an overview of the Gender Pay Gap at Blaby District Council for the year to the 31 March 2023 and invited Members to ask any questions.

Members discussed the following:

- The impact of length of service on officer's pay scales and its differential impact on the gender pay gap, e.g. women staying longer in post than men.
- Comparisons to national trends, e.g. more females working part time than full time and more female carers.
- Which policies are encouraging women to stay longer in post than men? The HR Service Manager discussed factors such as locality, flexible working (giving more opportunity to carers) and the maternity policy.
- Cllr. Tracey Shepherd asked whether Blaby District Council has a menopause policy? The HR Service Manager responded that Blaby does not have a direct menopause policy, but there is an active network providing menopause support.

### 4. **SCRUTINY OF THE ADMINISTRATIONS DRAFT 2024/25 BUDGET PROPOSALS**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer.

Members had no further amendments to make to the report. The Chair, Cllr. Nick Brown thanked all Members that were involved in the work.

#### **DECISION**

That the report and Statement on the Administrations 2024-25 Draft Budget Proposals for submission to Cabinet Executive on 26 February 2024 be approved.

Reason:

Scrutiny Commission has a mandate to scrutinise the Administration's draft budget proposals and make recommendations to Cabinet which it is obliged to consider before making final recommendations on the Budget to Council.

## **5. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer updated Members on several upcoming Scrutiny groups and informed Members that they would receive invitations to the following:

- HR Review Task & Finish Group
- Contaminated Land Working Group
- Net Zero by 2050 Working Group
- iPlan Working Group

Members accepted the items on the Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24 and no additional actions were proposed.

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF FORWARD PLAN ITEMS**

No items were raised for further information or examination.

## **7. FURTHER ACTIONS FOR SCRUTINY ARISING FROM MEETING**

Cllr. Antony Moseley asked whether Scrutiny would examine the feedback to the Council's recent survey on the Council Tax increase. Members agreed that Scrutiny would examine the outcome should the consultation feedback highlight any concerns.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 5.51 P.M.**

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**Blaby District Council  
Scrutiny Commission**

**Date of Meeting** 10 April 2024  
**Title of Report** **Cabinet Executive Response to Scrutiny  
Recommendations: Administrations 2024-25 Draft  
Budget Proposals**  
**Report Author:** Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer

**1. What is this report about?**

- 1.1 To consider Cabinet Executive's response to scrutiny recommendations following the Administrations 2024-25 Draft Budget Proposals Working Group review.

**2. Recommendation(s) to Scrutiny Commission**

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Commission considers Cabinet Executive's response.

**3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended**

- 3.1 As set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, it is the duty of the Executive to respond to Scrutiny reports and recommendations.

**4. Matters to consider**

4.1 Background

The Scrutiny Commission submitted recommendations to Cabinet Executive on 26 February 2024.

In accordance with the provisions of Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Cabinet Executive is required within 2 months of receipt of the Scrutiny report/recommendations to:

- Consider the report;
- Respond by identifying the action/s proposed in the light of it;
- Publish its response; and
- If Scrutiny has copied the report to a Member, the response is to be provided to the Member.

#### 4.2 Proposal(s)

Appendix A to this report sets out Cabinet Executive's response including proposed action/s and the Blaby District Council Officer responsible for the action/s approved at the Cabinet Executive meeting held on 18 March 2024.

#### 4.3 Relevant Consultations

Relevant Cabinet Executive Portfolio Holders and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

#### 4.4 Significant Issues

None.

### 5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

5.1 Not applicable.

### 6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1 Not applicable.

### 7. Other options considered

7.1 There are no other options as this is a legal requirement set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

### 8. Other significant issues

8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

### 9. Appendix

9.1 APPENDIX A – Cabinet Executive response to Scrutiny Recommendations

### 10. Background paper(s)

Scrutiny Commission report to [Cabinet Executive 26 February 2024](#)

### 11. Report author's contact details

Sandeep Tienas Senior Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer  
Sandeep.Tienas@blaby.gov.uk 0116 272 7640



## BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

## Cabinet Executive Response to Scrutiny Recommendations on the Administrations 2024-25 Draft Budget Proposals

Date submitted to Cabinet Executive: 26th February 2024

Cabinet Member responsible for compliance with notice of requirement: Cllr Maggie Wright

	Recommendation	Agreed YES/N O/IN PART	Cabinet Response including proposed action	Responsible Officer	Action by date
<b>R1</b>	Scrutiny would be supportive of a 2.99% increase given the current financial uncertainty that local authorities face.	Yes	Cabinet welcome the support of Scrutiny to increase Council Tax by 2.99%.	Executive Director (S151)	March 2024
<b>R2</b>	Scrutiny would welcome an update in 6 months on the levels of demand for Council Tax Support and Discretionary Housing Payments provided or any other similar support scheme.	Yes	Cabinet welcomes the interest shown by Scrutiny of the support that is given to Blaby residents.	Finance Group Manager	October 2024
<b>R3</b>	Scrutiny asks that Cabinet considers whether it is appropriate to hold a vacancy savings provision which is based on unfilled positions.	No	Cabinet considers the holding of a vacancy provision to be the most appropriate manner in which to reflect a budget which is not overstated. To be clear, the provision is not a target figure	N/A	N/A

	Recommendation	Agreed YES/N O/IN PART	Cabinet Response including proposed action	Responsible Officer	Action by date
			for the Council to achieve and vacancies will be filled in the normal manner.		
<b>R4</b>	That Cabinet Executive continues to retain its investments and supports diversification in the Council's investments.	Yes	It is Cabinet's intention to retain the investment in the property fund, however this will be dependent upon the continuation of the Lothbury Property Fund. An update will be provided within the Quarterly Treasury Reporting to Council. Cabinet will continue to consider investment opportunities as part of the Council's Commercial Strategy.	Executive Director (S151) & Finance Group Manager	In line with Qtrly report
<b>R5</b>	That Scrutiny be notified should a partner withdraw from the Lightbulb service.	Yes	Cabinet welcomes the interest in the Lightbulb service and will notify Scrutiny if a partner should withdraw.	Group Manager Environmental Health, Housing and Communities	When applicable
<b>R6</b>	Scrutiny requests that the financial impact on Blaby be provided, if one or more partners withdraw their funding from the Lightbulb Partnership.	Yes	Cabinet welcomes the interest in the Lightbulb service and will provide information relating to the financial impact should one or more partners withdraw.	Group Manager Environmental Health, Housing and Communities	When applicable

	Recommendation	Agreed YES/ O/ IN PART	Cabinet Response including proposed action	Responsible Officer	Action by date
<b>R7</b>	That a breakdown of Blaby's contribution to Lightbulb, compared to other partner authorities be provided.	Yes	Information relating to the contributions made by Blaby and partner authorities will be provided.	Group Manager Environmental Health, Housing and Communities	TBC
<b>R8</b>	That the new offer in terms of sport and physical activity be provided to Scrutiny, highlighting what changes have been made.	Yes	Cabinet welcomes Scrutiny's interest in the changes that may become necessary with reduced funding for the provision of sport and physical activity.	Group Manager of Assets and Major Projects	TBC
<b>R9</b>	In order to mitigate some of the costs associated with HVO, Scrutiny recommends that the Cabinet Executive explores increased storage capacity of HVO at the depot.	No	The Council's fuel capacity is already considerable and Cabinet does not feel it appropriate to retain levels above the current levels.	N/A	N/A
<b>R10</b>	Scrutiny recommends that should demand on the service increase further, resource be increased in the Housing Team to support vulnerable residents.	Yes	Demand on services provided to vulnerable residents are monitored by officers in order that Cabinet can consider increasing resource should it be required. Note: the Housing Team also deal with residents that may not be defined under the term vulnerable.	N/A	N/A

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## 2023/24 Scrutiny Work Programme

Item	Detail	Attendance required	Timescale	Forum/Progress
<b>'Quick wins'</b>				
Retail Strategy	To explore current use of existing and future retail spaces. Are we using them in the most appropriate way?	Tracy Gaskin	20 <sup>th</sup> September	Explored as part of the Economic Development Strategy at Scrutiny Commission – <b>Complete.</b>
The Council's approach to Graffiti & Littering	Is there more that the council can do to ensure a quick resolution to this? Including the removal of graffiti from privately owned land?	Caroline Harbour Phil Fasham	Tues 24 <sup>th</sup> October	Task & Finish 1 meeting  Requires an additional meeting to consider draft FPN levels and draft policy. (Apr 2024 – TBC)
Commercial Strategy	To review our approach.	Justin Henry and Sarah Pennelli	Tues 12 December	Task & Finish 1 meeting <b>Complete.</b>
<b>High Priority Areas</b>				
Parks and Open Spaces Strategy	To review the 11 objectives set out in the Parks & Open Spaces Strategy.	Paul Coates Pete Williams Kayleigh Waight Cllr. Nigel Grundy	Monday 4 December 2023	Task & Finish 1 meeting  Requires an additional meeting to review which objectives have been achieved from the Strategy. (December 2024 – TBC)
Budget Scrutiny process	Annual scrutiny of budgets.	Sarah Pennelli, Portfolio Holders	10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> January	All non-executive Members <b>Complete - pending response from Cabinet Executive.</b>
The Council's plans for historic waste sites	The scope of what we have, how big is the potential danger?  Information on Contaminated Land owned by the Council as well as sites that consume the Council's time and effort (even if the Council does not have direct liability). What do we know so far about these sites? E.g.	Anna Farish and Contaminated Land Officer	Wednesday 18 September (Brooks Room)	Task and Finish

Item	Detail	Attendance required	Timescale	Forum/Progress
	their location, are they being monitored?			
HR Review	To continue and 'wrap-up' the commission's work on current HR provision at The Council.		Wednesday 24 April (Park Room)	Task & Finish 2 meetings
Net Zero by 2050 target  To incorporate the Parks & Open Spaces /Footpath strategies.	Which projects are contributing to our target? What is the budget and are we thinking of dropping any projects?  Is our target realistic? Can we do more to achieve it?  Have we understood all potential challenges, what gaps are there?  Potential area for exploration at a subsequent meeting: Our community leadership role e.g. supporting parish councils.	Anna Farish Nick Fear Caroline Harbour  Jill Stevenson (to potentially come to later meetings)	Wednesday 26 June 2024 (Brooks Room)	Working Group
<b>Medium Priority Areas</b>				
iPlan Workshop (Corporate Measures)	To examine areas of concern, trends and poor performance through iPlan – the Council's Corporate Measures system.	Luke Clements	<b>Confirmed:</b>  Tuesday 2 July 2024 (Brooks Room)  Thursday 26 September 2024 (Brooks Room)	All Commission Members as a Working Group to log into iPlan  21 November 2023 – Members were successful in logging into iPlan. Queries were raised on P1 Measures which have now been added onto a spreadsheet for senior officers to respond to. One of the key areas raised was that you could not easily find the underperforming areas.  6 March 2024 – Members reviewed the responses from SLT from queries raised at

Item	Detail	Attendance required	Timescale	Forum/Progress
				the previous meeting. Members discussed and reviewed the current P1 Measures. Members reviewed evidence and delivery of the Blaby Corporate Plan Actions.
Homelessness & Social Housing	How many families have been impacted during this time (homelessness numbers)? Impact on the budget and the officers administering. Has it impacted on the resource needed? Will the team be able to continue absorbing the demand? Can we keep delivering our service? Other options, e.g. partnerships?	TBC	Scrutiny Commission 11 September 2024	This item to be deferred to the 24/25 Work Programme.
<b>New: Active Travel Strategy and LCWIP</b>	Review of the Strategy	Phill Turner	Task & Finish/ Working Group (Date TBC)	
Transforming Blaby Together' Strategy	Following completion of the strategy, commission to receive a progress update on the implementation of action plans.  It is expected that this work will then transition to a working group to examine the impact of transformation on services, with respective services providing 'evidence' to scrutiny	Lisa Boland	<b>Confirmed</b>  10 April	Scrutiny Commission, and then 2/3 working groups.
New Waste Collection Scheme	Scrutiny to feed into and examine the Council's proposed approach.	Paul Coates	Awaiting further Government guidance before timelines can be established.	TBC

Item	Detail	Attendance required	Timescale	Forum/Progress
Low Priority Areas				
Flood Resilience	To be looked at depending on the progress of higher priority issues.			
2023/24 Net Zero Target	To be looked at depending on the progress of higher priority issues.			
Scrutiny of Scrutiny	Only to be looked at after the new Scrutiny Commission has had sufficient opportunity to progress work, and it is still felt appropriate.			

### **Items for 2024/25 Work Programme**

Item	Detail	Attendance required	Timescale	Forum/Progress
Corporate Parenting Responsibilities	To assess the Council's responsibility in this area.	TBC	Information paper at Scrutiny Commission on 12 June 2024	
Lightbulb	That the lightbulb delivery document be brought to Scrutiny in 6 months to review the costs of the service. This will also incorporate the recommendations from the budget work.		September 2024	
Homelessness & Social Housing	How many families have been impacted during this time (homelessness numbers)?		Homelessness & Social Housing	How many families have been impacted during this time (homelessness numbers)?
Transformation	See 23/24 work programme			



**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
Forward Plan  
FOR THE PERIOD: March 2024**

**What is the Plan?**

It is a list of the Key Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet Executive during the period referred to above. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare this document, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended). The Plan is published 28 clear days before a meeting of Cabinet Executive is to be held. The Plan is available to view at the Council's main offices in Narborough, or on the Council's website, [www.blaby.gov.uk](http://www.blaby.gov.uk).

**What is a Key Decision?**

Definition of a key decision as detailed in Part 2 Article 11 of the Council's Constitution:

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- (i) Is, in value, worth more than £50,000 of the annual revenue budget for the service or function or of the capital allocation to the scheme concerned, or
- (ii) Has a significant impact because it either:
  - Affects individuals or organisations outside the District;
  - Affects individuals or organisations in more than one Ward; or
  - Will have a long term (more than 5 year) or permanent effect on the Council or District
- (iii) Involves significant changes to the policy and budget framework (involves the adoption or amendment of a policy or strategy or to the budgets which the Executive has the power to adopt).

**Who makes Key Decisions?**

Under the Council's constitution, Key Decisions are made by:

- Cabinet Executive
- The Leader or Deputy Leader (in matters of urgency only)
- Individual officers acting under delegated powers. (it is rare for any decision delegated to an officer to be a Key Decision)

**Are only Key Decisions published on the Plan?**

The Council has a statutory obligation to publish Key Decisions in the Plan. However, the Council has voluntarily decided to list non-key Cabinet Executive and Council decisions as well. To clarify matters, Key Decisions will be identified on the Plan with a Yes, non-key decisions with a No.

## What does the List tell me?

The List gives information about:

- Upcoming Key and Non-Key Decisions (identified by **Yes** or **No** next to them)
- Whether the decision will be made in public or private.
- When decisions are likely to be made.
- Who will make these decisions.
- Who you can contact for further information.

## Who are the members of the Cabinet Executive?

The members of the Cabinet Executive and their areas of responsibility are:

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| • Cllr. Terry Richardson | Leader of the Council & Cabinet Executive                    |
| • Cllr. Maggie Wright    | Deputy Leader and Finance, People & Performance              |
| • Cllr. Nigel Grundy     | Neighbourhood Services & Assets                              |
| • Cllr. Les Phillimore   | Housing, Community & Environmental Services                  |
| • Cllr. Ben Taylor       | Planning Delivery and Enforcement & Corporate Transformation |

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## What is the role of Overview and Scrutiny?

The Council's Scrutiny Commission's role is to contribute to the development of Council policies, scrutinise decisions of the Cabinet Executive and hold them to account and to consider any matter affecting Blaby District or its citizens. Dates of these meetings can be found on the Council's website.

## Who do I contact, and how?

Each entry on the Plan indicates the names of the people to contact about that item. They can be contacted via the switchboard on 0116 275 0555.

## Request to view Background Papers

Should you wish to request copies or extracts of any documents listed under the column entitled 'Background Papers', for items which are considered to be Key Decisions, please contact Democratic Services at, Blaby District Council, Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire, LE19 2EP. Please note that copies or extracts of documents which contain information of a confidential or exempt nature cannot be disclosed to the public.

## Submission of Additional Documents

Additional documents which are deemed relevant to a particular Key Decision item may be submitted to the Cabinet Executive for consideration. Copies of such documents may also be requested under the same process for requesting to view Background Papers.

## Confidential and Exempt Information

This list may also include items to be considered which contain confidential or exempt information, but will not disclose any detail of a confidential or exempt nature. Such items will be identified with '(Exempt)' in the report title.

<b><u>Report Title</u> and Expected Decision</b>	<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Decision Maker</b>	<b>Date of Decision</b>	<b>Key Decision?</b>	<b>Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer</b>	<b>Decision to be taken in public or private session?</b>
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### **March 2024**

<u>UK Shared Prosperity Fund</u>  Consideration of the UKSPF Year 3 proposed programme	None	Cabinet Executive	18 March 2024	No	8 March 2024  Councillor Terry Richardson  Cat Hartley, Planning & Strategic Growth Group Manager	Public
<u>Legal Services Structure</u>  Structure of the Legal Services Team within Corporate Services	None	Cabinet Executive	18 March 2024	No	8 March 2024  Councillor Terry Richardson  Louisa Horton, Executive Director - Communities and Monitoring Officer	Public

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