

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

WEDNESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2025

Present:-

Cllr. Nick Brown (Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)
Cllr. Neil Wright (Vice-Chairman - Scrutiny Commissioner)

Cllr. Stuart Coar
Cllr. Luke Cousin
Cllr. Susan Findlay

Cllr. Janet Forey
Cllr. Antony Moseley
Cllr. Matt Tomeo

Cllr. Maggie Wright

Officers present:-

Marc Greenwood	- Executive Director - Place
Gemma Dennis	- Corporate Services Group Manager
Luke Raddon-Jackson	- Assets & Major Projects Group Manager
Tracy Gaskin	- Health, Leisure and Tourism Service Manager
Faye Gardiner	- Physical Activity and Health Team Leader
Sandeep Tiensa	- Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Avisa Birchenough	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Nicole Cramp	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

Invitees:-

Councillor Nick Chapman, Health, Community and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

Apologies:-

Cllr. Royston Bayliss, Cllr. Adrian Clifford, Cllr. Roy Denney and
Cllr. Tracey Shepherd

122. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

No disclosures were received.

123. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2025 as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

124. REVIEW OF THE RIPA POLICY 2025

Considered – Report of the Corporate Services Group Manager.

DECISION

That the annual RIPA report be accepted.

Reason:

Whilst the Council does not actively make use of its RIPA powers as a rule, it is important that members are aware of RIPA, the policy and its usage, or otherwise.

125. OVERVIEW OF THE HEALTH AND LEISURE SERVICES

Considered – Presentation from the Health, Leisure and Tourism Service.

The Chairman, Cllr. Nick Brown welcomed Cllr. Nick Chapman - Health, Community and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Executive Director – Place, Assets and Major Projects Group Manager, Health, Leisure and Tourism Manager and the Physical Activity and Health Team Leader to the meeting.

Officers covered the following key points from their presentation:

- Strategic themes:
Keeping you safe and healthy: Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2026, Playing Pitch Strategy, Built Facilities Strategy, delivery of Leisure centre contract, Active Travel Strategy, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and raising awareness of mental health services.
Growing and supporting our economy: delivery of actions in Tourism Growth Plan 2025-2030.
Enabling our communities and supporting our vulnerable residents: increasing the number of people accessing A Place to Grow.
- Active Blaby – has seen a growth in the number of attendees, number of programmes delivered and an increase the number of referrals. £137,903 of external funding secured. 1,173 referrals received – the highest in the County. Access to classes for the over 65's has seen a reduction in the number of hospital admissions due to falls and has seen a wider increase in social care savings.
- Health and Wellbeing – obesity project supporting residents to make healthy lifestyle choices has received 40 referrals in the first 2 weeks. Monthly fibroscans have been held at the council offices since May, seeing 61 patients and 32 staff.
- A Place to Grow – has seen 961 attendances with 86 volunteers from April-October 2025. Income has been generated from January 2025 from hiring of plots and private hire. It also supports the Armed Forces and veterans who use the site frequently.
- Leisure Contract and wider offer – current leisure centre contract ends 2029. Enderby Gym is being expanded from October to December reopening to the public on 5 January.
- Tourism – visitor numbers have increased from 2.70m (2023) to 2.77m (2024). Employment figures from 2,058 (2023) to 2,071 (2024). Over the summer the Victory show attracted over 18,000 visitors. The Ice House held 7 tours including sold out dates. The Visit Blaby website has seen a 50% increase from June to August with over 2000 views of the event section.
- Active Travel – 3 new walking and cycling routes. The active travel survey received 186 responses and the active travel working group has been established with staff from 5 different departments.
- Challenges:

- Local Government funding for Health, Leisure and Tourism is challenging.
- At times it's necessary to seek funding from multiple sources, leading to complexity.
- Exploring options for ongoing resource requirements.
- Challenges remain with getting the public active and maintaining healthy lifestyles.
- BDC leisure assets across the district are aging and will require upgrades.
- Community facilities have not received sufficient funding either
- Opportunities:
 - Lubbesthorpe leisure offer to be developed.
 - Opportunities to maximise commercial revenue (O&W contract) and access alternative funding routes for investment (s106) are demonstrating a sustainable delivery model.
 - Working closely with partners across health, local government, community and voluntary sector and progress will continue to be made.
 - Identifying, and bidding for, external funding to improve facilities.
 - Working closely with partners to enable them to access support to improve facilities. These include the Blaby Community Grant scheme and external grant funding routes.

Scrutiny was asked if there were any areas of activity the service team should consider engaging with to further improve impact for residents?

Scrutiny responded with the following comments:

- Consideration should be given to S.106 grants being spent in the ward where the planning application was located. Examples were provided of playing pitches.
- Traffic and congestion around the leisure centre.
- Updating noticeboards in the rural areas and increasing communications.
- Increasing work with young people including scouts and girl guides and youth clubs.
- Cycle training in rural areas.
- Utilising the green spaces in Lubbesthorpe (e.g. with playing pitches).
- Highlighting any activities held at the leisure centre for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Increasing the opening times of A Place to Grow.
- Working with young people to bring about an awareness of vaping.
- Working with local groups who support male mental health.
- Increased work with Parish Council – they would benefit from the presentation.

Members and officers agreed that it was important to leave a legacy to be proud of, especially considering the impact of Local Government Reorganisation. Scrutiny thanked the Health, Leisure and Tourism service for their detailed and comprehensive presentation.

Cllr. Stuart Coar left the meeting during consideration of the item and did not return.

DECISION

That the presentation and associated actions be accepted.

Reason:

Scrutiny was provided with a comprehensive overview of the Health, Leisure and Tourism Service.

126. CABINET EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS: REVIEW INTO RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF

Considered – report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer, presented by Cllr. Neil Wright – Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Commission and Chairman of the Scrutiny Review into Recruitment and Retention of Staff.

Cllr. Neil Wright expressed his disappointment at the response provided by Cabinet Executive. Although many of the recommendations had been accepted, Cllr Wright expected that many of the recommendations should have an update on delivery against the actions.

It was noted that there had been no movement in securing a date for Phase 2 of the HR work.

It was agreed that a senior officer would respond to the response at the next Scrutiny Commissioners meeting.

DECISION

That Senior Officers provide an update on the response to Scrutiny recommendations at the next Scrutiny Commissioners meeting.

Reason:

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.

127. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Members accepted the 25/26 Scrutiny Work Programme.

The Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer provided the following update:

- Lightbulb – change of meeting date from 26 November to 24 November.
- Capital Programme meeting on 2 December.
- Local Police meeting on 9 December.

128. CONSIDERATION OF FORWARD PLAN ITEMS

No items were raised for further information or examination.

129. FURTHER ACTIONS FOR SCRUTINY ARISING FROM MEETING

There were no further actions arising from the meeting.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.50 P.M.