

DATE:
MY REF:
YOUR REF:
CONTACT:
TEL NO:
EMAIL:

1 September 2026
Scrutiny Commission

Democratic Services
0116 272 7640
committees@blaby.gov.uk

To Members of the Scrutiny Commission

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

Cllr. Royston Bayliss
Cllr. Lee Breckon JP
Cllr. Luke Cousin
Cllr. Roy Denney

Cllr. Janet Forey
Cllr. Antony Moseley
Cllr. Tracey Shepherd
Cllr. Dillan Shikotra

Cllr. Matt Tomeo
Cllr. Jane Wolfe
Cllr. Maggie Wright

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMISSION** will be held in the Council Chamber on **WEDNESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2026** at **5.30 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business and your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully



Gemma Dennis
Corporate Services Group Manager & 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 - 8)
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2026 (enclosed).
4. State of the Blaby District
Members will receive the 'State of the Blaby District' update from the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council Cllr. Ben Taylor (To follow).
5. Scrutiny Work Programme
To consider the 2026/27 Work Programme (To follow).
6. Consideration of Forward Plan Items (Pages 9 - 18)
7. Further Actions for Scrutiny arising from Meeting

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

WEDNESDAY, 17 JUNE 2026

Present:-

Cllr. Nick Brown (Chair)

Cllr. Luke Cousin

Cllr. Antony Moseley

Cllr. Jane Wolfe

Substitutes:-

Cllr. Shabbir Aslam (In place of Cllr. Tracey Shepherd)

Officers present:-

Louisa Horton	- Executive Director - Communities
Caroline Harbour	- Assistant Director - Environmental Health, Housing & Community Services
Rebecca Holcroft	- Community Services Manager
Ian Jones	- Housing Services Manager
Charlie Baylis	- Homelessness Team Leader
Remy Slaney	- Tenancy Relations Officer
Sandeep Tiensa	- Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer
Avisa Birchenough	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Nicole Evans	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

Invitees:-

Councillor Susan Findlay, Homelessness, Housing & Community Safety Portfolio Holder

Apologies:-

Cllr. Neil Wright, Cllr. Royston Bayliss, Cllr. Lee Breckon JP, Cllr. Roy Denney, Cllr. Janet Forey, Cllr. Tracey Shepherd, Cllr. Dillan Shikotra, Cllr. Matt Tomeo and Cllr. Maggie Wright

35. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr. Shabbir Aslam - Item 3 – Renters’ Rights Act

Nature of Interest - Non-registerable interest

Extent of Interest - Cllr Aslam is a landlord.

Cllr. Antony Moseley - Item 3 – Renters’ Rights Act

Nature of Interest - Non-registerable interest

Extent of Interest - Cllr Moseley is a landlord.

36. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2026 as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

37. RENTER'S RIGHTS ACT

The Chair, Cllr. Nick Brown welcomed Officers and the portfolio holder, Cllr. Susan Findlay to the meeting.

Officers provided an overview of the Renters' Rights Act 2025, its impact on the Council, local landlords, tenants and how it will be implemented.

When discussing the impacts on the Council, the following key points were made:

- Increased casework and investigations
- Enforce compliance through civil penalties
- Respond to complaints including at tribunal level
- Gather and report statutory data returns (which are increasing from 25 fields to 57)
- Administer the national Private Rented Sector (PRS) database locally
- Training needs for officers
- Changes to business systems and policy reviews

Impacts on landlords are:

- More formal tenancy and documentation requirements
- Clear reasons for gaining possession
- Consistent lettings and rent rise practice across the sector
- Mandatory registration on national database
- Exposure to civil penalties
- Changes to possession and letting practices

Impacts on tenants are:

- Greater security of tenure
- Flexibility to give notice at any time
- Ability to request pets
- Challenge affordability and rent rises above market value
- Fair lettings practices
- Greater confidence in reporting housing conditions and raising concerns about poor landlord or property practice.

Members were updated on next steps that officers need to take to ensure the new regulations are a success, including updating systems, identifying private rented properties of which there is over 5,400 in the District. Members considered the finance model and were informed that it would be partly self-funded, and through the PRS database. Civil penalties were not intended to be the main funding model.

Members considered the risks which included:

- Initial uncertainty and misunderstanding in the landlord community
- High case volumes (though this is not evident yet)
- Debt recovery challenges

It was noted positively that Blaby District did not have the same issues with private sector landlords as larger cities did. Members were informed of the Landlord Forum being hosted by the Council on 23 June to initiate early discussions with local landlords.

Scrutiny Members were keen to consider performance data and look forward to being kept updated on when data is provided.

Members questioned officers on whether they had seen an increase of evictions before the Act came into force. Officers positively responded that they had seen no such increase, instead there were more procedural queries and queries on how to end a tenancy.

Scrutiny were informed of a cabinet report being prepared for consideration on 30 June, which would request extra resource and describe the team structure.

The Chair, Cllr. Nick Brown thanked the Officers for providing a comprehensive overview of the new reforms.

DECISIONS

1. That Scrutiny be provided with an update in 12 months on the implications of the Act and learning from officers.
2. That performance measures be added to the Corporate Action Plan and the Council's performance monitoring system, to allow Scrutiny to consider them.
3. That Scrutiny be provided with further information on the statutory returns once they have been completed.

Reasons:

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 is a major reform with significant implications for the Council, landlords and tenants, and the local housing supply and affordability. Scrutiny will continue to monitor the implementation and outcomes as the scheme is rolled out.

38. HOMELESSNESS BRIEFING

The Chair, Cllr. Nick Brown welcomed officers to the meeting, who provided an overview as follows:

- An overview of the national homelessness strategy, which includes:
 1. Long term sustainable change to address the root causes of homelessness
 2. Immediate action to end the use of B&Bs for families and improve temporary accommodation
 3. Transformed accountability – which includes support for councils to have stronger oversight and deliver better outcomes
 4. Shift from crisis to prevention
 5. Halving the number of people experiencing long term rough sleeping
- Members considered the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 key priorities:
 1. Prevent homelessness and reduce the use of temporary accommodation
 2. Increase the supply of affordable housing for both General Needs Households and Vulnerable Groups
 3. Continue to develop partnership work with existing stakeholders and seek to form new innovative partnerships.
 4. Supporting vulnerable households to be independent and self-reliant.

Members considered the initiatives to reduce homelessness costs, which included reducing the use of nightly paid temporary accommodation, increasing the use of council owned/leased accommodation and strengthening prevention and early intervention.

Scrutiny considered the homelessness team resource, where the average caseload was 46 for each case officer, the identified trigger was 40. The households in and cost of temporary accommodation has increased significantly. The pressure on teams had also increased.

Members considered the current owned, leased and temporary accommodation. The current stock includes:

- 12 flats in Glen Parva and 3x2 bed homes in Littlethorpe
- 1x3 bed house, 2x2 bed flat, 1x1 bed flat leased from East Midlands Homes
- 12 units recently leased for singles in Enderby
- Currently in advanced stages to purchase a further 41 units.

The officers provided an overview of current initiatives which included:

- Tenancy Sustainment Officer – providing assistance to households to retain tenancies (through budgeting, applying for welfare benefits, charitable donations, liaison with landlords, and new and existing

- tenants)
- Supported provision for single households with complex needs – e.g. drug/alcohol, mental health needs.
- Pre-tenancy workshops for households in temporary accommodation
- Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (RSAP) – Countywide Housing First Scheme with the Blaby District as the lead authority.
- Rough Sleepers Initiative – Countywide initiative assisting rough sleepers with support and accommodation.

Due to time constraints of the meeting, the Chair, Cllr. Nick Brown deferred the remaining discussion of the item. The meeting had yet to consider financial implications of homelessness and required more time to do so. It was agreed that the Commissioners would discuss a suitable date at their next meeting.

Members placed on record their thanks to the Housing Services Manager for his dedicated service and valuable contribution to the Council over many years. They acknowledged his commitment to supporting residents and improving housing services and extended their best wishes to him for a long and happy retirement when he leaves the Council in August.

DECISION

That the remaining consideration of the item be deferred to a date to be determined by the Scrutiny Commissioners.

Reason:

To allow the Commissioners to examine the financial costs of homelessness in detail.

39. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair, Cllr Nick Brown deferred the Work Programme item to the next meeting to allow Scrutiny Commissioners to meet and finalise the work topics.

40. CONSIDERATION OF FORWARD PLAN ITEMS

No items were raised for further information or examination.

41. FURTHER ACTIONS FOR SCRUTINY ARISING FROM MEETING

There were no further actions arising from the meeting.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7.15 P.M.

**BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL
Forward Plan
FOR THE PERIOD: September 2026 to April 2027**

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.

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:

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|-------------------------|--|--|
| • Cllr. Ben Taylor | Leader of the Council & Cabinet Executive | cldr.ben.taylor@blaby.gov.uk |
| • Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore | Deputy Leader and Finance, People & Transformation | cldr.cheryl.cashmore@blaby.gov.uk |
| • Cllr. Nick Chapman | Health, Community and Economic Development | cldr.nick.chapman@blaby.gov.uk |
| • Cllr. Susan Findlay | Homelessness, Housing & Community Safety | cldr.susan.findlay@blaby.gov.uk |
| • Cllr. Nigel Grundy | Neighbourhood Services & Assets | cldr.nigel.grundy@blaby.gov.uk |
| • Cllr. Mike Shirley | Planning, Strategic Growth and Environment | cldr..mike.shirley@blaby.gov.uk |

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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.

Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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September 2026

<u>Quarter 1 Budget Review 2026/27</u> This report provides Members with an overview of the financial performance against the revenue budget for the quarter ending 30th June 2026.	None	Cabinet Executive	14 September 2026	Yes	4 September 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Joanne Davis, Accountancy Services Manager	Public
<u>Risk Management Strategy 2026-2029</u> This report provides Members with an updated Risk Management Strategy for 2026-2029.	None	Cabinet Executive	14 September 2026	No	4 September 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Sarabjit Khangura, Council Tax Income and Debt Manager	Public
<u>Quarter 1 Treasury Management Update 2026/27</u> This report provides Members with an update on the Council's treasury activities for the quarter ended 30th June 2026, and the economic factors that have affected those activities.	None	Cabinet Executive	14 September 2026	No	4 September 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Katie Hollis, Assistant Director - Finance	Public

Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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<u>Quarter 1 Capital Programme Review 2026/27</u> This report provides Members an update on expenditure against the Capital Programme for the first quarter of 2026/27.	None	Cabinet Executive Council	14 September 2026 22 September 2026	No	Cabinet Executive: 4 September 2026 Council: 11 September 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Joanne Davis, Accountancy Services Manager	Public
<u>Housing Strategy 2026 - 2031</u> Updated Housing Strategy following 2021 - 2026 edition	None	Council	22 September 2026	No	11 September 2026 Councillor Susan Findlay John Crane, Housing Strategy Team Leader	Public

<u>Report Title</u> and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
<u>Changes to the Planning Scheme of Delegation</u> That changes to the Planning Scheme of Delegation be approved due to the imposition of the National Scheme of Delegation.	None	Council	22 September 2026	No	11 September 2026 Councillor Mike Shirley, and Councillor Ben Taylor Jonathan Hodge, Assistant Director - Planning & Strategic Growth	Public
<u>Constitutional Amendments</u> Amendment to Part 11 Contract Procedure Rules	None	Council	22 September 2026	No	11 September 2026 Councillor Ben Taylor Katie Hollis, Assistant Director - Finance	Public

Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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November 2026

<u>Schedule of Charges 2027/28</u> This report lays out the proposed fees and charges for the financial year commencing 1st April 2027.	None	Cabinet Executive	16 November 2026	No	6 November 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Joanne Davis, Accountancy Services Manager	Public
<u>Corporate Action Plan 2026/27 - Mid Year Progress Report</u> A mid year update on the progress of actions appearing in the annual corporate action plan	Yes	Cabinet Executive	16 November 2026	No	6 November 2026 Councillor Ben Taylor Luke Clements, Business Systems & Information Manager Gemma Dennis, Assistant Director - Corporate Services Louisa Horton, Executive Director - Communities	Public

Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
<u>Quarter 2 Budget Review 2026/27</u> This report provides Members with an overview of the financial performance against the revenue budget for the quarter ending 30th September 2026.	None	Cabinet Executive	16 November 2026	No	6 November 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Joanne Davis, Accountancy Services Manager	Public
<u>Quarter 2 Capital Programme Review 2026/27</u> This report provides Members and update on expenditure against the Capital Programme for the second quarter of 2026/27.	None	Cabinet Executive Council	16 November 2026 24 November 2026	No	Cabinet Executive: 6 November 2026 Council: 13 November 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Joanne Davis, Accountancy Services Manager	Public
<u>Treasury Management Mid Year Monitoring Report 2026/27</u> This report updates the Members on the treasury management activities during the second quarter of 2026/27.	None	Council	24 November 2026	No	13 November 2026 Councillor Cheryl Cashmore Katie Hollis, Assistant Director - Finance	Public

Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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<u>Homelessness Action Plan</u> That the Homelessness Action Plan be approved.	Housing Strategy 2026-2031	Council	24 November 2026	No	13 November 2026 Councillor Susan Findlay Caroline Harbour, Assistant Director - Environmental Health, Housing & Community Services	Public
<u>Submission Local Plan</u> Agreement sought from Council to submit the Regulation 19 Local Plan.	Yes	Council	24 November 2026	No	13 November 2026 Councillor Mike Shirley Vicky Chapman, Development Strategy Manager	Public

<u>Report Title</u> and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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February 2027

<u>Annual Corporate Action Plan 2027/28</u> Submission of the proposed action plan for the annual period to follow from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2028.	No	Council	23 February 2027	No	12 February 2027 Councillor Ben Taylor Gemma Dennis, Assistant Director - Corporate Services Louisa Horton, Executive Director - Communities Luke Clements, Business Systems & Information Manager	Public
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Report Title and Expected Decision	Background Papers	Decision Maker	Date of Decision	Key Decision?	Report Available/ Portfolio Holder/ Contact Officer	Decision to be taken in public or private session?
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April 2027

<u>Annual Corporate Action Plan 2026/27 - Closure Report</u> A closing update of the progress made against actions listed in the plan for 2026/27.	Yes	Council	20 April 2027	No	9 April 2027 Councillor Ben Taylor Luke Clements, Business Systems & Information Manager Gemma Dennis, Assistant Director - Corporate Services Louisa Horton, Executive Director - Communities	Public
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