

CABINET EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Narborough

MONDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2026

Present:

Councillor Ben Taylor (Leader)
Councillor Cheryl Cashmore (Finance, People and Transformation Portfolio Holder)
(Deputy Leader)

Cllr. Nick Chapman	- Health, Community and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
Cllr. Nigel Grundy	- Neighbourhood Services and Assets Portfolio Holder
Cllr. Les Phillimore	- Housing, Community Safety and Environmental Services Portfolio Holder
Cllr. Mike Shirley	- Planning and Strategic Growth Portfolio Holder

Also in attendance:

Cllr. Nick Brown – Chairman of Scrutiny Commission
Cllr. Neil Wright – Vice-Chairman of Scrutiny Commission

Officers present:-

Julia Smith	- Chief Executive
Marc Greenwood	- Executive Director - Place
Sarah Pennelli	- Executive Director - S.151 Officer
Luke Raddon-Jackson	- Assets & Major Projects Group Manager
Katie Hollis	- Finance Group Manager
Caroline Harbour	- Environmental Health, Housing & Community Services Group Manager
Joanne Davis	- Accountancy Services Manager
Shanice Senghor	- Housing Enablement Service Manager
Gemma Dennis	- Corporate Services Group Manager
Avisa Birchenough	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer
Nicole Evans	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

No disclosures were received.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2026, as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

3. PUBLIC SPEAKING PROTOCOL

No disclosures were received.

4. HOUSING ENABLEMENT TEAM CONTRACT EXTENSION

Considered – Report of the Lightbulb Service Manager.

Other Options Considered:

Alternative options include decommissioning or significantly reducing the Housing Enablement Team service. These options were not recommended, as they would result in increased delayed discharges, greater pressure on clinical teams, reduced compliance with statutory duties and poorer outcomes for vulnerable residents.

DECISIONS

1. That a 3-year extension to the Housing Enablement Team (HET) agreement be approved until 31 March 2029.
2. That Blaby District Council continues to act as the host authority for the Housing Enablement Team for the duration of the extension.
3. That delegated authority be given to the Environmental Health, Housing & Community Services Group Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to monitor progress, review delivery methods and make any minor changes to ensure effective delivery.

Reasons:

1. The Housing Enablement Team has become a core component of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland health and care system, supporting safe and timely hospital discharge by resolving housing, tenancy and environmental barriers that would otherwise delay recovery and discharge.
2. A three-year extension provides sufficient time to manage increasing demand and complexity, embed and evaluate service developments and pilots, and align future commissioning decisions with a wider system change, including devolution changes and the proposed local government reorganisation.

5. LIGHTBULB PARTNERSHIP EXTENSION

Considered – Report of the Lightbulb Service Manager.

Other Options Considered:

Delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants is a mandatory function of Blaby District Council, there are a number of options for delivery which are being explored, delivering the service as prior to Lightbulb, would be less holistic and preventative and would provide a poorer service to Blaby residents.

The Leader Cllr Ben Taylor thanked the Lightbulb Team for their hard work with this Partnership acknowledged the excellent service Lightbulb supplies.

DECISIONS

1. That the Lightbulb agreement be extended for a further 24 months.
2. That the current contracts with the other Leicestershire Authorities be extended two years, whilst further work is undertaken to review the delivery model and pilots.
3. That the cost of delivering the Lightbulb Service, as set out in the report for 2025 – 2026 be noted.
4. That delegated authority be given to the Environmental Health, Housing & Community Services Group Manager in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to monitor progress, review delivery methods and make minor necessary changes to ensure effective delivery.

Reasons:

1. The Lightbulb Executive and Operational Boards have agreed that Blaby District Council continue to host the Lightbulb Service and that a continued review of the delivery models be undertaken of the delivery models.
2. Extending the current contractual arrangements with partner authorities ensures continuity across Leicestershire, avoids service disruption, and allows sufficient time to undertake a structured review of the delivery model and existing pilots to inform any future long-term decisions
3. The proposed cost of delivering the Lightbulb Service for 2025–2026 reflects the staffing structure, roles and salary assumptions that have been reviewed and agreed by the Lightbulb Executive and Operational Boards and is necessary to ensure the service remains responsive and compliant.
4. Delegated authority is required to allow the service to respond flexibly to operational needs, emerging pressures while maintaining appropriate oversight through the Group Manager and Portfolio Holder to ensure effective governance and value for money.

6. BLABY DISTRICT BUSINESS GRANT SCHEME

Considered – Report of the Executive Director – Place, presented by the Assets and Major Projects Group Manager.

Other Options Considered:

The alternative option is to not proceed with the establishment of the Business Grant. This would reduce the potential to help micro businesses to grow in Blaby District. Following the pilot of the grant in year 1, investment in future years will be considered.

DECISIONS

1. That the establishment of the Blaby Business Grant scheme for a pilot period of 1 year be approved.
2. That delegated authority is given to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health, Community and Economic Development, to decide if to continue the scheme into year 2 and beyond, in line with year 1 funding allocations.

Reason:

The Blaby Business Grant scheme will enable micro businesses within the District to access small scale funds that will help their businesses to grow, contributing to the Blaby Plan objective of growing and supporting our economy.

7. **SCRUTINY COMMISSION RESPONSE TO THE ADMINISTRATIONS
2026/27 DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS**

Considered – Report of the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer, presented by Cllr. Nick Brown - Chairman of Scrutiny Commission.

Other Options Considered:

No other options were considered. Budget scrutiny is a constitutional requirement.

The Leader, Cllr. Ben Taylor thanked the Scrutiny Commission Chairman for Scrutiny's response to the budget.

DECISION

That Cabinet Executive considers the comments and recommendations of Scrutiny Commission in respect of the draft 2026/27 budget proposals before making final recommendations to Council.

Reason:

Scrutiny Commission has a mandate to examine the Administration's draft budget proposals and submit comments to Cabinet Executive which it is then obliged to consider before making its own final recommendations to Council on Budget proposals. All non-executive members may be involved in this process.

8. QUARTER 3 BUDGET REVIEW 2025/26

Considered – Report of the Accountancy Services Manager.

Other Options Considered:

None.

DECISIONS

1. That the financial performance against the budget for the quarter ending 31st December 2025 be accepted.
2. That the forecast contribution of £240, 689 to General Fund balances be accepted as set out in paragraph 4.6 of the report.
3. That the irrecoverable debts set out in paragraph 4.5 of the report be authorised to be written off.

Reasons:

1. It is good practice that Members have oversight of the Council's financial performance at regular points during the financial year.
2. To recognise movements in the call on reserves and balances to date, along with potential variances in establishment costs and key income streams that may arise between now and the end of the financial year.

9. QUARTER 3 CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW 2025/26

Considered – Report of the Accountancy Services Manager.

Other Options Considered:

None

DECISIONS

1. That the report be accepted.
2. That the latest Capital Programme for 2025/26, totalling £8,305,120, be approved.
3. That the purchase of 6 plots for Temporary Accommodation as detailed in the report be approved.
4. That Council give delegated authority to the Executive Director (S151), in consultation with the Finance, People & Transformation Portfolio Holder, to finalise the details and enter contractual arrangements to purchase the 6 houses for temporary accommodation as detailed in the report.

Reasons:

1. To ensure that the Council has adequate resources in place to meet its capital expenditure commitments.
2. To reflect additions or other changes to the Capital Programme that have occurred in the 3rd quarter of the year.
3. To be in a position to take advantage of LAFH4 funding that is available and secure the plots to provide further temporary accommodation.
4. To enable the contractual arrangements to be entered into that align with the business case to purchase the temporary accommodation without delay.

10. QUARTER 3 TREASURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE 2025/26

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

Other Options Considered:

None, this report is a requirement of the 2025/26 Prudential Code.

DECISION

That the latest position in respect of treasury activities, and the prudential indicators, be accepted.

Reasons:

1. The regulatory framework governing treasury management activities includes a requirement that the Council should, as a minimum, receive quarterly treasury monitoring reports in addition to the forward-looking annual treasury strategy and the backward-looking annual treasury report.
2. This report fulfils the requirement above and incorporates the needs of the Prudential Code to ensure adequate monitoring of capital expenditure plans and the Council's prudential indicators. The treasury strategy and prudential indicators for 2025/26 were contained in the report approved by Council on 25th February 2025.

11. 5 YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2026/27 TO 2030/31

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

Other Options Considered:

None. It is important to produce a 5-year Capital Programme as a minimum requirement of the Capital Strategy, and that the programme aligns with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. That the 5 Year Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2030/31, be approved.
2. That the application of capital resources of £5,066,884 for 2026/27, including a borrowing requirement of £2,627,099 be approved.
3. That the Capital Strategy 2026/27 to 2030/31 be approved.

Reasons:

1. To obtain approval for the proposed level of capital expenditure in 2026/27 and the suggested method of financing that expenditure.
2. To provide a longer-term forecast of capital expend
3. To ensure compliance with the Prudential Code

12. PRUDENTIAL INDICATOR & TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2026/27

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

Other Options Considered:

None. The approval of the Treasury Management Strategy and prudential indicators is a statutory requirement.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. That the capital prudential indicators and limits for 2026/27 to 2030/31 be approved.
2. That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27 and the treasury prudential indicators be approved.
3. That the Investment Strategy for 2026/27 be approved.
4. That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2026/27 be approved.

Reasons:

1. The Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations requires the Council to “have regard to” the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council’s capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable.
2. The Act requires the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. This covers the Council’s criteria for choosing investment counterparties and limiting exposure to the risk of loss.
3. The Act also requires the Council to undertake an annual review of its policy for calculating the minimum revenue provision (MRP) for repayment of external debt.

13. COUNCIL TAX 2026/27

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

Other Options Considered:

None – the setting of the Council Tax Requirement is a statutory requirement, and changes to Council Tax Support and discretionary liability must be approved by Full Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. The Council Tax Requirement for 2026/27 be set at £7,006,913.
2. *The District Council Band D Council Tax is set at £200.62, reflecting an increase of 2.99% (£5.83), all other bands being determined in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended.
3. The precepts and Band D Council Tax for Leicestershire County Council**, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), the Combined Fire Authority, and the various Parish Councils within the District, be determined as set out in the following report, with all other bands being determined in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended.

*Recommendation 2 is subject to consideration of feedback following the end of the public consultation period at midnight on Monday 16th February 2026.

****Subject to the meeting of Leicestershire County Council to be held on 18th February 2026.**

Reason:

The Council is statutorily required to determine its own Council Tax Requirement and to determine the Council Tax for the 2026/27 financial year, after considering precepts set by the other preceptors.

14. GENERAL FUND BUDGET PROPOSALS 2026/27

Considered – Report of the Executive Director (Section 151 Officer).

A supplementary report which contained two additional recommendations detailed below at 4 and 5 was circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

The Finance, People and Transformation Portfolio Holder, Cllr Cheryl Cashmore proposed an amendment to Recommendation 2.1, the reference to paragraph 4.7 should read 4.4.

Other Options Considered:

No other options have been considered – The Council is required to set its budgetary requirement and for the Council to consider the opinion of the Executive Director (S151 Officer) as to the robustness of the proposed budget and the levels of reserves and balances being adequate.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. To have regard to the comments of the Executive Director (Section 151 Officer) in paragraph 4.4 of the report in respect of the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 2003.
2. That the 2026/27 General Fund Revenue Account net expenditure budget of £19.2m be approved.
3. That delegated authority be given to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to make minor amendments to the Budget should it be necessary.
4. That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to determine and approve expenditure from the £700,000 budget allocated to Local Government Reorganisation, in order to ensure timely, flexible and efficient use of resources.
5. That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to determine and approve expenditure from the additional £500,000 budget allocated to Homelessness to explore, identify and deliver new initiatives over and above those being planned and delivered for 2026-27.

Reasons:

1. It is a requirement for the Cabinet Executive and Council to take into account the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 in relation to the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves.

2. Cabinet and Council are required to consider and approve the General Fund Revenue Account budget proposals in order to set the budget and Council Tax for the forthcoming financial year.
3. Minor amendments to the budget may become necessary prior to the commencement of the year in April, it is therefore appropriate to give delegated authority to allow these to be reflected in the budget.
4. The sum of £700,000 is proposed to be added to the budget to enable the Authority to respond effectively to the costs associated with the next stage of Local Government Reorganisation, delegated authority enables a flexible and timely approach.
5. The sum of £500,000 is proposed to be added to the budget to enable the Authority to respond effectively to the rising costs of temporary accommodation and the numbers of homeless individuals and families presenting to the Council. This delegation will enable new initiatives to be explored to address the increasing demand.

15. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION – GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND

Considered – Report of the Chief Executive.

Other Options Considered:

No other option was considered appropriate as responding to the Consultation fully enables the opinion of Cabinet to be put forward for consideration by Ministers.

DECISION

That the Consultation response detailed in Appendix A of the report be agreed and formally submitted to MHCLG as Cabinet's formal response to the Consultation.

Reason:

The Government is required to consult on the proposals put forward in each area. It is important for the views of Blaby District Council's Cabinet to be taken into account.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.20 P.M.