

BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet Executive Response to Scrutiny Recommendations on the Administrations 2026-27 Draft Budget Proposals

Date submitted to Cabinet Executive: 23rd February 2026

Cabinet Member responsible for compliance with notice of requirement: Cllr Cheryl Cashmore

	Recommendation	Agreed YES/N O/IN PART	Cabinet Response including proposed action	Responsible Officer	Action by date
R1	Scrutiny is supportive of a 2.99% increase to continue to support the important services the Council provides	Yes	Cabinet welcomes the support of Scrutiny to increase Council Tax by 2.99%.	Executive Director (S151)	March 2026
R2	That £307k in the Hardship reserve be utilised over the next 3 years to help support people facing hardship in paying council tax.	Yes	Cabinet continues to be supportive of utilising the Hardship reserve to support our resident's facing hardship. Details on applying for the discretionary hardship payment are on the Council's website, and each request is considered on a case-by-case basis. At the end of February, 75 applications had been received with 38 applications granted, with a total of £21,419.90 awarded. Reasons for an award not being granted included 23 applications having excess	Financial Services Group Manager	Ongoing

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			<p>income, and 14 applications not supplying the information required for the application to be considered.</p> <p>We will undertake a review of the criteria to see if any amendments need to be made to improve the help that is currently being given in addition to looking at other mechanisms that we can provide to help support our residents who are experiencing hardship.</p>		
R3	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 are supportive of an update being given in 6 months. Officers are looking to add this information as a measure on Iplan so it can be monitored and easily viewed.	Financial Services Group Manager	July 2026
R4	Scrutiny strongly recommends that Cabinet establishes a clear legacy plan without delay. This should include the creation of a cross party legacy working group, ensuring that Members from across the Council can contribute to shaping and safeguarding Blaby's long term legacy.	In Part	Ensuring we get the balance right between spending reserves on legacy projects and balancing our budgets, whilst ensuring the sustainability of the new councils is important. We have already received guidance from MHCLG on sensible decision making regarding	Chief Executive	

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			<p>this issue. However, we are focussed on making significant investments in housing as members are aware, as this meets our current corporate plan, makes sound business sense whilst securing housing to meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents. This is delivering and responding against a current and future need. We are also looking at other initiatives to ensure that there is funding available to meet the needs of our local communities. We will continue to ensure that all parties are involved in this through discussions at the group leaders meetings.</p>		
R5	That further detail be provided on the estimated costs for preparation of LGR. (This can be provided at a future LGR scrutiny meeting).	Yes	We will continue to keep members informed regarding spend and estimated costs regarding the preparation and implementation of LGR. We do not have any further details to share at this point but would be happy to attend a future scrutiny meeting to update.	Chief Executive	Ongoing

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R6	That Cabinet adopt a more ambitious and innovative approach across all service areas, including the use of Council reserves to deliver tangible benefits for residents.	In Part	The existence of reserves have always allowed our Council to be ambitious and we've looked to take an innovative approach to services we provide. The reserves position is, perhaps not as positive as originally presented to Scrutiny following the changes in the final settlement and it will be key to develop a plan going forward as to how we can utilise those reserves to ensure the Council remains financially viable as well as take steps towards driving tangible benefits for residents.	Executive Director (S151)	March 27
R7	That Scrutiny be given the opportunity to examine the detail behind the Corporate Action Plan and to support Cabinet in prioritising any projects.	Yes	The corporate action plan will be presented to Council in April for member approval. We would be happy to attend a scrutiny meeting to provide detail behind the actions, projects and measures associated with the plan.	Chief Executive	Date TBC

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R8	<p>Scrutiny would welcome the opportunity to examine and understand the pressures of homelessness at a future scrutiny meeting. Scrutiny suggests that the Council should establish a stronger, more coordinated network with private sector landlords. By proactively engaging with landlords, the Council could be made aware when they intend to sell properties. This would create potential opportunities for the Council to purchase suitable homes directly, helping to retain these properties within the local housing market.</p> <p>Such an approach could improve the Council's ability to respond to rising housing pressures by increasing the supply of available homes, preventing the loss of rental properties, and providing additional options for households in need.</p> <p>Strengthening relationships with private landlords may therefore form part of a strategic, longterm solution to alleviating housing challenges within the district.</p>	In part	<p>The Housing Team are due to attend Scrutiny on the 22nd April for the Housing Strategy Consultation so this would be a good opportunity to discuss this at the same meeting if acceptable to the Commission.</p> <p>In relation to engaging with Landlords to secure temporary accommodation to address the homelessness demand - we are finding that a large majority of private sector landlords within the district do not want to engage with us due to the higher levels of income they can secure, as they are able to charge is well above the Local Authority Housing Rate in the private market.</p>	Environmental Health, Housing and Community Services Group Manager	April 26 and ongoing

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R9	Scrutiny urges the Cabinet to strengthen its commitment to supporting residents at risk of homelessness by exploring opportunities to acquire additional properties within the district and by creating a network of private sector landlords	Yes	<p>Cabinet set out its vision around addressing homelessness in January and this was confirmed in the leaders statement with the additional monies identified to focus on prevention.</p> <p>The need and desire to enhance our commitment to supporting residents at risk of homeless was identified during the setting of the budget and on that basis an additional budget £500,000 for 26/27 as it is a priority for this Cabinet. The additional funds were added to the general fund housing budgets to address the increase in the number of homeless households that are presenting to us.</p> <p>The additional budget will be used to strengthen our staffing resource to further progress our prevention work. We continue as a Council through the capital programme and external grant funding opportunities to secure additional properties within the district and have a pipeline of properties coming on stream in</p>	Environmental Health, Housing and Community Services Group Manager	Ongoing

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			the coming years to build on the stock we have already secured. We already actively engage with private sector landlords.		
R10	That Cabinet reviews the current allocation of Business Rate Pool monies to ensure it delivers maximum value for money and measurable economic impact.	No	The allocation of the Business Rates Pool has been reviewed and supports the delivery of the service. Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rates Pool members gave notice to revoke membership for 2026/27, therefore once allocation of the 2024/25 funds have been made, no additional funds will be received. The release of funds is currently used to support the work of the economic development team that deliver the action plan within the Economic Development Framework, however going forward the current reserve monies can be spent wider than just economic development and it may be necessary to draw upon them to support services to fill future funding gaps.	Assets and Major Projects Group Manager	

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R11	To enable Scrutiny to meet its responsibilities for monitoring key performance measures, wider access to performance data be provided.	Yes	We can achieve this by widening the visibility of items in iPlan for Scrutiny members (and indeed all members if we wish to do so) so that it matches that of the Cabinet, this will allow for visibility of all P1 to P3 performance measures.	Corporate Services Group Manager (Monitoring Officer)	30 th April 2026
R12	Food waste performance measures, when added to iPlan be made available to the Corporate Performance Working Group.	Yes	We will measure food waste performance using participation rates and tonnage data. Participation will be monitored once the scheme has bedded in, followed by a communications campaign and a second monitoring round to assess impact. Participation is defined as the percentage of households presenting a food caddy at least once in a two week period. We will also track food waste tonnage per household using weighbridge data. Performance will be compared with national and local benchmarks to assess how we are performing relative to similar authorities. This will be made available to members as per R11 above.	Neighbourhood Services Group Manager	31 March 2027

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R13	That resources dedicated to the Local Plan be increased to allow meaningful communication with residents.	In Part	<p>We have a robust communications plan in place that has been outlined to members. This includes both digital and hard copy ways of reaching our residents, face to face sessions and utilising groups to raise awareness with groups for whom our services are difficult to access. We also ask Ward Members to support the engagement approach by sharing information about the Local Plan. Should Members require materials such as posters and leaflets to share with resident's, these will be available. Members are asked to speak to the Planning Policy team should they need resources to help with raising the profile of the Local Plan engagement.</p> <p>Therefore there is no requirement at this stage for additional resource to achieve this. We remain fully committed to meaningful, accessible and effective communication as the Local Plan progresses, and will continue to use a wide range of channels to ensure</p>	Planning and Strategic Growth Group Manager	

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			<p>residents are well informed and able to participate</p> <p>However, we will review this on an ongoing basis and if any additional resource is required this will be addressed.</p>		