

CABINET

TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2024

Present: Councillor M Radulovic MBE, Chair

Councillors: G Marshall (Vice-Chair)
P J Bales
G Bunn
C Carr
T A Cullen
H J Faccio
J W McGrath
V C Smith

70 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor H E Skinner.

71 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Radulovic MBE declared an other-registerable interest in item 8.6 as he is a member of Eastwood Town Council, minute number 76.6 refers. Councillor J W McGrath declared an other-registerable interest in item 11.1 as he is a member of the Stapleford Town Board, minute number 79.1 refers.

72 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2024 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

73 DRAFT MINUTES OF OTHER MEETINGS

Members noted the minutes of the meetings of the Bramcote Bereavement Services Joint Committee meetings held on 20 June and 24 October 2024.

74 SCRUTINY REVIEWS

Cabinet noted the matters proposed for and undergoing scrutiny.

75 REFERENCES

75.1 FOSTER CARER POLICY

Members considered the creation of a Foster Care Scheme to support employees who were Foster Carers or were applying to become Foster Carers. Clarification was requested that additional leave for employees going through the application process to become a Foster Carer could be taken as half days.

RESOLVED that the Foster Carer Scheme Policy be approved.

Reason

The Policy will ensure the Council retains talent and continues to be an employer of choice.

75.2 COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

Cabinet considered the Policy, it was proposed to increase compassionate leave entitlement to up to fifteen days in the event of the death of a spouse, partner or child. It was considered that five days was not sufficient to support employees experiencing the death. The proposed increase would support employees and reduce sickness. It was confirmed that the Chief Executive had scope to use discretion on a case-by-case basis in exceptional circumstances.

RESOLVED that the amended Compassionate Leave Scheme, including an amendment that the leave be taken within six months of bereavement, be approved.

Reason

This would address previous occasions where the Policy entitlements were not deemed sufficient to support employees.

75.3 NEONATAL CARE LEAVE

The Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023 received Royal Assent on 24 May 2023, and will come into force in 2025. Its intention is to provide parents with a right to twelve weeks' leave when their baby requires neonatal care. Neonatal Care Leave would run consecutively to existing parental leave entitlements, effectively extending maternity and paternity leave.

RESOLVED that the Neonatal Care Leave Policy, with the following amendments, be approved.

- 1. That the wording regarding the eligibility for paid leave being 26 weeks' continuous service be made clearer.**
- 2. That the Chief Executive will have discretion in instances where the Neonatal Policy is used, in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager.**
- 3. That it be clarified that a period of absence related to the Policy would not impact on probation.**

Reason

The Act seeks to provide parents of newborns who require medical or palliative care for seven or more consecutive days within the first 28 days of life, additional leave of up to twelve weeks.

75.4 PROBATION POLICY

The Probation Policy was last reviewed in 2018, and required updating. Since the introduction of Apprentices under the Government's Apprenticeship Legislation, the Policy had required some clarification on the management of Apprentices' probation periods.

RESOLVED that the Probation Policy be approved.

Reason

The proposed changes to the Policy make clear this process.

75.5 REVIEW OF CORPORATE PLAN PROGRESS AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - SEPTEMBER 2024 QUARTER 2

Members noted the progress made in achieving the Corporate Plan priorities and financial performance for the quarter ended 30 September 2024. It was stated that forecasting would be improved in order to understand performance reporting and it was further stated that parking income would be reviewed in the near future.

76 QUARTERLY COMPLAINT REPORT

Members were provided with a summary of complaints made against the Council and noted a report which outlined the performance of the Council in dealing with complaints, at stage one by the service areas, at stage two by the Complaints and Compliments Officer and at stage three when complaints are referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Housing Ombudsman.

It was stated that the report should be used for positive outcomes with performance indicators used to ensure that recommendations had been dispensed and lessons learned from complaints received by the Council.

76.1 PEOPLE STRATEGY

Members considered the People Strategy 2025-29 which set out the Council's approach to selecting, supporting and developing its employees; identifying its future workforce and skills needs; developing its approach to leadership in employee equality and diversity and supporting the wellbeing of the workforce. to ensure the continuation to deliver excellent, value for money services to the Borough. It was stated that this Council would set the standard that other authorities would aspire to.

RESOLVED that the People Strategy 2025-29 be approved.

Reason

The People Strategy focuses on four themes that identifies key areas of the organisation which align with the Corporate Plan and vision.

76.2 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2025/26

Members considered the Council Tax Base for the year 2025/26. The Council tax base had been calculated on the estimated full year equivalent number of chargeable dwellings expressed as the equivalent number of band D dwellings in the Council's area after allowing for dwelling demolitions and completions during the year.

RESOLVED that based on the number of Band D equivalent properties and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, Broxtowe Borough Council calculates its Council Tax Base for the year 2025/26 as follows:

- 1. For the whole of its area 35,568.23**
- 2. In respect of Parish Precepts and Special Expenses for those parts of its area mentioned in the table below, the amounts specified therein:**

<u>Part of Council's Area</u>	<u>Area Council Tax Base</u>
Awsorth	607.40
Brinsley	773.41
Cossall	246.43
Eastwood	3,088.63
Greasley	3,756.84
Kimberley	1,898.97
Nuthall	2,258.62
Stapleford	4,274.82
Strelley	175.30
Trowell	842.43
<u>Special Expenses Area</u>	
Beeston Area	17,645.38
Total	35,568.23

Reason

The calculation of the tax base was a legal requirement and an essential part of the tax setting process. The tax base calculations for a particular financial year must comply with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 and be determined by no later than 31 January in the preceding financial year. These regulations had been made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (LGFA 1992) and The Local Government Finance Act 2012 (LGFA 2012) includes several amendments to the LGFA 1992 that affect the calculation of the Council Tax base. These amendments require the Council to operate a Council Tax Support Scheme.

76.3 COUNCIL TAX LEVY

The Government announced the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in which Section 75 addressed long-term empty properties by amending the initial period at which point councils could place the 100% levy from two-years down to one-year. It was being proposed to implement this change from 1 April 2025. Members stated that any income from this would be nominal and there should be a consideration of the Levy in conjunction with the Council's policies around housing and bringing homes back into use around the Borough.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The adoption of an empty property levy at 100% for dwellings that have been vacant for more than one year from 1 April 2025, be approved.**
- 2. A property levy for those classified as Second Homes at 100% from 1 April 2026, be approved.**

Reason

Whilst the changes will generate additional revenue, the primary focus is to bring empty homes back into use.

76.4 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2025/26

Members considered the arrangements to operate the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme remains in place for 2025/26.

Reason

Under section 13A (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council as billing authority must make a localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme in accordance with Schedule 1A to the Act. Each financial year the Council must consider whether to revise its scheme, or to replace it with another scheme.

76.5 HOUSING BENEFIT - WAR DISREGARD

Members considered a report which stated that the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (War Pensions Disregards) regulations 2007 allowed for local authorities to develop a local scheme that could disregard War Pension income from the calculation of Housing Benefit.

RESOLVED that the continuation of the current Local Scheme Disregarding War Pensions for Housing Benefit Applications in 2025/26, be approved.

Reason

The Regulations providing for this are the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 paragraph 40(2) and schedule 5, and Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 paragraph 33(9). Sections 134 and 139 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 provide the Council with

the discretion to modify the Housing Benefit scheme by disregarding a further amount, or all, of specified war disablement pensions and payments.

76.6 GRANT AID REQUESTS FROM PARISH/TOWN COUNCILS

Cabinet considered requests for grant assistance within the protocol for the consideration of grant aid to Parish and Town Councils. Eastwood Town Council had requested a grant of up to £1,722 towards the cost of security, first aid and traffic management for its Remembrance Sunday Event, and a request of up to £993 representing up to 50% of the cost of restoration of the 'Cadets Cross' memorial.

RESOLVED that the grant requests to Eastwood Town Council of £1,722 and £993 be approved.

Reason

Consideration was given in respect of awarding grants. As part of the Protocol, Grant Aid would only be given in support of specific projects or services and not as a general grant towards the services provided by a Parish/Town Council. There was no budgetary provision for Capital grants to Parish Councils.

(Councillor M Radulovic MBE, having declared an other-registerable interest, left the meeting without voting or discussion thereon. Councillor G Marshall took the Chair for the item.)

76.7 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, CHARITABLE BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN SPORTS, THE ARTS AND DISABILITY MATTERS 2024/25

Cabinet considered requests for grant aid in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Grant Aid Policy. On consideration of a potential grant to Toton Coronation Hall Community Association, concern was raised over whether there were sufficient activities being provided for the residents of Broxtowe. It was agreed that further consideration of the request was necessary prior to the grant being awarded.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The grant of £4,529 to the Dig-In Community Allotment be approved.**
- 2. The grant of £7,000 to the Toton Coronation Hall Community Association be awarded subject a satisfactory review of the Service Level Agreement by the Leader and Ward Members, and a further review by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as necessary.**

Reason

The Council is empowered to make grants to voluntary organisations by virtue of Section 48 Local Government Act 1985 (as well as other Legislation). Having an approved process in accordance with legislation and the Council's Grant Aid Policy would ensure the Council's compliance with its legal duties.

77 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

77.1 GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION FEES 2025/26

Members were updated with the proposals to increase the subscription for the collection service of garden waste for 2025/26. Consideration of an 'early bird' discounted rate for residents would be given for the collection service for 2026/27.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The subscription fee for the first garden bin be increased by £2.**
- 2. The subscription fee for additional bins be increased by £1.**
- 3. From 1 October 2025, the subscription fee for the first garden bin be reduced to £26 and any other additional bins are discounted by 50%.**
- 4. The method of communication regarding the new garden waste season changed from a direct letter to a leaflet for each household, be approved.**

Reason

The Council was the waste collection authority for the Borough with a duty to collect specified forms of waste. Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 stated "no charge shall be made for the collection of household waste except in cases prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State". Section 4 of Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 stated that charges may be made for the collection of household garden waste. Additionally, Section 45(3) (b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 required that collection authorities made a reasonable charge for the collection of household garden waste.

78 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

78.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION STRATEGY

An Economic Development Framework Document was approved by Cabinet in July 2022. Members were informed that this document fell between a full strategy and a statement of intent. The Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy 2022–28 was a direct replacement for the Framework. Being dated from 2022 allowed the capture of key detail presented in the Framework whilst also developing a detailed action plan for 2024–28.

Members considered the report to be positive, however, the addition of free parking over the festive period would assist retailers and residents in the Borough. It was suggested the period be extended in comparison to the previous year and be implemented through use of the Chief Executive's Urgency Powers.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The Economic Development Strategy 2022-28 be approved.**
- 2. The Chief Executive's Urgency Powers be used for the cessation of parking charges, in Council-owned car parks, as appropriate, between 9 December and 28 December 2024, be approved.**

Reasons

1. The Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy sets out a vision for future growth within the Borough.
2. The cessation of parking charges over the Christmas period will assist local businesses and encourage footfall in Broxtowe's town centres.

78.2 FORMER BEAMLIGHT FACTORY ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

Members considered a report which requested the removal of certain permitted development rights for dwellings built at the former Beamlight Factory.

RESOLVED that the Broxtowe Borough Council (Former Beamlight Factory) Direction 2025 be made and notified.

Reason

The resolution will assist in minimising any potential risk at the site.

79 COMMUNITY SAFETY

79.1 PROPOSED CCTV PROVISION IN DERBY ROAD CAR PARK STAPLEFORD

Cabinet was informed that the current provision for car parking at Victoria Street, Stapleford would be closed in order for a Business Hub to be constructed in January to February 2025. There was currently no Surveillance Camera presence at this location. A new car park was to be built on land acquired at Derby Road, Stapleford and would include two Surveillance Cameras.

RESOLVED that the provision of the two Surveillance Camera Units at the Derby Road Car Park, Stapleford be approved.

Reason

The purpose is for crime prevention, detection of crime and public safety in the area.

(Councillor J W McGrath, having declared an other-registerable interest, left the meeting without voting or discussion thereon.)

80 HOUSING

80.1 PETS POLICY

The Council allowed tenants and leaseholders to keep pets in their properties and for tenants, there were clauses in the tenancy agreement that set out the need for tenants to request permission to keep pets and also how the Council would manage the tenancy in this respect. The Policy provided a framework for the types of pets that were permissible by the Council and what additional measures or enquiries that tenants were required to undertake for the request to be approved. It was clarified that current owners of XL Bully dogs would not be affected but new XL Bully dogs would not be permitted for Council tenants.

RESOLVED that the Pets Policy be approved.

Reason

The Policy also provides clarification on what measures the Council will take should a pet be kept without permission and what actions the Council will take should pets become a nuisance and their continued ownership becomes an issue at the property or in the community.

81 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that the Work Programme, including key decisions, be approved.

Reason

This will assist with all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

82 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 7 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

83 IRRECOVERABLE ARREARS

RESOLVED that the arrears in excess of £7,500 on national non-domestic rates, council tax, rents, housing and council tax benefit overpayment and sundry debtors as set out in the report be written off and to note the exercise of the Deputy Chief Executive's delegated authority under Financial Procedure Rule 5.9.

Reason

This will assist with the Council's aim to deliver cost effectiveness.

84 PERMANENT RECRUITMENT OF A WASTE AND RECYCLING ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

RESOLVED that the transfer of the Waste and Recycling Engagement Officer post onto the permanent establishment be approved.

Reason

This will ensure continuity of support and expertise for the Council's recycling initiatives, ultimately benefiting the environment.