

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2025

Present: Councillor S Dannheimer, Chair

Councillors: E Williamson (Vice-Chair)
H Land
R D MacRae
J M Owen
A W G A Stockwell
C M Tideswell
S Webb
E Winfield
K Woodhead
P J Owen (Substitute for H L Crosby)
A Cooper (Substitute for T J Marsh)
P A Smith (Substitute for K A Harlow)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T J Marsh, H L Crosby and K A Harlow

Councillor V Smith was in attendance as Portfolio Holder for Housing.

Councillors P Bales, B C Carr, and S J Carr were in attendance to observe the meeting.

32 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R D MacRae declared an Other Registrable Interest as he was a Member on the Stapleford Towns Board Agenda item 6, Minute item 36 refers.

33 **CONSIDERATION OF CALL - IN**

There were no call-ins to be considered.

34 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK BUSINESS PLANS AND BUDGET SETTING**

Members noted the performance and financial management framework used to support the business planning and budget setting process in accordance with all of the Council's priorities.

35 **HOUSING – BUSINESS PLAN AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2025/26 - 2027/28**

Members considered proposals for the business plan, revenue budget estimates, capital programme and proposed fees and charges in respect of the Council's priority

area of Housing to have a good quality home for everyone. Members line of enquiries included the following:

- Changes to legislation and the Preventable Reform Bill and landlords issuing Section 21 Notices would impact the targets for Homelessness cases. There had been vacancies in the team during 2023/24 but still exceeded the target.
- Query regarding the Section 31 grant funding expected to support the increased cost of employers National Insurance Contributions.
- Confirmation that the repairs and maintenance budget was a one off budget and not a reduction.
- Further impacts with borrowing costs and interest rates

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

- 1. Cabinet approves the Housing Business Plan.**
- 2. Cabinet recommends to Council that the following be approved:**
 - a) The detailed revenue budget estimates for 2025/26 (base)**
 - b) The capital programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28**
 - c) The fees and charges for 2025/26.**

36 BUSINESS GROWTH – BUSINESS PLAN AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2025/26 - 2027/28

The Committee considered proposals for the business plan, revenue budget estimates, capital programme, and proposed fees and charges in respect of the Councils priority area of Business growth to invest in our towns and people by developing and implementing area regeneration and supporting business employment, skills and connectivity. Key lines of enquiry included:

- The consultation would continue for Broxtowe with the Greater Nottingham Neighbouring Local Plan despite another Local Authority withdrawing. Local plan examination was expected to cost £80,000 and adoption was anticipated by end of 2025.
- Town Centre occupancy was higher in all areas of the borough than the National target of 83% occupancy.
- Queries were raised with the car park Loyalty scheme for shopping in the Town Centres. It was confirmed the scheme had been funded from the UKSPF. Members would like further details of the scheme.
- Members would like to see a breakdown of occupancy, income and outgoings related to the Craft Workshops at Eastwood
- It was confirmed that the existing Christmas lights at Beeston were broken and required replacing. A budget provisional would be required to look at replacing them in 2025.

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

- 1. Cabinet approves the Business Growth Business Plan.**

2. **Cabinet recommends to Council that the following be approved:**
- a) **The detailed revenue budget estimates for 2025/26 (base)**
 - b) **The capital programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28**
 - c) **The fees and charges for 2025/26.**

37 **RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICE AREAS – BUSINESS PLANS AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2025/26 - 2027/28**

Members considered proposals for the business plan, revenue budget estimates, capital programme and proposed fees and charges in respect of the Council's priority area of Resources and Support Services Areas. Key lines of enquires included:

- Percentage of employees who felt informed had improved from the previous year. The Chief Executive confirmed that roadshows had taken place to all employees on the Corporate Plan with an opportunity to ask questions regarding the Council's vision, priorities, and objectives. Feedback had been successful.
- Residents who were satisfied with the services the Council provided was slightly higher than the National comparison of the LGA's local government customer satisfaction survey in October 2024.
- A new unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy would shortly be presented to the Policy Overview Working Group and would also include behaviour towards Members and contact by non-complainants.
- The Discretionary Housing Payments contribution from Central Government had been significantly reduced and this would mean the Council would be required to top up the amounts to support the most vulnerable. An additional amount of funding from Nottinghamshire County Council Household Support Fund was also provided which allowed an increase in expenditure above the 100% Department of Working Pensions Contribution.
- A review of Council tax exemptions was being undertaken with recommendations to review the levels and to promote a return to use for empty properties.
- Members commented on agile working and would like assurance wellbeing was considered for all employees who worked remotely.

The Committee RECOMMENDED that:

Cabinet approves the Business Plans for the support service areas.

2. **Cabinet recommends to Council that the following be approved:**
- a) **The detailed revenue budget estimates for 2025/26 (base) including any revenue development submissions.**
 - b) **The capital programme for 2025/26 to 2027/28**
 - c) **The fees and charges for 2025/26.**

38 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the work programme and resolved accordingly.

RESOLVED that the work programme be approved.

