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To: Chair & Members of the Council

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Monday, 30 September 2024

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Dear Councillor


**COUNCIL**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Council of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday, 9th October, 2024 at 10:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 3 onwards.

Yours faithfully



Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

## **Equalities Statement**

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

### **Access for All statement**

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** [enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk)
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

# COUNCIL AGENDA

*Wednesday, 9th October, 2024* **Wednesday, 9 October 2024 at 10:00 hours taking place in  
the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne**

<b>Item No.</b>		<b>Page No.(s)</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies For Absence</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
	Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of:	
	a) any business on the agenda	
	b) any matters arising out of those items	
	and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Chair's Announcements</b>	
	To receive any announcements that the Chair of the Council may desire to lay before the meeting.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	4 - 8
	To approve the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2024.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Motions</b>	9 - 10
	In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10, to consider motions on notice from Members.	
	(A) Motion from Councillor William Fletcher – Winter Fuel Payment	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	11 - 29
<b>7.</b>	<b>Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24</b>	30 - 48
<b>8.</b>	<b>Council Chamber Audio Visual Solution</b>	49 - 51
<b>9.</b>	<b>Recommendations from the Employment and Personnel Committee</b>	52 - 55
<b>10.</b>	<b>Proportionality and Appointments to Committees and Advisory Groups</b>	56 - 66
<b>11.</b>	<b>Chairman's Closing Remarks</b>	

## COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024 at 10:00 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:-

Councillor Tom Munro in the Chair

Councillors Rita Turner (Vice-Chair), David Bennett, Amanda Davis, Mary Dooley, Will Fletcher, Louise Fox, Steve Fritchley, Justin Gilbody, Donna Hales, Rob Hiney-Saunders, Mark Hinman, Cathy Jeffery, Duncan McGregor, Clive Moesby, Sandra Peake, Lisa Powell, Jeanne Raspin, Sally Renshaw, John Ritchie, Phil Smith, Emma Stevenson, Janet Tait, Catherine Tite, Ross Walker (for items CL28-24/25 to CL35-24/25 only), Deborah Watson, Jen Wilson, Carol Wood and Jane Yates.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Theresa Fletcher (Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer), Jim Fieldsend (Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer), Pam Brown (Director of Executive and Corporate Services), Sarah Kay (Assistant Director of Planning and Planning Enforcement), Peter Wilmot (HR Business Partner), Theresa Garrod (Tourism & Place Manager, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited), and Amy Bryan (Governance and Civic Manager).

At the start of the meeting Council observed a one-minute silence for the children that had been tragically killed in Southport.

### **CL28-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anne Clarke, Rowan Clarke, Chris Kane, Tom Kirkham, Ashley Taylor and Vicky Waplington.

### **CL29-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

### **CL30-24/25 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair stated that the Leader of the Council had asked offices to update Members regarding the Roseland Crematorium and the £15m regeneration fund as soon as possible.

### **CL31-24/25 MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor David Bennett **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual meeting of Council held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 and an ordinary meeting of Council also held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 be approved as true and correct records.

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### **CL32-24/25      PRODUCTIVITY PLAN**

Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources, introduced a report by the Chief Executive which provided details of the Productivity Plan that had been submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The report explained that in April 2024, the then Minister for Local Government had written to all Councils requesting the submission of a Productivity Plan by 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024. This request had been received following the Local Government Finance Settlement. The letter from Simon Hoare MP, dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024, was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Council had drafted a Productivity Plan, which had been endorsed by Executive and Junior Executive members on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024. The Plan had then been submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by the deadline of the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and placed on the Council's website, as required. The Productivity Plan was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

Councillor Clive Moesby highlighted some of the challenges that Councils were facing from Government, including the lack of multi-year funding, complex ad-hoc changes and inconsistent processes.

Councillor Mary Dooley thanked staff and colleagues for the work on producing the Productivity Plan. Councillor Ross Walker praised the Council staff he had dealt with but expressed concern over the current political leadership of the Council.

Moved by Councillor Clive Moesby and seconded by Councillor Phil Smith  
**RESOLVED** that the Council's Productivity Plan be noted.

### **CL33-24/25      AUDITOR'S ANNUAL REPORT - 2022/23**

Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources, presented a report in relation to the Auditor's Annual Report in respect of 2022/23. The report, attached to the report at Appendix 1, had been prepared by Mazars, the Council's External Auditor.

Both the Portfolio Holder for Resources and the Chair of the Audit Committee expressed their gratitude to the Finance Team for their continued hard work and welcomed such a great report.

Moved by Councillor Clive Moesby and seconded by Councillor John Ritchie  
**RESOLVED** that the annual report from the Council's External Auditor, Mazars, be noted.

### **CL34-24/25      NEURODIVERSITY POLICY**

Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources, presented a report which sought approval for the implementation of a Neurodiversity Policy for the Council. The proposed policy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

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The report stated that the Neurodiversity Policy aimed to foster an inclusive environment that recognised and valued the diverse strengths and perspectives of individuals with neurological differences. The implementation of this policy aligned with the Council's commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion. By embracing neurodiversity, the Council could tap into a wider talent pool, increase innovation, and create a more dynamic and supportive work environment for all employees. Moreover, fostering an inclusive culture where neurodiverse individuals felt valued and supported could lead to higher employee satisfaction, retention and productivity.

The report set out the principles and key components of the Neurodiversity Policy. The Policy had been considered and was supported by the Senior Leadership Team and the Union / Employee Consultation Committee.

Moved by Councillor Clive Moesby and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor  
**RESOLVED** that the Neurodiversity Policy be approved.

(HR Business Partner)

### **CL35-24/25            RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Council considered a report of the Chair of the Employment and Personnel Committee, which sought agreement for budget increases to fund changes to the Procurement Service, that had been agreed at Employment and Personnel Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024.

The proposal agreed at the Employment and Personnel Committee was to end the shared Procurement Service with North East Derbyshire District Council and to create a small Bolsover focussed team. The current Procurement Assistant (0.5 FTE) would remain with the Council and a new Procurement Manager (1 FTE) would be recruited. The proposal had been considered in detail at the Employment and Personnel Committee and it had been recommended to Council to agree the required budget increase of £54,684 to fund the proposals.

The changes would require an increase to the Council's General Fund budget.

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor Sandra Peake  
**RESOLVED** that the growth in salary budgets (General Fund) as recommended by the Employment and Personnel Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 be approved.

(Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer)

### **CL36-24/25            MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24**

Councillor Sandra Peake, Chair of the Member Development Working Group, presented to Council the Member Development Annual Report 2023/24. The Annual Report was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The annual report set out the member development activities that had taken place during 2023/24, training opportunities that had been made available to Members and information

## COUNCIL

on the evaluation of member development activities that had taken place.

Councillor David Bennett thanked everyone involved in the training he had received as a new Councillor. This was echoed by Councillor Tom Munro.

Moved by Councillor Sandra Peake and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley  
**RESOLVED** that the Member Development Annual Report 2023/24 be noted.

### **CL37-24/25          APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER CHAMPIONS**

Council considered a report regarding the appointment of Member Champions for 2024/25.

The report stated that Member Champions were Councillors who acted as an advocate or spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business and activities. The main responsibility of each Member Champion was to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represented.

The proposed Member Champions for 2024/25 were set out in Appendix 1 to the report. The Member Champion areas were Armed Forces, Member Development and Local Nature Recovery.

In answer to a question regarding the appointment of Champions, it was stated that the Member Development Champion was traditionally the Chair of the Member Development Working Group. Councillor Munro stated that he undertook a voluntary role with SSAFA and had approached Councillor Bennett to be a joint champion given his background in the Royal Air Force. The Armed Forces Champion was part of the Armed Forces Covenant, which the Council was signed up to.

It was suggested that consideration be given to also having a neurodiversity champion in the future.

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor Clive Moesby  
**RESOLVED** that the following Member Champions be appointed:

Armed Forces Champion(s) – Councillors David Bennett and Tom Munro  
Member Development Champion – Councillor Sandra Peake  
Local Nature Recovery Champion – Councillor Anne Clarke

### **CL38-24/25          BOLSOVER PLACE LAUNCH (PRESENTATION)**

Therasa Garrod, Tourism & Place Manager, Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited, gave a presentation on the Bolsover Place Launch.

The presentation covered the Bolsover Place Programme, including engagement with stakeholders, consultation findings, setting a positive place narrative, visual language and visual identity, embracing wider opportunities, the Bolsover Place Board and the Bolsover Place Action Plan.

One of the key aims was to embed the following phrases into everyday conversation,

## **COUNCIL**

Bolsover:

- was a place where people wanted to live, work, visit, or study.
- was a great short break destination.
- was somewhere you could experience a great range of cultural and historic attractions.
- had a thriving business community.
- was a place to be proud of.
- provided a high-quality education offer, ambitious and skilled workforce with great employment opportunities.

The presentation ended with a video of recent Bolsover Place Launch event.

### **CL39-24/25      CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chair had nothing further to add and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10:55 hours.



## **MOTION ON WINTER FUEL PAYMENT**

### **Council Notes:**

- The Labour Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like Pension Credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.
- The estimated impact of this decision, which Age UK says will mean 2 million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it.
- The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of Bolsover District and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.
- The criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.
- The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship.

### **Council believes:**

- That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.
- While some pensioners currently in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment may not require it, many thousands across Bolsover District sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance.
- The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and well-being of our poorest older residents.
- The government's approach fails to consider the administrative barriers and stigma that prevent eligible pensioners from claiming Pension Credit, leaving many without the support they desperately need.

### **Council resolves to:**

- Bring forward a Council-led local awareness campaign to alert those eligible of Pension Credit which in some respects will help access to the Winter Fuel Payment for those most in need.

- Request that the Council Leader write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging a review of the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Payment and asking the government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty.
- Commit the Council to signing the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK and write to all members offering them the opportunity to sign the petition themselves.
- Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in Bolsover District are supported in claiming their entitlement.

Proposed by: Councillor Will Fletcher

Seconded by: Councillor Carol Wood



**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of Council on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Medium-Term Financial Strategy**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is public
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Theresa Fletcher Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

To seek approval of the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) attached at **Appendix 1**, which was considered by Executive on the 9<sup>th</sup> of September 2024.

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**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council’s strategic approach to the management of its finances and outlines the various factors and influences that may impact on us over the next few years.
- 1.2 This MTFS relates purely to the General Fund at present as the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assumptions are based on the 30-year Business Plan. The decisions for Members around the HRA dwelling rents and service charges will be provided to Council in the MTFP in January.

**2. Details of Proposal or Information**

- 2.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2028/29 for the General Fund is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 The MTFS is the starting point for developing a meaningful four-year strategy that sets out the strategic intention for all of the different strands of funding available to the Council. The Council will then rely on this to inform future decisions. The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will be prepared using the approved MTFS assumptions.
- 2.3 The MTFS has been produced in a period where there remains a great deal of uncertainty regarding future funding of Local Government. Delays to Government Reviews and a series of roll-over Spending Reviews for the last few years, mean predicting the likely outcome of the Spending Review for 2025/26 is exceedingly difficult. The change in Government after the general election, makes this even more so.

- 2.4 The outcome of the Spending Review is critically important to the financial health and viability of local authorities across the country. Councils are looking to the review to give real-terms growth in funding that will underpin our finances over the next few years.
- 2.5 As it states at 3.16 of the appendix, some commentators are predicting another 1-year settlement, with decisions on spending reforms delayed until 2026/27 at the earliest.
- 2.6 Once the details of the Spending Review are known the implications for Bolsover will be included in our updated MTFP which will be presented to Members in January 2025.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 To inform the MTFP process by providing strategic financial intention.

### **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 Members could decide not to approve the MTFS. The MTFP would then be prepared on assumptions not agreed by Members and there could be a risk it would need to be amended in January if the assumptions used were not agreeable. By law, the MTFP must be approved prior to the beginning of the financial year to which the budget relates, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. That Members approve the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at Appendix 1.
2. The Council continues to fund the General Fund revenue base budget from the full amount of New Homes Bonus (and related grants such as Services Grant) allocated by Government.
3. To set the strategic intention to continue to be a member of the Derbyshire Business Rates Pool while ever it is financially advantageous for the Council to do so.
4. To set the strategic intention to raise Council Tax by the maximum allowed in any given year, without triggering a Council Tax referendum, to endeavour to continue to deliver services. (The actual Council Tax for any given year will be decided by Council in the preceding March).
5. That the Council maintains a policy of a minimum level of Balances for the General Fund of £2m.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder - Cllr Clive Moesby, Executive Member for Resources

**IMPLICATIONS.**

**Finance and Risk:**            Yes             No

**Details:** Financial implications are covered throughout this report and appendix 1. The risk of not approving the MTFP before the statutory deadline might be greater without an approved MTFS.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no legal or data protection issues arising directly from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:**

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:** Not applicable to this report.

**Staffing:**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no human resource issues arising directly out of this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**DECISION INFORMATION**

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:  <b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No

<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	None
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:  Portfolio Holder for Finance

<b>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.</b>

<b>DOCUMENT INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 – 2028/29

<b>Background Papers</b>
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
None

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and outlines the various factors and influences that may impact on us over the next few years.

1.2 The MTFS links our Council strategic plan (Bolsover District – The Future) and priorities, with forecasted resources and budgets. It is then used as a framework for the detailed budget setting process to ensure that resources are effectively managed and are able to deliver the Council's key objectives as set out in the Council's plan, over the medium term.

1.3 The Council's vision for 2024-2028 is:

“To maximise our influence and opportunities within the East Midlands Combined County Authority to drive the continued delivery of excellent services, maximise local aspirations and drive economic prosperity for Bolsover District.”

1.4 Within the Council's plan one of the strategic themes is Economy. To support this theme is the priority of 'Ensuring financial sustainability and increasing revenue streams.' This is the overall purpose of this MTFS.

## **2 Key Objectives of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

2.1 There is a legal requirement for the Council to produce a balanced and robust budget for the forthcoming year. In preparation for the annual budget, officers will review the MTFS to update Members on changes to budget assumptions and service issues. The MTFS will be updated when items are further known, such as results of Government consultations or Government funding settlements.

2.2 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MFTP) will then be presented to Members in January based on the MTFS strategic assumptions. The MFTP will contain the detailed revenue budgets for the general fund and housing revenue account resulting from the annual budget process for the next 4 years at service level, along with the proposed Capital Programme.

2.3 The MTFS will ensure financial sustainability and increase revenue streams by:

- Ensuring that effective financial planning and management contributes to the Council achieving the priorities in the Council plan.
- Maximising the income from Council Tax and Business Rates.

- Maximising income from commercial and regeneration opportunities within the District.
- Ensuring Dragonfly Developments Ltd, our wholly owned company, is able to take advantage of the wider trading powers provided by the Localism Act 2011, to earn income for the Council.
- Ensuring the Council's financial standing is prudent, robust, stable, and sustainable.

2.4 The Council has a number of agreed principles as a basis for financial management and budget planning as follows:

- Emerging pressures are managed within existing overall budgets in the first instance.
- Spending is aligned to key priorities as set out in the Council's plan.
- Income is only included in the budget where it is supported by robust proposals and is deliverable.
- Commercial income will be maximised where possible to ensure that fee charging services break-even over time and are provided with a nil cost subsidy from the taxpayer or return a surplus where appropriate.
- Where possible, future liabilities are anticipated.
- Budgets are sustainable.
- Savings proposals are supported by project plans and the impact on service delivery is clear.
- Capital and revenue planning are integrated to ensure implications are fully anticipated.
- Borrowing costs will be incurred (on capital projects) only where the cost is covered by new income as part of a business case.
- The Council's reserves and balances are not used as a primary method to balance the ongoing pressures in the budget. Earmarked reserves are used for specific one-off purposes to support the delivery of corporate objectives, to mitigate risks or to allow savings to be made as an invest-to-save.



### 3 The Factors Affecting the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

3.1 In compiling the MTFS a number of factors which affect the resources and expenditure for the Council have been considered. These have been reviewed to ensure the MTFS reflects the most up-to-date financial position for the Council.

#### Resources Available

3.2 The anticipated resources to be received by the Council are included in the MTFS. The resources forecasts are based on a number of assumptions which are detailed in the following sections. The table below shows the resources that were included in the MTFP in February 2024 as we do not yet have the actual figures for 2025/26 onwards until the Spending Review 2024 is announced.

Table 1 – Estimated resources receivable by the Council (excluding fees and charges)

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£	£	£	£
<b>Government Grants</b>				
Revenue Support Grant	1,570,582	1,573,000	395,000	347,000
Business Rates S31 Grant	1,400,400	1,393,400	746,000	757,000
New Homes Bonus	361,142	0	0	0
Services Grant	18,623	18,623	0	0
3% Funding Guarantee Grant	392,305	493,000	0	0
	<b>3,743,052</b>	<b>3,478,023</b>	<b>1,141,000</b>	<b>1,104,000</b>
<b>Locally Generated Income</b>				
Council Tax	9,286,507	9,410,638	9,546,755	9,682,872
Business Rates	5,556,304	6,268,100	4,429,500	4,646,700
	<b>14,842,811</b>	<b>15,678,738</b>	<b>13,976,255</b>	<b>14,329,572</b>
	<b>18,585,863</b>	<b>19,156,761</b>	<b>15,117,255</b>	<b>15,433,572</b>
% resources locally generated	80%	82%	92%	93%

3.3 The amount of income the Council receives from the Government has significantly reduced since 2009/10. The amount received direct from the Government for 2024/25 is £7.2m lower than was received in 2009/10, as much more of the Council's income is now generated locally from Council Tax and business rates. The MTFP from February 2024, outlined the continued uncertainty surrounding local government funding and the significant assumptions that have to be made. These are given in more detail below.

### **Overdue Local Government Funding Reforms**

- 3.4 There were multiple reforms scheduled for 2020/21 that were due to have a significant impact on local authority finances when complete. These were delayed understandably in 2020 due to the pandemic and it was expected originally that some of these may not be implemented until 2023/24. The assumption held in the MTFP was that these reforms would now probably be delayed until at least 2026/27. As a reminder the areas being reformed are described below.
- 3.5 **The Fair Funding Review** will re-assess the relative needs and relative resources of local authorities. This will determine the methodology for the distribution of the funding allocated to local government to individual authorities. Initial modelling showed that the recalculated Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) was redirecting resources based on ‘need,’ which would impact negatively on most shire districts. However, there does seem to be some growing acknowledgement that authorities such as us with a low tax base, would lose out significantly under this method, and particularly if changes to business rates were brought in as planned, at the same time.
- 3.6 **Baseline Reset** – the Business Rates retention system is due to be reset. The reset will establish new Baseline Funding Levels, Business Rates Baselines and Top-ups/Tariffs for each local authority.

Top-ups/Tariffs will be reset based on:

- The amount of funding to be distributed following the Spending Review.
  - The new needs assessment resulting from the Fair Funding Review.
  - Estimates of individual local authority’s Business Rates income.
- 3.7 **Business Rates Retention** – the Government announced in the Autumn Budget 2017 that local authorities would move to a system of 75% Business Rates Retention from 2020/21. This was delayed and due to be in place from April 2022. However, in early November 2021 the government announced that plans to allow councils to retain 75% of Business Rates from April 2022 had been abandoned as it was said the policy would conflict with the government’s levelling up agenda and that the government would now ‘proceed with caution’ on the issue.
- 3.8 **Council Tax** – the Government’s future strategy for Council Tax increases will also be a key issue. The Government’s policy on referendum limits from 2024/25 onwards was not known when we prepared the MTFP, so our assumption was that the limits and strategy would remain unchanged.

### **Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25**

- 3.9 2019/20 was the final year of the four-year Local Government Finance Settlement. The Spending Review 2019 was originally planned to cover the three-year period 2020/21 – 2022/23 but was delayed. This effectively resulted in a one-year extension to the four-year settlement.

- 3.10 The Spending Review 2020 was due to cover the years 2021/22 – 2024/25 and it was anticipated it would provide clarity on the Government reforms, but this was delayed due to the pandemic. The Spending Review 2020 was therefore, another one-year extension.
- 3.11 It was hoped the Spending Review 2021 would provide an update on the Government reforms and cover the years 2022/23 – 2024/25 but again, a one-year settlement was announced for 2022/23 and there were no projected or indicative numbers for the remainder of the spending review period. Therefore, the Spending Review 2021 was again effectively a roll-over settlement.
- 3.12 It was thought that the Spending Review 2022 would cover both 2023/24 and 2024/25. However, the Local Government Finance Settlement when announced was another one-year settlement for 2023/24 only. There were no projected or indicative numbers for 2024/25 in lots of areas (although some were given), therefore, the Spending Review 2022 was effectively another roll-over settlement.
- 3.13 However, the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement announced on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, was announced as the second year of the previous year's settlement. There were no projected or indicative numbers for 2025/26 and beyond, we made assumptions for 2025/26 and all future years.
- 3.14 As previously discussed, many times, the early indicative results of the above reforms were all detrimental to us as a district Council who has seen much growth in recent years, both in business rates and New Homes Bonus grant. The removal of these funding streams will have a major effect on our financial position.
- 3.15 The current MTFP was produced before the change of Government that resulted from the general election. It is still early days for the new administration and lots of rumours are circulating about when there might be a budget announcement, what reforms may now disappear, and what the Spending Review 2024, is likely to look like.
- 3.16 Some commentators are predicting an Autumn Statement will be delivered at, or after, the party conference in October, that decisions on reforms are likely to be delayed until 2026/27 at the earliest, and that the Finance Settlement for 2025/26 is likely to be a one-year only, possibly just rolling over from 2024/25.

3.17 Once the implications of the Spending Review are known for Bolsover, they will be included in our updated MTFP. The following sections give details of the outcome of the Spending Review for 2023, which is included in our MTFP, along with possible changes being talked about for the Review due to be announced in the next few months.

#### **New Homes Bonus**

3.18 A number of times it has been announced by the Government that the current year represents the final year of New Homes Bonus funding. In the Spending Review 2023, the grant continued for another final year. We were allocated grant of £0.361m for 2024/25 which was a reduction on previous years. The future of New Homes Bonus has been consulted on by Government and we await the result. Both the Lower Tier Services Grant and the Services Grant were introduced because the future of New Homes Bonus Grant had not been decided. Commentators are predicting that the grant will be received again next year, due to a lack of time to establish and consult on an alternative.

#### **Lower Tier Services Grant**

3.19 This grant was introduced in 2021/22 to provide damping to authorities with cash-terms reductions in Core Spending Power. It provided additional funding to district Councils who are losing the most from the reduction in New Homes Bonus and gain the least from new grant increases and council tax increases. This grant has now been replaced by the Funding Guarantee Grant.

#### **Services Grant**

3.20 This was a new, one-off grant to support all services delivered by councils. This was distributed to every authority using the 2013/14 SFA. This grant continued in 2024/25 and 2025/26 but has been cut significantly. It is unlikely this specific grant will be paid to us again.

#### **Funding Guarantee Grant**

3.21 The Funding Guarantee Grant was initially introduced to ensure every authority got an increase in core spending power of at least 3%. This was to take account of the reduction in Lower Tier Services Grant and the change in New Homes Bonus allocations. Bolsover received a one-year allocation of £0.392m for 2024/25. We have estimated at a similar value, that this grant will be provided to us in some form again in 2025/26 as a proxy for the New Homes Bonus that we assumed would be lost. This grant will only be payable again if the other grants end.

#### **Revenue Support Grant**

3.22 As with New Homes Bonus, we have been led to believe that RSG is being phased out. However, the Spending Review 2022 allocated us two more years and implied funding for a further two. The Spending Review 2023 confirmed this and allocated us a further amount to take us up to 2027/28. Therefore, the current MTFP has amounts of £1.571m, £1.573m, £0.395m and £0.347m for 2024/25, 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28, respectively.

### Baseline Funding Level

3.23 The baseline is the amount of money the Government has assessed that the Council needs to keep to fund its services, based on a needs formula. The Local Government Finance Settlement updates the baseline every year, usually in line with inflation. Bolsover is able to keep 50% of any business rates growth above the baseline set by the Government, with the remainder payable to the Government (but see Retained Business Rates section for pool implications). The table below summarises the estimated Baseline Funding Level for the MTFS period and shows the current assumptions change in 2026/27, which was the revised date for the introduction of the Business Rates Reset.

	Baseline Funding Level			Change %		
	Business Rates Baseline	Business Rates Tariff	Total	Business Rates Baseline	Business Rates Tariff	Total
	£	£	£			
2019/20	8,481,995	(5,602,995)	<b>2,879,000</b>			
2020/21	8,620,695	(5,694,286)	<b>2,926,409</b>	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%
2021/22	8,620,695	(5,694,286)	<b>2,926,409</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2022/23	8,620,695	(5,694,286)	<b>2,926,409</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2023/24	9,821,928	(6,786,006)	<b>3,035,922</b>	13.9%	19.2%	3.7%
2024/25	10,268,453	(7,083,461)	<b>3,184,992</b>	4.5%	4.4%	4.9%
2025/26	10,422,000	(7,189,000)	<b>3,233,000</b>	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
2026/27	14,835,000	(11,555,000)	<b>3,280,000</b>	42.3%	60.7%	1.5%
2027/28	15,048,000	(11,721,000)	<b>3,327,000</b>	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%

### Retained Business Rates

3.24 Our Business Rates tax base represents the value of Business Rates income we estimate will be collected from businesses. Each Business Rates taxpayer account has a rateable valuation provided by the Valuation Office Agency, multiplied by a business rates multiplier which increases each year and is set by the Government.

3.25 In total Bolsover retains 40% of Business Rates collected during the year, after deductions for mandatory and discretionary reliefs, the cost of income collections, including losses, and for the cost of changes to rateable values as a result of appeals. The remaining amounts are paid on the basis of 50% to central government, 9% to Derbyshire County Council and 1% to Derbyshire Fire Authority.

- 3.26 Bolsover's Retained Business Rates income (the 40%) is then subject to a tariff, which is increased annually by the retail price index and is paid to central government. This tariff payment funds other authorities where their Business Rates are considered to be disproportionately low. The level of the tariff is unique to each local authority and is announced as part of the Spending Review.
- 3.27 Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015, the Derbyshire Business Rates pool has been in operation. This consists of all eight Derbyshire district or borough Councils, Derbyshire County, Derby City and Derbyshire Fire Authority. Instead of each district or borough Council paying 50% of their growth above the baseline over to Government, it is kept within the pool and distributed amongst all the members on an agreed basis.
- 3.28 There are a number of risks that could affect the level of Business Rate income collected, and as such, reduce the anticipated amount of Retained Business Rates. The most significant risks are as follows:
- Unpredictable increases in exemptions and reliefs due to different property usage.
  - Successful business rate appeals dating back to earlier years.
  - Slower than anticipated local economic growth.
  - Retail price index increases on the tariff, being higher than local economic growth.
  - Uncollectable debts as a result of worsening economic conditions.
- 3.29 One of the largest financial risks that the Council is facing is around how the Government will re-set the Business Rates Baseline for the Council. The growth being encouraged by the Council within the business sector means we have the highest level of growth in the Derbyshire Business Rates pool.
- 3.30 In 2023/24 we were £5m above our Business Rates Baseline so contributed £2.5m into the pool and were able to transfer £1m into our Business Rates Growth Protection Reserve as we planned in the MTFP.
- 3.31 The Business Rates income in the current MTFP has the worst-case scenario for 2025/26 to 2027/28 and includes no smoothing from the Government of significant losses because the detail is unknown. This will be updated as soon as any information is made available.

### **Council Tax**

- 3.32 Council Tax is charged by local authorities on residential properties. The Valuation Office Agency decides the correct band based on the value of property at 1 April 1991. Local authorities set the charge based on a Band D property each year.

3.33 Council Tax is the main source of funding for the provision of general fund services. It is determined locally but the Government indicate what upper limit they consider acceptable on a yearly basis. The legislative requirement to hold a referendum is triggered if this limit is exceeded. For 2024/25, District Councils were permitted to increase their share of the Council Tax by the greater of 3% or £5. These limits were unchanged from the previous year. It is currently unknown whether this will remain the same for 2025/26 or whether the £5 limit will be increased as some groups, including the District Council's Network, have lobbied for. Commentators are predicting no change in the limits for the first year of the new Government.

3.34 In calculating our recent funding settlements, the Government has assumed that we will increase Council Tax by the maximum level allowed.

3.35 For 2024/25 we increased our share of the bill for a Band D property by £5.89 per annum which was 2.99% and equated to 11p per week. This raised £136,117 in revenue income. This same increase has been assumed for all years of the MTFP for exemplifying the financial position only.

3.36 The breakdown of the 2024/25 Council Tax bill over all the preceptors is as follows:

<i>Derbyshire County Council</i>		£1,355.20
<i>Derbyshire County Council - Adult Social Care element</i>		£196.53
Derbyshire County Council Total	66.9%	£1,551.73
Bolsover District Council	8.7%	£202.89
Police + Crime Commissioner	12%	£279.60
Derbyshire Fire Authority	3.8%	£88.41
Town + Parish Councils (average)	8.5%	£198.21
The total charge for the average Band D bill 2024/25	<b>100%</b>	<b>£2,320.84</b>

### **Council Tax Base**

3.37 The Council Tax base for 2024/25 of 23,122.93 was determined by the Chief Financial Officer under delegated powers in December 2023. This represents the number of Band D equivalent properties that we collect Council Tax from. However, the total number of properties who pay Council Tax is reduced for properties where discounts for such as single occupier and/or Council Tax support are claimed.

- 3.38 The more Band D equivalent properties the Council has, the more income can be generated for the Council from Council Tax. Properties valued at Band A generate less income for the Council as the charge is 70% of the charge for a Band D property. The Council Tax base for Bolsover District Council is exceptionally low and this is a disadvantage for us. If another Council with a much higher Tax base increased their Council Tax by the same percentage as us, they would receive far more income than us. This needs to be remembered when Council Tax is becoming one of the main ways the Government is allowing us to generate income.
- 3.39 The 2024/25 Tax base was an increase on the 2023/24 calculation. The Tax base for 2025/26 is currently being determined.

### **Reserves and Balances**

- 3.40 The Local Government Act 2003 (Section 25) requires the Council's Section 151 Officer to report to Council on the Robustness of Budget Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves, for consideration immediately prior to setting the Budget and Council Tax. This is subject to external audit review to assess value for money and a going concern opinion.
- 3.41 The Section 151 Officer must consider the level of reserves needed to meet estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement. The Council keeps a level of reserves to protect against the risk of any uncertainties or unforeseen expenditure. Much like using savings to offset monthly household bills the use of financial reserves cannot solve a budget problem outright but allows for smoothing of impacts or allows the Council time to ride any short-term situations before returning to normal. Therefore, reserves are used to:
- Manage the impact of funding reductions over a longer period.
  - Invest in projects that allow services to be delivered cheaper.
  - Take one-off hits for the council without the need to further reduce service budgets.
  - Provide capacity to absorb any non-achievement of planned budget reductions in each year.
  - Provide capacity to absorb non-achievement of potential income, planned to be included in the MTFP in each year.
  - To temporarily roll over unused portions of grants that can legally be used later.
  - To insure against major unexpected events.
  - To protect against general risk.



- To guard against emerging specific risks, such as business rate appeals, Council Tax support funding cuts and welfare reform.

3.42 Best practice guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), states that the General Fund balance may be between 5% and 100% of net expenditure. The Council's £2m minimum working balance represents 14% of total net expenditure.

3.43 In addition to the General Fund balance, the Council retains a number of earmarked reserves on the balance sheet. Some are required to be held for statutory reasons, some are needed to comply with proper accounting practice and others have been set up voluntarily to earmark resources for future spending plans or potential liabilities.

3.44 The Council has continued to develop its prudent financial management arrangements through the development of earmarked reserves to mitigate against potential future risks. As issues arise, the potential requirement for an earmarked reserve is considered. New earmarked reserves are formally considered as part of the detailed budget process to ensure that any new risks identified are mitigated, and throughout the annual budget monitoring process as risks arise or become clearer.

3.45 The detailed budget process includes an assessment of risk, the adequacy of General Fund Reserves and a review of earmarked reserves, to both create and change earmarked reserve levels and to also release reserves which are no longer required.

The table below shows the level of general fund usable reserves and balances as at 1 April 2024.

	<b>Balance at</b>
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>01-Apr-24</b>
	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Balances:</b>	
General Fund Balance	<b>(2,001)</b>

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Balance at 01-Apr-24 £'000</b>
<b>Usable Reserves:</b>	
Area Based Grant	(48)
Covid-19 - Reserve	(14)
General	(1,821)
NDR Growth Protection	(12,517)
Insurance - GF	(429)
IT and Office Equipment	(1,611)
Legal Costs	(386)
Local Development Scheme	(177)
Planning Fees	(139)
Transformation Reserve	(3,056)
Vehicle Repair and Renewal - GF	(2,615)
3G Pitch, Carpet Renewal Reserve	(200)
<b>Total Reserves and Balances</b>	<b>(25,014)</b>

#### **4 Budget Pressures**

- 4.1 The table below is from the 2023/24 Outturn report. It is the latest position for all years in the current MTFP before we start the revised budget and MTFP process. These figures will be updated and presented to Members in December and January.
- 4.2 The table shows that the Council is currently not forecasting any budget shortfall in any year due to us making transfers to/(from) the NNDR Growth Protection Reserve as planned in the MTFP. At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the balance on the reserve was £12.517m. The planned movement on this reserve means at the end of the current MTFP there is forecast to be a balance of £4.160m remaining for future years.

	<b>2024/25 Budget £000</b>	<b>2025/26 Budget £000</b>	<b>2026/27 Budget £000</b>	<b>2027/28 Budget £000</b>
Net Cost of Services	13,907	14,266	14,747	15,342
Net debt charges + investment interest	(1,052)	(806)	(1,185)	(1,235)
Net t/f to/(from) reserves + balances	1,178	1,462	367	321
Net t/f to/(from) NNDR Growth Protection Reserve	188	(620)	(3,803)	(4,122)
Parish precept	3,968	3,968	3,968	3,968
Funding from council tax, business rates and government grants	(18,189)	(18,270)	(14,094)	(14,274)
<b>Use of GF balance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

4.3 Once the details of the Spending Review are known the implications for Bolsover will be included in our updated MTFP and the figures for 2028/29 will be included in the plan for the first time.

4.4 Since 2011/12, Bolsover has delivered savings of over £5m. We have a good record of finding efficiencies and new ways of working but new budget savings are becoming increasingly more difficult to identify and deliver now we have reduced service budgets to minimum levels. For this reason, it is essential that the Council continues to identify areas where costs can be reduced, or income increased to close any budget gaps.

4.5 A number of areas have already been identified around additional income as follows:

- Potential Council Tax increases and growth in the tax base from new properties or bringing empty properties back into use.
- Income from a proposed crematorium.
- Income from providing funding for Dragonfly Development Ltd.
- Income from the operating profit earned by Dragonfly Development Ltd.

## **5 CIPFA Financial Management Code**

- 5.1 CIPFA has developed a Financial Management Code (FM Code) which is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist local authorities in demonstrating their financial sustainability. The FM Code has been introduced because the exceptional financial circumstances faced by local authorities have revealed concerns about fundamental weaknesses in financial management, particularly in relation to a small number of high-profile failures across local government which threaten stakeholder's confidence in the sector as a whole.
- 5.2 Although the FM Code does not have legislative backing, it applies to all local authorities, and it must be demonstrated that the requirements of the FM Code are being met. Demonstrating this compliance with the Code is a collective responsibility of Elected Members, the Section 151 Officer, and the Corporate Leadership Team.

## **6 Dragonfly Group**

- 6.1 Dragonfly Development Ltd is a development company limited by shares. Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Ltd is a management company which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Dragonfly Development Ltd, as a company limited by shares. These two entities form the Dragonfly Group, and they are both wholly owned by the Council. Governance arrangements are set out in the Group Shareholder Agreement. This agreement regulates the activities of both companies and ensures that the Council retains influence over strategic objectives and significant decisions of Dragonfly Development Ltd.
- 6.2 A full business case was commissioned from Sharpe Pritchard (Public Sector Lawyers) during 2022/23 and aligned to the requirements of the HM Treasury Five Case Model and the CIPFA Local Authority Owned Companies good practice guide. The business case produced, demonstrated that Dragonfly Development Ltd can be a viable proposition that will provide the Council with a positive income stream.
- 6.3 The business case showed that the Company makes a loss in the first 3 years of operation and makes a profit after tax for the first time in 2026/27. The business case also showed the losses made in the first 3 years of operation during development and before it starts generating returns, are recouped by 2034 under the assumptions used at the time. Assumptions would be such as interest rates/costs of materials/achievable income, to name but a few.

- 6.4 As with any business case it is important that actual costs remain close to the costs estimated in producing the business case to ensure the financial performance of Dragonfly is viable and a positive income stream is provided for the Council. At the time of writing this Strategy, the financial statements for 2023/24 for the two companies are being prepared by their external auditor. It is anticipated that the statements will show Dragonfly Development Ltd made a profit before tax in 2023/24. This will allow the repayment to the Council during 2024/25 of loans provided by the Council to the company, in previous years.
- 6.5 To protect the Council, as a minimum, monitoring of the business case and the performance of Dragonfly against it, will take place on at least a quarterly basis in respect of the transferred services. This will then be reported to Members as part of the budget monitoring process.

## **Bolsover District Council**

### **Meeting of the Council on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

### **Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24**

### **Report of the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Scrutiny Officer

#### **PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- To provide Members of the Council with an annual overview of the work programme of the Committees during 2023/24, in accordance with functional responsibilities of Scrutiny as detailed in Part 2, Article 6.3(2) and Part 3.6.1(10) of the Council's Constitution.

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#### **REPORT DETAILS**

##### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The main purpose of the report is to allow Members to review the summary of Scrutiny's activities during 2023/24.
- 1.2 The report provides an overview on the core activity for each of the Committee's and details some of the impacts.

##### **2. Details of Proposal or Information**

- 2.1 Part 2, Article 6.1 of the constitution requires the Council to appoint four Scrutiny Committees to discharge the functions conferred by Part 1A, s9F of the Local Government Act 2000.

- 2.2 Within the Terms of Reference (Part 2, Article 6.2), the four Scrutiny Committees have delivered the following functions:
- i. review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
  - ii. make reports and/or recommendations to the Council and/or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions;
  - iii. consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
  - iv. exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive; and
  - v. assist the Council and the Executive with the development of future policies and strategies.
- 2.3 Each of the four Scrutiny Committees have conducted their proceedings in accordance with the Terms of Reference at Part 3.6.1 and the Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The attached provides an overview of the work completed by Members of the Scrutiny Committees during 2023/24, and reviews the impact of work completed.
- 3.2 Members are asked to note the report as required by Article 6.3(2) of the Council's Constitution.

### **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 This report and the appendix have been prepared on behalf of the Scrutiny Committees with a view to informing Council of the Committee's undertaking of their statutory responsibilities.
- 4.2 There are no alternative options as Members are required to report to Council on an annual basis as determined in the Constitution.

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### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. That Members review the attached Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee's activities in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

**Finance and Risk:**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no financial implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**            Yes             No

**Details:** The Scrutiny Committee function is a statutory requirement pursuant to Part 1A, s9F of the Local Government Act 2000.

In carrying out scrutiny reviews the Council is exercising its scrutiny powers as laid out in Part 1A, s9F(2) of the Local Government Act 2000.

Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act requires every local authority to have a Crime and Disorder Committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions. (Responsible authorities are effectively the statutory partners within a community safety partnership i.e. Police, local authorities (county and district), Fire and Rescue Authority, Probation Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups.)

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:**                                    Yes             No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:** The Scrutiny structure of the Council ensures there is a dedicated group of Members to consider all service aspects related to the environment and climate change.

The Review being monitored by Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee – Review of Council’s Approach to Carbon Reduction– aims to enable the Council to clarify immediate priorities for action, as well as longer term plan to ensure the Council and District is net zero by 2050.

The Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee’s Review of the Council’s Energy Policy for Local Housing - aims to assist the Council in improving energy efficiency in local housing and promoting the use of sustainable energy methods.

The Customer Services Scrutiny Committee’s Review of Effectiveness of Council’s Waste Collection and Disposal Education aims to increase rates of recycling across the district and reduce the levels of waste sent to landfill to reduce the District’s carbon footprint.

**Staffing:**            Yes             No

**Details:** None from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service



## DECISION INFORMATION

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>  A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b>  <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No
<p><b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b></p>	N/A
<p><b>Consultation:</b>  <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Members</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Details:  Committee  Members</p>

<p><b>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing.</b></p>
<p>Scrutiny evaluates delivery against all Corporate Ambitions and Priorities</p>

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

<p><b>Background Papers</b>  <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p>



# Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2023/24

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# Foreword of the Scrutiny Chairs

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Throughout 2023/24, our Scrutiny Committees have continued to carry out their functions in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

Following advice from Internal Audit and revised guidance at a national level, the Finance Corporate and Overview and Scrutiny Committee was established in May 2023 to separate the Audit and Scrutiny functions. The committee has been responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategies and associated policies; for receiving and scrutinising the Executive's budget proposals; for receiving quarterly updates on performance against relevant Corporate Plan targets from Portfolio Holders; and has provided a forum for Scrutiny Members to review and scrutinise the Council's financial position and for Scrutiny Chairs to update information from their respective Committees

The Finance Corporate and Overview and Scrutiny Committee has delivered its function in accordance with its remit featured in the Council's Constitution. The three thematic committees continued to deliver their responsibilities in line with their terms of reference and monitored the delivery of recommendations from completed past reviews.

Scrutiny Members' focus over the next year needs to be on the challenges facing both the Authority and service provision by our partners. We aim to ensure that Scrutiny makes a valuable contribution through its work. We appreciate the continued support of colleagues on the Executive and senior officers and look forward to another year of collaborative working for the benefit of our communities.

***Councillor Donna Hales***

**Chair of the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee (2023/24)**

***Councillors Catherine Tite and Emma Stevenson***

**Chair of the Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee (2023/24)**

***Councillor Tom Kirkham***

**Chair of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee (2023/24)**

***Councillor Lucy King***

**Chair of the Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee (2023/24)**

# Summary of 2023/24

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## Constitution Updates

As noted in the Foreword, work took place during Spring 2023 to create a revised scrutiny structure and associated terms of reference as a result of the national guidance from CIPFA on the separation of Audit and Scrutiny.

This brings all sections related to scrutiny up to date with current legislation and the revised statutory guidance issued during 2019.

## Member Training

A range of training took place for Scrutiny Members. This included Data and Managing Council Performance training from LGA, Questioning Skills for Scrutiny training from EMC/CfGS and Scoping and Managing Scrutiny Reviews from EMC/CfGS. Members also Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Finance Training for the newly established committee; the Chair of this committee also attended training on Effective Budget Scrutiny at Nottinghamshire County Council from EMC/CfGS). CfGS provided training on Best Practice and Scrutiny Essentials for all Scrutiny Members and Scrutiny Chairs also attended training for chairing skills by ADSO.

## Customer Services Scrutiny Committee

During 2023/24, Members received a range of reports to Committee. Some were routine update reports and others were linked to service transformation and development of new policies:

### Policy/Strategy/Programme Monitoring Reports:

- Housing Strategy 2021-24 – Action Plan Monitoring Update

### Policy Development:

- Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Equality Plan and Objectives 2023-27
- Business Rates Mandatory and Discretionary Rate Relief Policy
- Consultation on Draft Allocations Policy
- Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Housing Strategy 2024-2029: Consultation

### Performance Review Reports:

- Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints 2022/23 – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 and Annual Summary
- LG&SCO and Housing Ombudsman Annual Report 2022/23
- Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints 2023/24 – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023
- Customer Service Standards and Compliments, Comments and Complaints Report 2022/23 – 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023
- Policy Review

## Review Work

- Review of Members ICT & Support and ICT Service Delivery: post scrutiny monitoring
- Review of Effectiveness of Council's Waste Collection and Disposal Education

## Review of Effectiveness of Council's Waste Collection and Disposal Education

The Customer Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of effectiveness of the Council's waste collection and disposal education as part of the 2023-24 Work Programme.

The issue was initially raised due to concerns of contamination rates within recycling waste collections, creating additional costs to the Authority through contamination charges. Committee Members believed that the main cause of this issue was due to residents not knowing how to use their bins correctly and effectively.

The aim of the review was:

- To ensure that the Council's approach to waste disposal advice and education is reaching all target audiences to reduce current contamination rates and improve recycling rates by way of increased resident participation.

The objectives agreed were:

- Assess the current approach of the Council to waste disposal advice and education and the channels used.
- Examine the accessibility and reach of current communications on waste disposal/education
- Assess current levels of performance and action taken to ensure this is controlled within expected limits.

The key issues identified for investigation included:

- Impact of current contamination rates on recycling targets, additional costs to the Council.
- Usage of Household Waste Recycling Centre in Bolsover and whether there is clear messaging as to what can and can't be taken to the site.
- Reduction in size of black residual waste bins. Costs associated with recycling by way of burgundy bin, with second available on request.
- Potential use of skip collections in problem wards or Freighter Days – this does not always encourage correct recycling and results in bulky type waste collection. This further increases residual waste which may normally be taken to a household waste recycling centre and therefore increases the amount of residual waste collected by the Council. This then lowers the overall combined recycling rates due to the amount recycled being calculated as the percentage diverted from the residual waste stream and not increasing as skip collections do.

The key findings arising from the review were:

- That there is most confusion over the burgundy bin and which items are supposed to be recycled and which items cannot be recycled.
- That since the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Council has struggled to regenerate school programmes and has not yet returned to the pre-COVID standards of recycling education for young people.
- That the Council acknowledges the introduction of separate weekly food waste collections from 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 will influence the next major stepped change in Bolsover's combined recycling performance, by breaking the 50% barrier to head towards the 2035 target of 65%.
- That it is crucial that the Council considers accessibility of communication services and the statutory requirements with regards to education on Council services that affect all residents so that every service user can benefit from the waste collection services that the Council provides.
- That the Council should look towards the future of Bolsover by considering innovative modern methods of communication to consider ways to engage young people and the future residents of the District.
- That some of the Council's communication services are not being fully utilised due to a lack of educational content being received from the relevant specialist officers.
- That the Council must effectively utilise their current methods of communication to the highest standard with efficiency and coherence to frequently remind residents on the importance of recycling, the correct methods of recycling, and the best practice of how to engage with the Council's waste collection services.

The Committee put together 11 recommendations, as outlined in section 2 of the final report, which will hopefully assist the Council in improving recycling rates and reducing rates of waste contamination by improving the effectiveness of the Council's waste collection and disposal education. This review is now within its monitoring phase with reports expected in January and July 2025.



## Climate Change & Communities Scrutiny Committee

During 2023/24, Members received a wide range of reports to Committee:

### Policy/Strategy/Programme Monitoring Reports:

- Sustainable Community Strategy 2020-23 and current Partnership delivery – Monitoring Update
- Review of Community Safety Partnership – Deliberate Fires Group Monitoring Report
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Monitoring Update
- Annual Review of Community Safety Partnership (Both Public and Exempt session)

### Policy Development:

- New Council Ambition 2024-2028 – Scrutiny Consultation
- Safeguarding Policy for Adults and Safeguarding Policy for Children – Consultation on Refresh
- Fire Safety Policy
- Review of the Council's Policy under the Licensing Act 2003

### Performance Review Reports:

- None for 2023/24

## Annual Review of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 requires every Local Authority to have a specified Committee (the “Crime and Disorder Committee”) with the power to:

- Review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.
- Make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions.

(Responsible authorities are effectively the statutory partners within a community safety partnership i.e. Police, Local Authorities (County and District), Fire and Rescue Authority, Probation Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups. This is determined by section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (c. 37)).

Following on from last year's review Members wished to focus on the ongoing impact of the pandemic on trends in service demand and delivery, and current engagement by partners.

Key issues presented and areas of questioning included:

- Delivery of the current Partnership Plan and Plan Priorities 2023 – 2026.
- PCC New Priorities (Police Crime Plan 2022 – 2025).
- Summary of achievements 2023/24 inc. Diversionary Activities and Crime Prevention

Officers were invited to attend from Bolsover District Council Community Safety Team and Enforcement Team, and Derbyshire Fire & Rescue Service.

## Review Work

- Review of Council's Approach to Carbon Reduction: Post-Scrutiny Monitoring
- Review of Council's Policy on Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons: Post-Scrutiny Monitoring
- Review of Voluntary & Community Sector Grant Allocations: Post-Scrutiny Monitoring
- Review of the Council's Energy Policy for Local Housing

## Review of the Council's Energy Policy for Local Housing

The Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of the Council's energy policy for local housing, as part of the 2023-24 Work Programme.

The issue was initially raised due to the District's requirement of improved energy resilience within the local housing stock as well as concerns over residents being under pressure due to the rising costs of energy adding to the current cost of living crisis. This review will assist in determining the Council's response to the national changes to EPC requirements.

The aim of the review was:

- To ensure that the Council has a clear policy on energy efficiency standards across Council stock and long-term energy resilience across all housing stock within the District.

The objectives agreed were:

- Clarify the Council's energy policy and minimum energy efficiency standard for:
  - Council Housing
  - New build properties
  - Private rented sector
  - Owner-occupiers (existing private stock)
- Ensure the Council has clear data analysis of its current housing stock to establish current Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings and areas for improvement.
- Analyse existing Local Plan policies in relation to energy efficiency and requirements for new build housing and assess if they support the Council's net zero target.
- Improve public information/education on grants and energy efficiency.
- Ensure there is a clear Council approach to improving energy ratings of private rented sector stock.
- Clarify opportunities for Dragonfly Development Ltd. (DDL) to become a lead local exemplar offering energy improvements to the owner-occupier sector.
- Clarify position/policy in relation to installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points for Council Housing (inc. Motability vehicles).

The key findings arising from the review were:

- That the Council has clear data analysis of current housing stock.
- That the Council's Local Plan policies relating to energy efficiency and requirements support the Council's net zero target.
- That the Council's recent 2024 Private Sector Housing Strategy provides a clear approach to improving energy ratings of private rented sector stock.

- That it is currently not in the budget or remit to become a lead local exemplar offering energy improvements to the owner-occupier sector, however, research would still be useful to investigate potential opportunities in the future.
- That it is important that the Council continues to utilise its current methods of communication such as Intouch and Bolsover TV to improve public information/education on grants and energy efficiency.
- That the Council's website lacks easily accessible detailed information regarding several key areas of energy saving for local housing. These areas include:
- The Council's energy policy and minimum energy efficiency standard for council housing, new build properties, and the private rented sector.
- Public information regarding energy saving grants.
- The Council's existing policies, strategies and plans regarding EV charging stations for Bolsover District as well as any basic information on EV's for residents in general.

The Committee have put together five recommendations which will assist the Council in improving the Council's energy policy for local housing.

This review is now within its monitoring phase with reports expected in March 2025 and September 2025.

## Local Growth Scrutiny Committee

During 2023/24, Members have received a range of reports to Committee, some allowing us to monitor delivery of core projects and others to develop new policies for the Authority.

### Policy/Strategy/Programme Monitoring Reports:

- Business Growth Strategy – Monitoring Update
- Update on Levelling Up Fund Bid for Bolsover
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Monitoring Update
- Dragonfly Development Limited (DDL) Delivery Update
- Pleasley Vale Regeneration Programme
- Tourism Strategy – Monitoring Update
- Business Engagement Strategy

### Policy Development:

- Draft Tourism Strategy 2023-2025 – Consultation
- Business Engagement Strategy (BES) and Action Plan – Final draft Consultation

### Performance Review Report:

- None for 2023/24

## Review Work

- Review of Town Centre Regeneration Frameworks
- Review of Dragonfly Development Limited (DDL) Service Level Agreements

## Finance & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee

The Finance and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee has provided oversight of a range of core governance and accountability arrangements, responses to the recommendations of assurance providers and helping to ensure robust arrangements were maintained. This Committee has provided a forum for Scrutiny Members to review and scrutinise the Council's financial position.

The Scrutiny element of the Committee has been responsible for receiving and scrutinising the Council's Treasury Management Strategies and associated policies, reviewing budget proposals in line with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution, and reviewing performance against the Council's Corporate Ambitions and associated performance indicators.

During 2023/24, Members received a range of reports to Committee. Some were routine update reports and others were linked to service transformation.

### Treasury Management Reports:

- Treasury Strategy Reports 2024/25 – 2027/28
- Treasury Management Strategy

### Capital:

- Capital Strategy

### Borrowing & Investment:

- Corporate Investment Strategy

### Budget Monitoring:

- Annual Corporate Debt Monitoring Performance Report 2022/23
- Budget Monitoring Report – Financial Outturn 2022/23
- Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 1 – April to June 2023/24
- Budget Monitoring Report – Quarter 2 – July to September 2023/24
- Revised Budgets 2023/24
- Setting of Council Tax 2024/25
- Proposed Budget – Medium Term Financial Plan 2024/25 – 2027/28

### Performance Review Reports:

- Member Briefing on Bolsover District Council's Performance Management Framework (Verbal report)
- Corporate Ambitions Performance Update – January to March 2022 (Q4 – 2022/23)
- Corporate Ambitions Performance Update – April to June 2023 (Q1 – 2023/24)
- Corporate Ambitions Performance Update – July to September 2023 (Q2 – 2023/24)
- Corporate Ambitions Performance Update – October to December 2023 (Q3 – 2023/24)
- Corporate Ambitions Performance Update – January 2024 – March 2024 (Q4 – 2023/24)

## The Committee's Main Achievements/Outcomes

The Committee aims to add value to the organisation through its activity and in particular has:

- Reviewed non-financial performance against the Council's Ambition targets on a quarterly basis and invited officers to attend the Committee meetings to help Members understand where performance was not on target.
- Scrutinised the Medium-Term Financial Plan prior to recommending to Executive the budget proposals in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.
- Reviewed quarterly budget monitoring reports.
- Scrutinised the setting of Council Tax rates.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is considered that the Committee has made a positive contribution to the Council's overall governance and control arrangements, including risk management.

# Scrutiny Impact

During 2023/24, the three themed committees monitored implementation of review recommendations. Progress across the year was as follows:

Review	Recommendations						Status
	Achieved	Achieved (Behind target)	On track	Overdue	Extended	Alert	
Council's Approach to Carbon Reduction	5	0	0	0	4	0	Progress for this recommendation is now pending following the newly appointed Climate Officer beginning work.
Review of Members ICT & Support and ICT Service Delivery	7	3	0	4	4	0	Review almost complete pending decisions to be made by the Chief Exec and Assistant Director of ICT.
Council Policy on Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons	5	0	0	0	0	0	This review is now complete.
Review of Council-Owned Adapted Accommodation	4	2	3	0	1	0	Review on track to be complete.
Review of Integration of Social Value to BDC Policy and Delivery	2	0	0	0	4	0	Several recommendations extended, action to be transferred to partnerships team.
<b>Total No. of Recommendations Monitored</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	

A number of the reviews are due to complete their monitoring within 2024/25 with recommendations expected to be implemented. The Customer Services Committee and the Climate Change and Communities Committee also completed reviews on the Council's approach to waste disposal education and the Council's energy policy for housing. The recommendations from these new reviews will be implemented over the next 6–12-month period and scrutiny will continue to monitor their progress.

# The year ahead

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## Setting the Committee Work Programmes

A call for suggested topics went out to all Members and senior leadership in Spring 2024 prior to the national election. Topic suggestions were put forward from a range of councillors, service managers and directors. The three thematic committees discussed the various subject areas put forward to review and each committee has decided on what they intend to investigate and scrutinise for the 2024/25 municipal year and have drawn up draft work programmes.

The Local Growth Scrutiny Committee intend to review the Council's approach to industrial enterprise zones within Bolsover District to explore potential opportunities for growth however as this subject area has recently been evaluated by Development and Planning, the committee will instead receive an interim report on East Midland Investment Zones in Spring and Autumn 2025. The Customer Services Scrutiny Committee intend to undertake a review of the Council's security procedures and protocols at the Arc to evaluate what policies are already in place and identify areas for improvement. It has been proposed that the Local Growth Committee will work collaboratively with the Customer Services Committee on this review from a facilities perspective. Final details of this collaborative joint scrutiny review are still in discussion. Lastly, the Climate Change and Communities Committee intend to undertake a review of environmental despoilment education and enforcement across the District with the aim of to reducing littering, fly-tipping and dog fouling. The Finance and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to evaluate and scrutinise the Council's financial position through critical examination of the Budget and Policy Framework.





**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Council on 9th October 2024**

**Council Chamber Audio Visual Solution**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is public.
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Karen Hanson

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

To seek approval from Council for funding to enable the implementation of a new Council Chamber audio and visual solution.

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**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 During 2022/23, the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee concluded its review of Member’s ICT and Support, and ICT Service Delivery and made 13 recommendations to Executive.
- 1.2 One of the key findings was *‘that the ICT equipment within the Chamber and meeting rooms required an urgent review to ensure it remained fit for purpose for current and future delivery of meetings. This would need to include replacement microphones, voting facilities, provision of cameras to enable full use of online meeting software and recording/streaming of meetings where required. Due to ongoing lobbying for a change of legislation in relation to local government meetings, the Council must ensure it is able to deliver more accessible public meetings where required.’*
- 1.3 This finding was one of the recommendations approved by Executive at its meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2023. Additional feedback from the Member’s working group that was formed after the review, established that Members had experienced issues with the quality of the microphones and the sound quality of the speakers in the Council Chamber.
- 1.4 The current Council Chamber equipment is approximately 9 years old; the microphones are no longer manufactured or in support, and several of the microphones are no longer working. The current equipment is not configured to enable the streaming or recording of meetings automatically. A work around was arranged during the pandemic, but this required additional staff to operate the cameras and produce the streams.

- 1.5 The Council has therefore engaged audio-visual suppliers to provide demonstrations of solutions to replace the current audio-visual equipment in the Council Chamber with fit-for-purpose solutions, taking into considerations the Scrutiny recommendations and feedback from Members. A demonstration of a potential solution was provided to the Leader and Deputy Leader, Senior Managers and Governance in May 2024, which has led to this report.
- 1.6 The project to procure the new solution for the Council Chamber is likely to cost in the region of £180,000, this will be added to the capital programme, and the cost can be funded through the Council's ICT Reserve. The maintenance of the system will be £5,000 per annum, and at the outset this figure is usually set for 4 years. This will be a cost to the Council's general fund.
- 1.7 Following approval of the budget outlined above, work will commence immediately to procure the equipment.

## **2 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 2.1 Purchasing new equipment is the only way to solve the issues identified by the Customer Services Scrutiny Committee, the current equipment cannot be upgraded or altered to make the required improvements.

## **3 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 3.1 To do nothing would mean Members' would see no improvement in their Council Chamber meeting experience.

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 1 That Council approve a budget totalling £180,000 to be funded from the ICT Reserve to purchase audio-visual equipment to make the Council Chamber fit-for-purpose.
- 2 That Council approve an increase in the revenue budget of £5,000 per annum to cover the maintenance of the system.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder - Cllr Clive Moesby, Executive Member for Resources

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### **IMPLICATIONS.**

**Finance and Risk:**            Yes             No

**Details:**

There is sufficient balance in the ICT Reserve to fund the capital purchase of £180,000. The revenue cost of £5,000 per annum, will be a cost to the Council's general fund.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**            Yes             No

**Details:**

There are no legal or data protection issues arising directly from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:**

**Details:**

Not applicable to this report.

**Staffing:** Yes  No

**Details:**

There are no human resource issues arising directly out of this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**DECISION INFORMATION**

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>  A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies.</i></p>	No
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b>  <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

<p><b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b></p>	All
<p><b>Consultation:</b>  <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>SLT</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Details:

**Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.**

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**DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

Appendix No	Title

**Background Papers**

*(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).*

None



**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of Council on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Recommendations of the Employment and Personnel Committee**

**Chair of the Employment and Personnel Committee**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Governance and Civic Manager

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

For Council to consider a budget increase for proposals made and agreed at the Employment and Personnel Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024 regarding the establishment of an additional post in Customer Services and a review of the Governance team.

Council's role is to agree the budget implications following full scrutiny of the proposals put to the Employment and Personnel Committee.

**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background and details of the proposal**

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024, the Employment and Personnel Committee considered a proposal for changes to the Council's establishment.
- 1.2 The remit of the Committee is to consider and deal with issues relating to the Council's establishment structure and employees, and to recommend to Council in relation to any growth in the establishment resulting in budgetary increase.

**Customer Services**

- 1.3 The Customer Services team are looking to create a new permanent Customer Advisor/Complaints Administrator post to assist with the increased volume of work. This would be a full-time position with three days per week (22 hours) dedicated to the complaints handling, with two days operating as a Customer Advisor (15 hours). This would be a Grade 5 post. The proposal would allow for a reduction in the overtime budget of £8,000 and would require an increased budget of £26,072.09 to fund the post. However, some of the increased cost would be recharged to the HRA and Dragonfly based on support service calculations.

## Governance

- 1.4 A review of the Governance team had been undertaken and a new structure was proposed. The revised structure would replace the current 0.6 FTE Governance & Civic Manager and 0.4 FTE Governance & Civic Manager / 0.6 FTE Governance & Civic Officer with 1 FTE Governance & Civic Manager, as a Grade 10 post, and 1 FTE Senior Governance & Civic Officer, as a Grade 7 post. An increased budget of £36,641 is required to fund the revised structure.
- 1.5 The reports and Minutes of the Employment and Personnel Committee meeting are not appended to this report but are available to Members on the Council's website, through the Mod.gov app or on request from the Governance Team.

## **2. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 2.1 The proposals have been fully considered by the Employment and Personnel Committee who agreed with the reasons and rationale for changes to the services and therefore recommend to Council an increase in the Council's General Fund budget to fund the new structure.

## **3 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 3.1 Council are to consider the financial implications only. Council may choose to approve all, some, or none of the requests for growth to the establishment.

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## **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That Council approve the growth in salary budgets (General Fund) as set out in paragraphs 1.3 and 1.4 of the report as recommended by the Employment and Personnel Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Approved by Employment and Personnel Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### **IMPLICATIONS:**

**Finance and Risk:**            Yes             No

**Details:** For the establishment of an additional post in Customer Services an increased budget of £29,072.09 is required to fund the Grade 5 post. However, some of the extra cost (42%) will be recovered from the HRA through the support service recharge process.

For the restructure of the Governance team an increased budget of £36,641 is required.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**            Yes             No

**Details:** There are no legal or data protection implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:** Yes  No

**Details:** There will be no environmental impact arising from this post.

**Staffing:** Yes  No

**Details:** The Council's policies and procedures will be followed for recruitment these posts.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

## DECISION INFORMATION

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:  <b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
<b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No

<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	None
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: Employment and Personnel Committee

**Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, and Environment.**

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title

**Background Papers**

*(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).*

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of Council on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024**

**Proportionality and Appointments to Committees and Advisory Groups**

**Report of the Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Report By</b>	Jim Fieldsend, Director of Governance and Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

To report to Council changes to the allocation of Committee seats following a change in the political makeup of the Council.

**REPORT DETAILS**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 At the end of August 2024, one Councillor changed political parties.
- 1.2 The political makeup on the Council is now: Labour – 31 Councillors, Conservative – 2 Councillors, Reform – 1 Councillor, and three independent Councillors.
- 1.3 This report therefore brings forward the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the Political Balance rules.
- 1.4 Committees are subject to the political balance requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Any Advisory Groups are not subject to the political balance requirements.

**2. Details of Proposal or Information**

- 2.1 **Appendix 1** to the report sets out the allocation of committee seats which best meets the requirements of Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 2.2 **Appendix 2** sets out the current appointments/vacancies to committees.
- 2.3 Whilst there has been a change to the numbers in political groups of the Council, the current committee allocation still best meets the legal requirements. Therefore, no change is recommended.



### 3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The report recommends no change to the allocation of Committee seats detailed in **Appendix 1** as it still currently best meets the requirements of section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act a far as reasonably practicable.

### 4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Members may consider that they wish to change the allocation, but this is not advised because the current allocation best meets the political balance requirements.

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## RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the proportionality of committee places as set out in Appendix 1 and the continuation of the current committee places allocation as set out in Appendix 2 be noted.

Approved by Councillor Duncan McGregor, Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance

### IMPLICATIONS:

**Finance and Risk:** Yes  No

**Details:** There are no finance or risk implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):** Yes  No

**Details:** The Council is required to decide the allocation of seats to political groups in accordance with the Political Balance rules set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:** Yes  No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:** Environmental implications are not applicable for this report.

**Staffing:** Yes  No

**Details:** There are no staffing implications arising from this report.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

## DECISION INFORMATION

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>          A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue - £75,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Capital - £150,000</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b>  <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

<p><b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b></p>	None
<p><b>Consultation:</b>  <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Members</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>	Details:

<p><b>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment and Housing</b></p>

DOCUMENT INFORMATION	
Appendix No	Title
1	Proportionality of the Council
2	Current Appointments to Committees

<p><b>Background Papers</b></p>
<p><i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p>
<p>None</p>

	Seats on Council	Proportion
<b>Total seats</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>
Labour Group	31	83.78%
Conservative	2	5.41%
Independent (DW)	1	2.70%
Independent (JG)	1	2.70%
Independent (RW)	1	2.70%
Reform	1	2.70%

<b>Executive</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Non-Exec</b>	<b>30</b>

50

Ordinary Committees	Total seats on Committee	Labour Group		Conservative		Independent (DW)		Independent (JG)		Independent (RW)		Reform		Total seats allocated
		Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	
Employee Appeals Committee	3	2.51	3	0.16	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	3
Employee Appeals Deputies	3	2.51	3	0.16	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	3
General Licensing Committee	10	8.38	9	0.54	1	0.27	0	0.27	0	0.27	0	0.27	0	10
Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee	10	8.38	9	0.54	1	0.27	0	0.27	0	0.27	0	0.27	0	10
Planning Committee	10	8.38	8	0.54	0	0.27	1	0.27	0	0.27	0	0.27	1	10
Safety Committee	5	4.19	4	0.27	0	0.14	0	0.14	1	0.14	0	0.14	0	5
Standards Committee	6	5.03	4	0.32	1	0.16	0	0.16	1	0.16	0	0.16	0	6
Audit Committee	6	5.03	5	0.32	0	0.16	0	0.16	0	0.16	0	0.16	1	6
Employment and Personnel Committee	5	4.19	4	0.27	0	0.14	1	0.14	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	5
Union/Employee Consultation Committee	6	5.03	5	0.32	0	0.16	0	0.16	0	0.16	1	0.16	0	6
<b>Total Seats on Ordinary Committees</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>53.62</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.73</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>64</b>

Group	Total Seats Allocated	Proportion
Labour Group	86	82.69%
Conservative Group	7	6.73%
Independent (DW)	3	2.88%
Independent (JG)	3	2.88%
Independent (RW)	2	1.92%
Reform	3	2.88%
<b>Total Seats</b>	<b>104</b>	

Scrutiny Committees	Total seats on Committee	Labour Group		Conservative		Independent (DW)		Independent (JG)		Independent (RW)		Reform		Total seats allocated	
		Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats		
Customer Services Scrutiny Committee	7.50	8	6.70	6	0.43	1	0.22	1	0.22	0	0.22	0	0.22	0	8
Local Growth Scrutiny Committee	7.50	7	5.86	5	0.38	1	0.19	0	0.19	0	0.19	1	0.19	0	7
Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee	7.50	8	6.70	7	0.43	0	0.22	0	0.22	1	0.22	0	0.22	0	8
Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee	7.50	7	5.86	6	0.38	0	0.19	0	0.19	0	0.19	0	0.19	1	7
<b>Total seats</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25.14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1.62</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>30</b>

\*includes all non-executive Members, so political balance cannot strictly apply

Joint Committees*	Total seats on Committee	Labour Group		Conservative		Independent (DW)		Independent (JG)		Independent (RW)		Reform		Total seats allocated
		Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	
Joint ICT	3	2.51	3	0.16	0	0.08	0	0.00	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	3

Joint Scrutiny Panel	3	2.51	2	0.16	1	0.08	0	0.00	0	0.08	0	0.08	0	3
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\* Note – For political balance to apply, there must be at least three seats to be filled on joint committees (excl executive committees)

Joint Employment and Appeals Committee Membership set within Constitution	Total seats on Committee	Majority		Minority	
		Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats
	4	3.35	3	0.22	1

Advisory/Working Groups**	Total seats on Group	Labour Group		Conservative		Independent (DW)		Independent (JG)		Independent (RW)		Reform		Total seats allocated
		Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	Proportion of seats	Allocated Seats	
MDWG	7	5.86	5	0.38	1	0.19	0	0.19	1	0.19	0	0.19	0	7
Local Plan Implementation Action Group	10	8.38	8	0.54	0	0.27	1	0.27	0	0.27	0	0.27	1	10
Pleasley Park and Vale Conservation Area Working Group	5	4.19	5	0.27	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	5
Housing Liasion Board	5	4.19	5	0.27	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	0.14	0	5
<b>Total seats</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22.62</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1.46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>27</b>

\*\*Note - allocated proportionally but not included in proportionality calculations

## BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

### APPOINTMENT TO ESTABLISHED COMMITTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS 2024/25

#### COMMITTEES

Committee	Labour Group (31)	Conservative Group (2)	Independent DW (1)	Independent JG (1)	Independent RW (1)	Reform (1)
<b>Finance &amp; Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee (8)</b>	(7) David Bennett Rowan Clarke Chris Kane Lucy King Sally Renshaw Janet Tait Jane Yates	(0)	(0)	(1) Justin Gilbody	(0)	(0)
<b>Local Growth Scrutiny Committee (7)</b>	(5) Duncan Haywood Tom Kirkham Tom Munro Jeanne Rospin Jen Wilson	(1) Will Fletcher	(0)	(0)	(1) Ross Walker	(0)
<b>Customer Services Scrutiny Committee (8)</b>	(6) Amanda Davis Donna Hales Lisa Powell Phil Smith Rita Turner Victoria Waplington	(1) Louise Fox	(1) Deborah Watson	(0)	(0)	(0)

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Appendix 2

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Labour Group (31)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (2)</b>	<b>Independent DW (1)</b>	<b>Independent JG (1)</b>	<b>Independent RW (1)</b>	<b>Reform (1)</b>
<b>Climate Change and Communities Scrutiny Committee (7)</b>	(6) Rob Hiney-Saunders Mark Hinman Cathy Jeffery Emma Stevenson Ashley Taylor Catherine Tite	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1) Carol Wood
<b>Employee Appeals Committee (3)</b>  <b>Deputies (3)</b>	(3) Steve Fritchley Duncan McGregor Rita Turner  Deputies: (3) Deputy 1 – Jane Yates Deputy 2 – Rowan Clarke Deputy 3 – Janet Tait	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
<b>Employment and Personnel Committee (5)</b>	(4) Mary Dooley Duncan McGregor Tom Munro Sandra Peake	(0)	(1) Deborah Watson	(0)	(0)	(0)

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Labour Group (31)</b>	<b>Conservative Group (2)</b>	<b>Independent DW (1)</b>	<b>Independent JG (1)</b>	<b>Independent RW (1)</b>	<b>Reform (1)</b>
<b>General Licensing Committee (10)</b>	(9) David Bennett Anne Clarke Amanda Davis Mary Dooley Lisa Powell, Jeanne Raspin Emma Stevenson Ashley Taylor Rita Turner	(1) Will Fletcher	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
<b>Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee (10)</b>	(9) David Bennett Anne Clarke Amanda Davis Mary Dooley Lisa Powell Jeanne Raspin Emma Stevenson Ashley Taylor Rita Turner	(1) Will Fletcher	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
<b>Planning Committee (10)</b>	(8) Rob Hiney-Saunders Chris Kane Duncan McGregor Tom Munro John Ritchie	(0)	(1) Deborah Watson	(0)	(0)	(1) Carol Wood

Committee	Labour Group (31)	Conservative Group (2)	Independent DW (1)	Independent JG (1)	Independent RW (1)	Reform (1)
	Phil Smit Janet Tait Jen Wilson					
<b>Safety Committee (5)</b>	(4) Amanda Davis Tom Munro Jeanne Rospin Jane Yates	(0)	(0)	(1) Justin Gilbody	(0)	(0)
<b>Audit Committee (6) Plus 2 co-opted Members</b>	(5) Cathy Jeffery Chris Kane Tom Munro Lisa Powell Catherine Tite	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(1) Carol Wood
<b>Standards (6) Plus 1 co-opted Member</b>	(4) Anne Clarke Duncan Haywood Tom Kirkham Jane Yates	(1) Louise Fox	(0)	(1) Justin Gilbody	(0)	(0)
<b>Union / Employee Consultation Committee (6)</b>	(5) Rowan Clarke Mary Dooley Duncan Haywood Sandra Peake Victoria Waplington	(0)	(1) Ross Walker	(0)	(0)	(0)



## JOINT COMMITTEES

Committee	Labour Group (31)	Conservative Group (2)	Independent DW (1)	Independent JG (1)	Independent RW (1)	Reform (1)
<b>ICT Shared Services Committee</b>  <b>(3 from BDC plus CBC and NEDDC)</b>	(3) David Bennett Steve Fritchley Clive Moesby	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
65 <b>Shared Services Scrutiny Committee (also known as Joint Scrutiny Panel) (3)</b>	(2) TBC	(1) Will Fletcher	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)

## ADVISORY GROUPS

Committee	Labour Group (31)	Conservative Group (2)	Independent DW (1)	Independent JG (1)	Independent RW (1)	Reform (1)
<b>Pleasley Park and Vale Conservation Area Joint Advisory Group (5)</b>	(5) Chris Kane Tom Kirkham Tom Munro Janet Tait Catherine Tite	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)

<b>Local Plan Implementation Advisory Group (10)</b>	(8) Rob Hiney- Saunders Chris Kane Duncan McGregor Tom Munro John Ritchie Phil Smith Janet Tait Jen Wilson	(0)	(1) Deborah Watson	(0)	(0)	(1) Carol Wood
<b>Member Development Working Group (7)</b>	(5) Rowan Clarke Mary Dooley Cathy Jeffery Sandra Peake Jen Wilson	(1) Louise Fox	(0)	(1) Justin Gilbody	(0)	(0)
<b>Housing Liaison Board (5)</b>	(5) Sandra Peake Janet Tait Ashley Taylor Rita Turner Jane Yates	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)