

To Members of the Council

Cllr. Roy Denney (Chairman)
Cllr. Janet Forey (Vice Chairman)

Cllr. Shabbir Aslam
Cllr. Royston Bayliss
Cllr. Dr John Bloxham
Cllr. Lee Breckon JP
Cllr. Nick Brown
Cllr. Nick Chapman
Cllr. Adrian Clifford
Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore
Cllr. Stuart Coar
Cllr. Luke Cousin
Cllr. Tony Deakin
Cllr. Alex DeWinter

Cllr. Susan Findlay
Cllr. Helen Gambardella
Cllr. Hannah Gill
Cllr. Nigel Grundy
Cllr. Paul Hartshorn
Cllr. Richard Holdridge
Cllr. Mark Jackson
Cllr. Becca Lunn
Cllr. Antony Moseley
Cllr. Les Phillimore
Cllr. Terry Richardson
Cllr. Ande Savage

Cllr. Tracey Shepherd
Cllr. Dillan Shikotra
Cllr. Mike Shirley
Cllr. Roger Stead
Cllr. Ben Taylor
Cllr. Matt Tomeo
Cllr. Bob Waterton
Cllr. Jane Wolfe
Cllr. Maggie Wright
Cllr. Neil Wright

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **COUNCIL** will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Narborough on **TUESDAY, 8 JULY 2025** at **5.30 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business and your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully



Gemma Dennis
Corporate Services Group Manager and Monitoring Officer



AGENDA

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

To receive apologies for absence, disclosures of interest from Councillors, and Minutes of the previous Council meeting.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Disclosures of Interests from Members

To receive disclosures of interests from Members (i.e. the existence and the nature of those interests in respect of items on this agenda).

3. Minutes

To approve and sign the minutes of the Council meetings held on 20 May 2025 (To Follow).

SECTION 2 - STANDARD COUNCIL BUSINESS

To receive announcements from the Chairman and the statement of the Leader of the Council.

Any reports for consideration listed under this section will be moved in one block without discussion, unless any Member present requests otherwise.

4. Chairman's Announcements
5. Leader's Statement (To Follow)

SECTION 3 - PRESENTATIONS TO COUNCIL

To consider any presentations from Council Officer's or an external body/partner agency.

SECTION 4 - QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC & PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

To receive questions to Councillors submitted by members of the public and to receive any petitions submitted in accordance with the Council's petitions scheme.

6. Public Speaking Protocol

Requests received by the Protocol deadline to be reported by the Monitoring Officer with details of the Agenda Item to which they relate. (Such persons entitled to use the Protocol attend for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business of the meeting and the time allocated to each person is a maximum of three minutes unless extended at the discretion of the Chairman).

SECTION 5 - MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To receive any questions submitted by Councillors.

7. Questions from Members

Any Members wishing to submit questions must do so to the Monitoring Officer no later than 5 working days before the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer will report if any questions have been submitted.

8. Question under Council Rules of Procedure

Cllr. Paul Hartshorn to raise the following question to Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore – Finance, People and Transformation Portfolio Holder (Deputy Leader).

“Can the relevant Portfolio Holder confirm whether Blaby District Council is actively exploring the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve service delivery, efficiency, or internal operations, and if so, what areas are currently being considered or trialled?”

SECTION 6 - REPORTS FOR DECISIONS

To consider any reports submitted for consideration by Council.

9. Modern Slavery Statement 2026 (Pages 5-9)

To consider the report of the Customer Insight, Experience and Engagement Service Manager (enclosed).

10. Treasury Management Outturn 2024/25 (Pages 10-20)

To consider the report of the Finance Group Manager (enclosed).

11. Affordable Housing Contributions (Pages 21-24)

To consider the report of the Housing Services Manager (enclosed).

SECTION 7 - MOTIONS/ DEBATES/CONSULTATIONS & MEMBERS' FEEDBACK

To consider Motions submitted by Councillors, take part in a debate or receive Member feedback from attendance at national briefings, key training initiatives or work on any Outside Bodies.

SECTION 8 - EXEMPT REPORTS

To receive any reports submitted which require consideration under exempt status.

12. Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider passing the following resolution:

“That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that the item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

Exemption Category: 3

Reason for Exemption: The minutes contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Public Interest Test: The public interest test has been considered and, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption is considered to outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.”

13. Approval of Restricted Minutes - 20 May 2025

To approve and sign the restricted minutes from the meeting held on 20 May 2025.
(To Follow)

Blaby District Council Council

Date of Meeting	8 July 2025
Title of Report	Modern Slavery Statement 2025
Lead Member	This is not a Key Decision and is on the Forward Plan
Report Author	Cllr. Ben Taylor - Leader of the Council Customer Insight, Experience and Engagement Service Manager
Strategic Themes	Enabling our communities and supporting our vulnerable residents

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 There are several duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. This report set out requirements and recommended good practice for local authorities under the Act.
- 1.2 This report presents a Modern Slavery statement for Blaby District Council for the year 2025/26.

2. Recommendation(s) to Council

- 2.1 For Blaby District Council to adopt the Modern Slavery Statement as set out in Appendix A.

3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

- 3.1 It is a requirement of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 that organisations with a turnover of £36m or more publish a statement on their approach to ensuring that there is no modern slavery in their own business and their supply chains. Although Blaby District Council is under no legal obligation to publish a statement, the Local Government Association is encouraging all local authorities to produce an annual statement ensuring transparency in their approach to modern slavery and human trafficking
- 3.2 The Modern Slavery Act also includes a number of provisions for local authorities. Section 52 of the Act places a duty to identify and report potential victims through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Depending on the age and needs of victims of modern slavery, councils may also have statutory responsibilities to provide support to them.
- 3.3 Relevant policies should reflect the councils agreed approach to tackling modern slavery and human trafficking to ensure that this statement is successfully delivered.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

Modern slavery is a crime resulting in an abuse of human rights. It is constituted in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 by the offences of 'slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour' and 'human trafficking'.

Victims of modern slavery and human trafficking can be men, women and children of all ages, ethnicities and nationalities. However, exploitation is normally more prevalent among the most vulnerable or within minority or socially excluded groups. Poverty, lack of education, unstable social and political conditions, economic imbalances and war are key issues that contribute to someone's vulnerability in becoming a victim of modern slavery. In addition, victims can often face more than one type of abuse and slavery, for example being sold on to another trafficker and then forced into another form of exploitation.

The National Referral Mechanism reports there has been an 870% rise in referrals of potential victims of modern slavery in the past ten years. The Anti-Slavery International and The Royal United Services Institute estimate that 130,000 people are currently subjected to slavery in the UK.

In recent years Unseen, the anti-slavery charity, has seen a worrying rise in calls about care sector workers being abused. It follows changes in the rules to make it easier for overseas social care staff to work in the UK, with the aim of filling thousands of job vacancies.

Most exploited care workers are women from overseas, working long and gruelling hours – often 20 hours each day. In some cases, they earn as little as £2 per hour. Those most at risk appear to be care workers from India, Zimbabwe and Nigeria. Some have paid huge sums of money to unscrupulous employers or recruitment agencies to come to the UK on special visas designed to fill vacancies in the care sector. Often the workers do not understand their rights in the UK, which leaves them vulnerable to further abuse.

The Government has introduced a provision (Section 54) in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which requires organisations (with a turnover of £36m or over) to produce a statement setting out the steps they have taken to ensure there is no modern slavery in their own business and their supply chains. If an organisation has taken no steps to do this, their statement should say so creating a level playing field between those businesses, which act responsibly and those that need to change their policies and practices. However, the Government wants to encourage organisations to do more, not just because they are legally obliged to, but also because they recognise it is the right thing to do.

One key purpose of this measure is to prevent modern slavery in organisations and their supply chains. A means to achieve this is to increase transparency by ensuring the public, partners, and employees know what steps an organisation is taking to tackle modern slavery. Organisations will need to build on what they are doing year on year.

Through their regulatory role interacting with local businesses and landlords, council officers are well placed to identify cases of modern slavery and work with law enforcement partners to use regulatory tools to intervene and disrupt

it. Additionally, through their individual and collective buying power, councils have significant leverage to seek to eradicate modern slavery from their extensive supply chains.

The Modern Slavery Act also includes several provisions for local authorities. Section 52 of the Act places a duty to identify and report potential victims through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Depending on the age and needs of victims of modern slavery, councils may also have statutory responsibilities to provide support to them.

The Government encourages all businesses to develop an appropriate and effective response to modern slavery. The Local Government Association (LGA) is also encouraging local authorities to produce individual statements. The LGA states that local councils “are uniquely placed to be at the forefront of the fight against modern slavery”. Several councils have already voluntarily compiled their statement and the LGA is encouraging others to follow suit.

In November 2018 Blaby District Council adopted a Modern Slavery Statement. The Council reviews this Statement regularly as required by the legislation. The Statement at Appendix A outlines the policies and activity that the Council will use to ensure that we are transparent in our activities and are working to ensure that there is no slavery and human trafficking within its business or supply chains. The Act requires a slavery and human trafficking statement to be approved and signed by an appropriate senior person in the business. The Blaby District Council Modern Slavery statement will therefore be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

4.2 Proposal(s)

For Blaby District Council to adopt the Modern Slavery Statement as set out in Appendix A.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

- Community Services Manager
- Transformation Group Manager

4.4 Significant Issues

Due regard should be given to data protection legislation (GDPR). Councils’ statutory powers support joint investigations by allowing for the sharing of information in support of the prevention or detection of crime and in support of legal proceedings. The LGA has a memorandum of understanding on data sharing with HMRC which all councils can sign up to in order to share and receive data from HMRC.

Human Resources – In order to identify and support victims of slavery and human trafficking within the workplace, in the supply-chain or when delivering services, staff will require appropriate training.

5. **Environmental impact**

Not applicable

6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

6.1 There are no cost implications.

7 What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

7.1

Current Risk	Actions to reduce the risks
Slavery may be used in the supply of goods or services to the Council	Procurement Toolkit updated to ensure that modern slavery and human trafficking does not form part of the supply chain
Officers are not able to identify possible cases of slavery	Training on awareness and recognising the signs of modern slavery and human trafficking whether that be through the supply chain, customers when delivering services or during recruitment and/or employment.

8. Other options considered

8.1 Not to adopt and publish a Modern Slavery Statement. Although there is no requirement for the Council to produce a statement it is considered best practice and encouraged by the Local Government Association

10. Appendix

10.1 Appendix A – Blaby District Council Modern Slavery Statement (To Follow)

10. Background paper(s)

[Modern slavery | Local Government Association](#)

[Unseen 2024 Annual Report](#)

11. Report author's contact details

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**Blaby District Council
Council**

Date of Meeting	8 July 2025
Title of Report	Recommendations of the Cabinet Executive - Treasury Management Outturn 2024/25 This is not a Key Decision and is on the Forward Plan
Lead Member	Cllr. Cheryl Cashmore - Finance, People & Transformation (Deputy Leader)
Report Author	Finance Group Manager
Strategic Themes	Ambitious and well managed Council, valuing our people

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The report reviews the Council's treasury management activities undertaken during the 2024/25 financial year and gives details of the prudential and treasury indicators for the same period.
- 1.2 It also provides an update regarding the property fund investment.

2. Recommendation(s) to Council

- 2.1 That the treasury management activities for 2024/25 are approved.
- 2.2 That the prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25 are approved.

3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

- 3.1 The regulatory framework governing treasury management activities includes a requirement that the Council should produce an annual review of treasury activities undertaken in the preceding financial year. It must also report the performance against the approved prudential indicators for the year.
- 3.2 This report fulfils the requirement above and incorporates the needs of the Prudential Code to ensure adequate monitoring of capital expenditure plans and the Council's prudential indicators. The treasury strategy and prudential indicators for 2024/25 were contained in the report approved by Council on 27th February 2024.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Council is required to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2024/25 by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003. This report meets the requirements of both the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants' (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

During 2024/25 the minimum reporting requirements were that the full Council should receive the following reports:

- an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (Cabinet Executive 26th February 2024, Council 27th February 2024)
- a mid-year treasury update report (Cabinet Executive 4th November 2024, Council 19th November 2024)
- an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report)

The regulations place responsibility on Members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is important, in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by Members.

The Council has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to all the above treasury management reports by the Cabinet Executive and/or Scrutiny Commission before they were reported to the full Council. Member training on treasury management issues is undertaken on an ad hoc basis as required, with a training session proposed to be arranged during 2025/26.

4.2 Capital Expenditure and Financing

The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets which may either be:

- Financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (e.g., capital receipts, grants, revenue contributions), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
- Financed through borrowing if insufficient resources are available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources.

The actual capital expenditure forms one of the main prudential indicators. The following table summarises the capital expenditure and financing for the year. A more detailed analysis is provided at Appendix A.

	2023/24 Actual £	2024/25 Budget £	2024/25 Actual £
Capital Expenditure	6,996,593	10,650,011	4,608,979
Financed in year	(3,332,263)	(6,864,237)	(3,370,859)
Unfinanced Capital Expenditure	3,664,330	3,785,774	1,238,120

4.3 The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and resources used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2024/25 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies, (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board [PWLB], or the money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.

The Council's underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need. This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.

The total CFR can also be reduced by:

- the application of additional capital financing resources, (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
- charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

The Council's 2024/25 MRP Policy, (as required by MHCLG Guidance), was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2024/25 on 27th February 2024.

Once again, the Council undertook no new borrowing during 2024/25.

Although there was a borrowing need to fund the capital programme, there are still sufficient reserves and balances available to enable the Council to effectively borrow internally.

The table below highlights the gross borrowing position against the CFR. The CFR represents a key prudential indicator. It includes finance leases that appear on the balance sheet, and which increase the Council's borrowing need. However, no borrowing is required to cover finance leases as there is a borrowing facility included in the contract.

	31st March 2024 Actual £	31st March 2025 Budget £	31st March 2025 Actual £
Opening Balance	14,486,025	17,465,910	17,465,910
Add Unfinanced Capital Expenditure	3,664,330	3,785,774	1,238,120
Less IFRS 16 Adjustment	0	0	(3,916)
Less MRP & VRP	(784,445)	(910,820)	(910,520)
Closing Balance	17,365,910	20,240,864	17,689,594

Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.

It is important to ensure that borrowing is prudent over the medium term and that it is only undertaken for capital purposes. Therefore, the Council needs to make sure that, except in the short term, its gross external borrowing does not exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year (2023/24) plus the estimates of any additional CFR for the current year (2024/25) and next two financial years. Effectively this means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. This indicator also allows the Council some flexibility to borrow in advance of its immediate need where it is appropriate to do so. The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR. The Council has complied with this prudential indicator.

	31st March 2024 Actual £	31st March 2025 Budget £	31st March 2025 Actual £
CFR	17,365,910	20,240,864	17,689,594
Gross Borrowing	6,168,303	8,099,341	5,721,563
(Under)/Over Funding of CFR	(11,197,607)	(12,141,253)	(11,968,032)

The Authorised Limit – this is the affordable borrowing limit required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once it has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that the Council has maintained gross borrowing within the authorised limit during 2024/25.

The Operational Boundary – this is the expected borrowing position for the year. Periods where the actual position is either above or below the boundary

are acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

Actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream – this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital (i.e., borrowing, and other long term obligation costs net of investment income), against the net revenue stream.

	2024/25
Authorised limit	£23,000,000
Maximum gross borrowing position during the year	£6,168,303
Operational boundary	£20,700,000
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream	8.81%

4.4 The Council's treasury management debt and investment position is organised by the treasury management service to ensure adequate liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security for investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established both through Member reporting detailed in the summary, and through officer activity detailed in the Council's Treasury Management Practices. At the end of 2024/25 the Council's treasury position was as follows:

	Principal at 31st March 2024	Rate/ Return	Average Life	Principal at 31st March 2025	Rate/ Return	Average Life
PWLB Debt	£5,713,439	2.25%	18.8 years	£4,857,602	2.25%	17.8 years
Market Debt	0	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a
Total debt	£5,713,439	2.25%	18.8 years	£4,857,602	2.25%	17.8 years
Capital Financing Requirement	£17,365,910			£17,269,227		
Over/(under) borrowing	(£11,652,471)			(£12,411,626)		
Short Term investments	(£22,089,000)	5.34%		(£22,575,200)	4.34%	
Long Term Investments	(£742,726)	5.27%		(£754,697)	3.90%	
Net debt	(£34,484,197)			(35,741,523)		

Other long-term liabilities, such as finance leases, are excluded from the table above.

The interest rates in the table above are based on the loans and investments outstanding at the year end and are not necessarily the same as the average rate payable during the financial year.

The maturity structure of the debt portfolio was as follows:

	31st March 2024	31st March 2025
	£	£
Less than one year	855,837	857,602
Between one and two years	857,602	0
Between two and five years	0	0
Between five and ten years	0	0
Over ten years	4,000,000	4,000,000
	5,713,439	4,857,602

Investment Portfolio	31st March 2024	31st March 2024	31st March 2025	31st March 2025
	£	%	£	%
Banks	18,129,000	5.27%	19,391,200	4.31%
Local Authorities	1,000,000	6.90%	0	0
Money Market Funds	2,960,000	5.26%	3,184,000	4.49%
Property Fund	742,726	5.27%	754,697	3.90%

The return on the Property Fund comprises both rental income and interest income gross of fees.

4.5 The Strategy for 2024/25

Investments

Investment returns remained robust throughout 2024/25 with Bank Rate reducing steadily through the course of the financial year (three 0.25% rate cuts in total), and even at the end of March the yield curve was still relatively flat, which might be considered unusual as further Bank Rate cuts were expected in 2025/26.

Bank Rate reductions of 0.25% occurred in August, November and February, bringing the headline rate down from 5.25% to 4.5%. Each of the Bank Rate cuts occurred in the same month as the Bank of England published its Quarterly Monetary Policy Report, therein providing a clarity over the timing of potential future rate cuts.

Over the year Local Authorities were able to achieve returns in excess of 5% for all periods ranging from 1 month to 12 months in the spring of 2024 but by March 2025 deposit rates were some 0.75% - 1% lower. Where liquidity requirements were not a drain on day-to-day investment choices, extending duration through the use of “laddered investments” paid off.

Investment choices were not straight-forward due to concerns over rising inflation after the Autumn Statement in October led to reduced expectations for Bank Rate to fall. The CPI measure of inflation is expected to reach c3.75% by the autumn of 2025, which could provide for some presentational issues for a Bank whose primary mandate is to ensure inflation is close to 2% on a two-to-three-year timeframe. At the end of March, only two further rate cuts were priced into the market for 2025 (4% at December 2025). A week later and sentiment has changed dramatically in the wake of the equity market sell-off to the extent that markets now expect three Bank Rate reductions between May

and December 2025 (Bank Rate to fall to 3.75%).

Borrowing

During 2024/25, the Council maintained an under-borrowed position. This meant that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), was not fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. This strategy was prudent as although near-term investment rates were equal to, and sometimes higher than, long-term borrowing costs, the latter are expected to fall back through 2025 and 2026 in the light of economic growth concerns and the eventual dampening of inflation. The Authority has sought to minimise the taking on of long-term borrowing at elevated levels (>5%) and has focused on a policy of internal and temporary borrowing, supplemented by short-dated borrowing (<5 years) as appropriate.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution was adopted with the treasury operations. The Executive Director (Section 151) therefore monitored interest rates in financial markets and adopted a pragmatic strategy based upon the following principles to manage interest rate risks:

- if it had been felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short-term rates, (e.g., due to a marked increase of risks around a relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long term borrowings would have been postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing would have been considered.
- if it had been felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short-term rates than initially expected, perhaps arising from the stickiness of inflation in the major developed economies, then the portfolio position would have been re-appraised. Most likely, fixed rate funding would have been drawn whilst interest rates were lower than they were projected to be in the next few years.

Interest rate forecasts initially suggested gradual reductions in short, medium and longer-term fixed borrowing rates during 2024/25. Bank Rate did peak at 5.25% as anticipated, but the initial expectation of significant rate reductions did not transpire, primarily because inflation concerns remained elevated. Forecasts were too optimistic from a rate reduction perspective, but more recently the forecasts, updated from November 2024 onwards, look more realistic.

At the start of April 2025, following the introduction of President Trump's trade tariffs policies, the market now expects Bank Rate to fall to 3.75% by the end of December 2025, pulling down the 5- and 10-year parts of the curve too. This should provide an opportunity for greater certainty to be added to the debt portfolio, although a significant fall in inflation will be required to underpin any material movement lower in the longer part of the curve.

Borrowing Outturn

No new borrowing was undertaken during the year. As a result, gross borrowing has fallen from £5,713,439 to £4,587,602 on 31st March 2025. The

movement is summarised in the following table:

	£
Balance at 1st April 2024	5,713,439
New borrowing in year	0
Loans repaid in year	(855,837)
Balance at 31st March 2025	4,587,602

The total loan interest payable in 2024/25, excluding finance leases, was £108,264.64 (£131,268 in 2023/24), and the average interest rate payable was 2.25% (2.25% in 2023/24).

Borrowing in advance of need:

The Council has not borrowed more than, or in advance of its needs, purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed.

Rescheduling:

No rescheduling was done during the year as the approximate 1% differential between PWLB new borrowing rates and premature repayment rates made rescheduling unviable.

Investment Outturn

The Council's investment policy is governed by MHCLG investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by Council on 27th February 2024. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies, supplemented by additional market data, (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps, bank share prices etc.).

The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy, and the Council experienced no liquidity difficulties during the financial year.

Interest on in house investments amounted to £1,539,528 (£1,699,508 in 2023/24), above the revised budget by over £0.2m, due to the Monetary Policy Committee maintaining the high bank rate and cash flow balances remaining high. The average rate of return for 2024/25 was 4.34% compared with the average of 5.34% achieved in 2023/24.

In addition to this the Council achieved a return of £34,055 interest and rental income on its property fund investment during 2024/25. There is a statutory override in place until 1st April 2029, for legacy investments already in place at the end of the previous financial year (1st April 2024), which prevents fluctuations in the fund value from having to be charged to the General Fund. The Council also has an earmarked reserve as a mitigation against losses in the fund value.

The Council invested £1m in the Lothbury Property Trust in December 2019. Following the unprecedented withdrawal of a number of investors, notice was given by Lothbury for the termination of the fund on the 31st March 2024 if a viable merger option could not be found by this date.

Following an extraordinary general meeting held in March 2024, the deadline for terminating the fund was extended to the end of May 2024. Unfortunately, due to a difference in opinion over the valuation of certain assets that were to be transferred from Lothbury to UBS, the merger option did not proceed, and the fund was wound up on 30th May.

Although the merger fell through, officers maintained communication with UBS Triton fund managers. Due to the opportunity to transfer the Council's share of proceeds from Lothbury to UBS Triton, as and when funds are distributed, at a preferential management fee rate, under delegated authority the Executive Director (Section 151), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, People and Performance determined that the transfer of funds from Lothbury to UBS Triton remained the Council's best opportunity to recover its investment loss. Following the winding up of this fund on the 30th May 2024 Lothbury continue to dispose of all assets and making distributions to investors.

As at 31st March 2025 the remaining balance within the Lothbury Fund still to be distributed was £90,045.82.

As at 31st March 2025 the UBS Triton Property Fund LP investment value stood at £664,651.45.

Significant Issues
None.

In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

5. Environmental impact

- 5.1 No Net Zero and Climate Impact Assessment (NZCIA) is required for this report.

6. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

- 7.1

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**Blaby District Council
Council**

Date of Meeting 8 July 2025

Title of Report Affordable Housing Contributions

This is not a Key Decision and is on the Forward Plan

Lead Member Cllr. Les Phillimore - Housing, Community Safety and Environmental Services

Report Author Housing Services Manager

Strategic Themes Enabling our communities and supporting our vulnerable residents

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 To ask Members to support the proposed contribution of funds towards an all affordable housing scheme.

2. Recommendation(s) to Council

- 2.1 That Members approve an allocation of £148,381 towards a proposed 21 unit all affordable housing scheme.

3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

- 3.1 To ensure that funds previously allocated for affordable housing and commuted sums paid in lieu of affordable housing are utilised in the most appropriate and efficient way.
- 3.2 To ensure that the above funds are used to enable the delivery of affordable housing.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

Members will recall from previous reports that the Council holds funds that are ring-fenced for affordable housing delivery. These funds consist of commuted sums, garage sale receipts and a small amount of New Homes Bonus. The table below details the current balance of these funds:

Receipt	Amount
New Homes Bonus	£13,278.00
Capital Receipts (Garage Site Sales)	£224,635.00
S106 Contributions (Uncommitted)	£317,586.52
Total	£555,499.52

Table 1 – Balance of funds held for affordable housing

(For clarity, £57,835 from the above funds was approved by Council on the

24th of September 2024 to support the Norton Housing Mental Health scheme in Blaby. This has yet to be paid or committed due to the need for additional legal documentation being completed. This is currently in process. Once this is completed the total fund available for Affordable Housing will be £497,664.52)

In November 2015 Council approved that funds previously allocated for affordable housing would be utilised in the most appropriate and efficient way, examples of which were contained in the November 2015 report of the Principal Housing Strategy Officer, these being:

- Contributions to the Council's Rural Exception Site Programme.
- Contributions to new all affordable housing developments.
- Contributions to specialist supported accommodation such as Extra Care schemes for the ageing population and Foyer schemes for Young People.
- Bridging Registered Provider capacity gaps on major schemes.
- Any other affordable housing projects / schemes deemed appropriate by the Strategic Housing Team in consultation with the Group Manager for Planning and Economic Development and the Group Manager for Housing and Community Services

Springwell Lane, Whetstone 21 Unit All Affordable Scheme

The scheme at Springwell Lane is being developed in partnership between the developer My Pad and the registered provider Futures Housing Group (one of our preferred not for profit social housing providers).

It meets the following strategic priorities set out in the Councils adopted Housing Strategy (2020 – 2025), namely:

- Increasing the supply of Affordable Homes
- Prevent Homelessness and end Rough Sleeping

The scheme is made up of 21 units consisting of 15 x social rented homes and 6 x shared ownership homes with the following mix:

1 bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4+ Bedroom
1	8	7	5

The mix of house types has been developed in conjunction with the Housing Strategy Team from the outset. Close collaboration between My Pad and Blaby District Council has been ongoing from initial proposals to the awarding of planning approval.

Of particular note for a development of this size is the inclusion of larger house types in the Affordable Housing sector provision. This has been led by the Housing Strategy Team to address the growing number of larger blended families needing both social and shared ownership housing due to the unaffordability of the Private Rented Sector. These are provided whilst still addressing our core need of two and three bedroom affordable housing for rent.

As is currently common on an affordable development of this size the viability of the scheme from a financial perspective is very tight. Futures Housing group approached the Housing Strategy Team for assistance when it became clear that in order to deliver the scheme as affordable housing at the current mix, they would require some financial input from the Council through our ring fenced Affordable Housing Fund.

The amount requested (£148,381) represents £7,066 per unit and is comparable to previous affordable housing contribution awards passed by the Council.

As is policy the Housing Strategy Team commissioned an independent viability consultant to assess the scheme. The report confirmed that the amount sought by Futures would be required to ensure the development could proceed as an all affordable scheme. The Independent Viability Assessment report is attached (Appendix A).

4.2 Proposal(s)

To approve an allocation of £148,381 towards the costs of the scheme alongside funding already agreed from Homes England and Futures Housing themselves.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

- Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, Housing and Community Services
- Executive Director – Communities

4.4 Significant Issues

None

- 4.5 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities and there are no areas of concern.

5. **Environmental impact**

- 5.1 There is no environmental impact as a result of this report, the Environmental Impact of the delivery of the scheme has been considered as part of the Planning Application process.

6. **What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?**

- 6.1 The costs are outlined at 4.1 (Table 1)

7. **What are the risks and how can they be reduced?**

- 7.1 If this funding is not approved there is a risk that the scheme would be

unviable and not completed as an all affordable development.

8. Other options considered

- 8.1 There are no other options, without the proposed contribution the scheme would not be viable as affordable housing.

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix A – Springwell Lane Appraisal Review (To Follow)

10. Background paper(s)

- 10.1 None

11. Report author's contact details

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