

**ASHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL**



Council Offices,  
Urban Road,  
Kirkby in Ashfield  
Nottingham  
NG17 8DA

## **Agenda**

### **Principal Select Committee**

Date: **Wednesday, 10th April, 2024**

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Time: **7.00 pm**

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Venue: **Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road,  
Kirkby-in-Ashfield**

For any further information please contact:

**Lynn Cain**

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# Principal Select Committee

## Membership

**Chairman:** Councillor Kier Barsby  
**Vice-Chairman:** Councillor Julie Gregory

**Councillors:**  
Jamie Bell Jodine Cronshaw  
Warren Nuttall Phil Rostance  
John Smallridge

## FILMING/AUDIO RECORDING NOTICE

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## SUMMONS

You are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the Principal Select Committee to be held at the time/place and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.



**Theresa Hodgkinson**  
**Chief Executive**

## **AGENDA**

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1. To receive apologies for absence, if any.
2. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and/or Non-Registrable Interests.**
3. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 February 2024. 5 - 8
4. **Select Review: Markets Update** 9 - 14

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## PRINCIPAL SELECT COMMITTEE

Meeting held in the Committee Room, Council Offices, Urban Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield,  
on Thursday, 15th February, 2024 at 7.00 pm

**Present:** Councillor Kier Barsby in the Chair;

Councillors Paul Grafton (as substitute for Jodine Cronshaw), Julie Gregory and Warren Nuttall.

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors Jodine Cronshaw and John Smallridge.

**Officers Present:** Lynn Cain, Peter Hudson, Mike Joy and Shane Wright.

### **PS.17 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and/or Non-Registrable Interests**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **PS.18 Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 January 2024, be received and approved as a correct record.

### **PS.19 Annual Budget Update**

The Corporate Resources Director (and Section 151 Officer) attended the meeting to provide a presentation on the 2024/25 Annual Budget and an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Members were advised that the 2024/25 Annual Budget would be fully considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 19 February 2024 in readiness for its final approval at the Extraordinary Council (Tax Setting) meeting on 4 March 2024.

#### General Fund Budget

Members were advised that the budget for 2024/25, as presented, had assumed a 2.94% increase to Council Tax (an anticipated additional income of £2034K for the Council) without any contribution from General Reserves.

In relation to the General Fund, savings and efficiencies had been identified from undertaking a Council wide base budget review, a Regeneration service review and a renegotiated contract with Civica for the Revenues and Benefits system.

Investments had been made in the following areas:

- Training and development – new Decision Making Accountability (DMA) Structure
- Growth in Council events
- Infrastructure Grants to Voluntary Bodies
- Asset Management – Cleaner Greener Initiatives
- Corporate Policy and Performance Review
- Corporate Communications Review
- Customer Services – Improved Accessibility.

#### Comparison of Borrowing against Neighbouring Authorities

Members were shown an illustration of the Council's borrowing compared to other Nottinghamshire authorities and confirmed that the Council were very much in line with their spending in comparison.

#### Council's Investment Portfolio

An update was given as to the current status of the Council's investment portfolio and its contribution towards the Council's total income stream.

#### Medium Term Financial Strategy

Committee was advised of the significant uncertainty around the level of resources which would be available to the Council beyond 2024/25. Local Government Funding Reform was due to take place during 2025/26 at the earliest. A summary was then given of estimated expenditure, income, cumulative and annual funding gaps and inflation assumptions that could evolve and affect the Council's finances over the next 3 years.

#### Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - Investments

Members were advised that investments had been made in the following areas:

- Payment of new Regulator Fee - (Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023)
- Staff Training under new Regulations
- Policy and Performance Review (HRA share)
- Corporate Communications Review (HRA share)

To conclude Members received an outline of the proposed HRA budget for 2024/25 which included provision for funding for increments and contractual inflation, any revenue implications from the proposed Capital Programme (not yet determined) and the effect of the recent Council housing rent increase of 7.7%, as determined by Cabinet on 29 January 2024.

RESOLVED that

- a) the presentation from the Corporate Resources Director (and Section 151 Officer) on the 2024/25 Annual Budget and the update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, be received and duly noted;
- b) as a result of (a) above, the following comment from the Committee Members be forwarded to Cabinet/Council for consideration as part of their budget deliberations for 2024/25:-

*“Having listened to the presentation and update from the Corporate Resources Director (and Section 151 Officer) in relation to the Council’s 2024/25 Annual Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy and then having undertaken a full and robust discussion regarding the same, Cabinet be advised that the Principal Select Committee urges them to approve the Annual Budget (with the assumption of a 2.94% increase to Council Tax and without any contribution from General Reserves) in its entirety, without amendment.”*

**PS.20 Select Committee Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Research Officer gave an update on progress of the Select Work Programme for 2023/24 and asked Members to consider two further topics for possible inclusion on the Work Programme going forward:

**1. Markets Update**

For Committee to undertake a single meeting review and received an update from the Town Centres and Markets Manager as to take up, ongoing financial viability and customer usage of the Council’s indoor/outdoor market sites at the March 2024 meeting.

**2. Council Staff Recruitment and Retention**

To potentially add the topic to the Select Work Programme to commence after May 2024.

**3. Customer Experience**

Following the recent investment and restructure of the Customer Services Team; to consider how this has improved customer service and satisfaction (suggested by the Assistant Director for Democracy).

Members also received an update on progress against the current Select Work Programme:

<b>Work Programme Topic:</b>	<b>Progress:</b>
Ashfield District Council – 50 Year Anniversary	Project passed onto Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), led by Assistant Director for Democracy and Scrutiny Research Officer
Damp and Mould	Completed – October 2023
Christmas Lights	Officers currently working on tender requirements
Homeless Prevention Strategy	Completed – contributions made to Council’s Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Prevention Strategy 2024 -2029
General Waste Bins	Awaiting progress with the

	Environment Bill 2021
Universal Credit	Completed – Update received at meeting on 15 November 2023
Funding Programme Updates	Executive Lead Member for Growth, Regeneration and Local Planning invited to present update at March 2024 meeting
Parks and Green Spaces on New Estates	Topic removed – not suitable for general review but agreement to replace with new topic ‘S106 Council Contributions’
No Mow May	Completed – Cabinet considered recommendations in January 2024
Performance	Standing Item - Quarterly
Crime and Disorder	Topic to be determined
Budget	Completed – presentation received at February 2024 meeting

RESOLVED that

- a) the update in respect of the Select Work Programme for 2023/24, be received and noted;
- b) the following three topics suggestions be added to the Select Work Programme for 2023/24:
  - Markets Update (Single Meeting Review)
  - Council Staff Recruitment and Retention
  - Customer Experience.

The meeting closed at 8.49 pm

Chairman.





<b>Report To:</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL SELECT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>10 APRIL 2024</b>
<b>Heading:</b>	<b>SELECT REVIEW: MARKETS UPDATE</b>
<b>Executive Lead Member:</b>	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b>
<b>Ward/s:</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Subject to Call-In:</b>	<b>NO</b>

### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to present the Principal Select Committee with an introductory report on the Markets Update item, following inclusion on the select work programme at the February 2024 meeting.

### **Recommendation(s)**

Principal Select Committee is recommended to:

- a. Note the introductory information contained within this report.
- b. Consider key lines of enquiry for the Select Review: Markets Update.
- c. Identify next steps for the Select Review: Markets Update.

### **Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

Markets Update was added to the select work programme at the February 2024 meeting of the Principal Select Committee. At this meeting, Members agreed to commence the review at a meeting arranged in April 2024.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

No alternative options have been considered at this stage of the Select Review: Markets Update as it is still in the introductory stage.

## **Detailed Information**

### **BACKGROUND**

At the meeting held on 15 February 2024, the Principal Select Committee, while discussing the select work programme, voted to add Markets Update as an item for review. Members would like an update on how the various markets in Ashfield are operating, recent successes, any challenges the markets are facing, and what future plans the Council has in relation to the markets.

### **WEBSITE INFORMATION**

The Council has information regarding markets in Ashfield published on the website through the Community & Leisure section titled Markets and Town Centres.

As per the Council's website, the Council runs two indoor markets which are in:

- Idlewells Shopping Centre in Sutton-in-Ashfield
- Moor Market in Kirkby-in-Ashfield

The Council also runs outdoor markets in:

- Hucknall
- Kirkby-in-Ashfield
- Sutton-in-Ashfield

Each location listed above has an individual page on the Council's website. Each page provides details of the market and what can be found when visited. The page for Idlewells Indoor Market includes details for each trader operating, including a summary of the service they offer as well as contact information for each market stall. The pages also include details of car parking availability and transport links.

Finally, the Markets and Town Centres page has contact information to engage with the Council regarding markets, including an online form, telephone number, and postal address.

Further on the Council's website is a page dedicated to providing information on how to become a Market Trader, including costs associated, rules and regulations, and the application process for both indoor and outdoor markets.

### **RELATED POLICIES**

The Council has an adopted Markets Policy featuring guidance for persons wishing to hold private, commercial, charity markets, car boot sales or similar across the District of Ashfield. This policy sets out a wide range of information, including, but not limited to:

- Ashfield District Council's market rights,
- What a market is and who the Markets Policy applies to
- Markets operated by the Council,
- Licensing private markets
- Process for determining market license applications
- Renewing a market license
- Enforcement

For full details, the complete Markets Policy can be found on the Council's website, through the Community & Leisure > Markets and Town Centres page.

The Council also has an adopted Markets and Events Fees and Charges Policy, most recently revised in January 2024. This policy sets out the Council's approach to the setting of fees and charges for indoor and outdoor markets and events. The aim of the policy is to identify where variation from the agreed fees and charges is permissible for markets and events. The policy applies to Idlewells Indoor Market, the Council's outdoor markets (listed above), events held on Council land, and commercial market license fees.

These fees and charges are reviewed and set by Cabinet each year, in accordance with the Annual Budget and Tax Setting process. As explained in the policy, flexibility is required for Markets and Events fees and charges for the following reasons:

- Recognition of the Council's social responsibility, to support specific events free of charge or at a reduced rate
- To ensure charges are fair and equitable and support the Council's objective to promote equality of opportunity
- Allocate appropriate refunds due to cancellations through force majeure etc.
- To ensure specific concessionary rates for defined groupings are applied consistently
- To increase the number of third-party events to support the visitor economy
- To ensure that the Council can charge at commercial rates.

The policy further clarifies that where fees and charges are increased in comparison to regular market fees the income will be used for:

- Running an efficient waste, street cleansing and on-site market service
- Market promotion both within the District and beyond
- Improving the markets environment to be modern, safe secure and attractive
- Road Closures and traffic management
- Market team staff costs

For full details, the complete Markets and Events Fees and Charges Policy can be found on the Council's website, through the Community & Leisure > Markets and Town Centres page.

### Fees and Charges

Each year, the Council reviews its Fees and Charges as part of the Annual Budget and Tax Setting process. In doing so, the Council considers levels of service demand, inflation, and how Fees and Charges in Ashfield compare with neighbouring Councils. This process was most recently completed by Cabinet in January 2024.

As part of this process, it was approved by Cabinet that Market Fees and Charges would be increased by 5%. However, charges for stalls in the Indoor Markets range in price, based on floor space, and are negotiated individually so as to maximise take up.

## **NEXT STEPS**

For the Principal Select Committee on 10 April 2024, an invitation was extended to the Assistant Director, Regeneration and the Town Centres and Markets Manager to attend the meeting and assist Members with the early stage of the review process. Both Officers have kindly agreed to attend the meeting and assist Members with discussions and provide an update on Markets in Ashfield.

Ahead of the meeting, Members are asked to consider specific topics within the Markets Update scope to discuss with the Assistant Director, Regeneration, and the Town Centres and Markets Manager.

## **Implications**

### **Corporate Plan:**

Economic Growth and Place is a key priority of the Council as established in the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2027. Within this priority, the Council is committed to ensuring Ashfield is a location and destination of choice, being well connected and offering a great environment to live, work, learn, and visit.

### **Legal:**

There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations within this report.

### **Finance:**

There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations within this report.

<b>Budget Area</b>	<b>Implication</b>
General Fund – Revenue Budget	N/A
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

### **Risk:**

There are no immediate risks as a result of the recommendations within this report.

## **Human Resources:**

There are no HR implications as a result of the recommendations within this report.

## **Environmental/Sustainability:**

There are no environmental/sustainability implications as a result of the recommendations within this report.

## **Equalities:**

There are no equalities implications as a result of the recommendations within this report.

## **Other Implications:**

None.

## **Reason(s) for Urgency**

None.

## **Reason(s) for Exemption**

None.

## **Background Papers**

None.

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