

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2026

Present:

Councillor Richard Beech
Councillor Christine Gare
Councillor William Jones
Councillor Derrick Skinner
Councillor Mick Smith

Councillor Lilian Deighton
Councillor Pam Jones
Councillor Tony Lacey
Councillor Christine Smith
Councillor Caroline Smith

Also Present:

Councillor N Barker
Councillor P Kerry
J Dethick
J Wells
P Kerry
J Hayden
A Bryan

Leader of the Council
Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance
Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer)
Corporate Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer
Trainee Accountant
Senior Scrutiny Officer
Governance Manager

JSC Appointment of Chair

**1/25-
26**

RESOLVED – that Councillor M Smith be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

Councillor M Smith in the Chair.

JSC Apologies for Absence

**2/25-
26**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors S Clough, S Cornwell, M Durrant, L Harthorne, C Lacey, F Petersen, R Shipman and R Welton.

JSC Declarations of Interest

**3/25-
26**

There were no declarations of interest.

JSC Minutes of Last Meeting

**4/25-
26**

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 16 January 2025 be approved as a correct record.

JSC Consideration of Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 - 2029/30

**5/25-
26**

Councillor P Kerry, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, introduced the draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2029/30, which would be presented to Council on 26 January 2026.

Councillor Kerry talked about the budget setting process, a key part of which had been the upcoming business rate reset, which was the first reset since 2013. The

reset removed all previous growth, significantly affecting the Council's business rate income. An increase to Council Tax of 2.99% was being proposed.

The importance of rent affordability for tenants was emphasised, with consideration also given to rising costs pressures on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The housing service had recently been awarded a C1 rating, however the financial burden of regulatory and compliance requirements was beginning to have a notable impact. Consequently, a rent increase of 4.8% was proposed.

The Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) gave a presentation which summarised the draft Medium Term Financial Plan. This included details of:

- General Fund
 - Funding Reforms
 - Waste Reforms
 - Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Transitional Protection
 - Business Rates
 - Recovery Grant
 - Local Government Reorganisation
 - Council Tax
 - 2025/26 Budget
 - 2026/27 Original Budget
 - Forecast 2027/28 – 2029/30
 - Reserves
- Housing Update
 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
- Capital Investment Programme

Members thanked the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) for their presentation and the work in preparing the budget.

JSC Additional Urgent Items

**6/25-
26**

None.