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Chief Executive

Date: 05 August 2015

Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

To: **Members of the Scrutiny Commission**

Mr MR Lay (Chairman)	Mr KWP Lynch
Mr SL Bray (Vice-Chairman)	Mr SL Rooney
Mrs R Camamile (Vice-Chairman)	Mr BE Sutton
Mr RG Allen	Mr R Ward
Mr DC Bill MBE	Mr HG Williams
Mr WJ Crooks	

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear Councillor,

There will be a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMISSION** in the De Montfort Suite, Hinckley Hub on **THURSDAY, 13 AUGUST 2015 at 6.30 pm** and your attendance is required.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Officer

SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 13 AUGUST 2015

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 2)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2015.

3. ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

To be advised of any additional items of business which the Chairman decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting (to be considered at the end of the agenda).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive verbally from members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. **This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the agenda.**

5. QUESTIONS

To hear any questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.

6. SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16-17 (Pages 3 - 4)

Notes of the work programming session on 13 July are attached. Members are asked to prioritise these to inform the work programme for the ensuing two years.

In addition to the larger reviews, there are also regular items that will be inserted into the work programme before the final version comes to the next meeting of the Commission for approval.

7. SCRUTINY ENVIRONMENT GROUP - APPOINTMENT TO GROUP

The Scrutiny Environment Group is a standing working group of the Scrutiny Commission to which the Commission appoints members annually.

Members are asked to express an interest in joining the group (all members of Council except Executive members are eligible).

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH AS MATTERS OF URGENCY

Agenda Item 2

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

12 MARCH 2015 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mr C Ladkin and Miss DM Taylor – Vice-Chairman

Mr MS Hulbert, Mr DW Inman, Mr R Mayne, Mr JS Moore, Mr K Morrell and
Mr K Nichols

Also in attendance:

Officers in attendance: Steve Atkinson, Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Paul Langham, Rebecca Owen and Sharon Stacey

418 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Batty, Bessant and Hall.

419 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Nichols, seconded by Councillor Mayne and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

420 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

421 CHANNEL SHIFT STRATEGY

Following a request at the previous meeting, the Scrutiny Commission received a report on the Channel Shift project. It was noted that not every function would be able to be completed online, but that a significant number would be. This would free up front line staff to assist more people who were unable to complete their tasks online.

Some concern was expressed regarding security of information when carrying out online transactions, but in response it was noted that the system used was based on the highest levels of security and identity checking, as required by central government.

It was agreed that a progress report be brought to the Scrutiny Commission in twelve months.

422 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Scrutiny Commission considered the abbreviated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which focussed on the forecast position and reminded members of the reduction in government funding and the benefits of the new homes bonus over the last few years. In discussing current projects, the Chief Executive confirmed that, contrary to recent comments on social media, Sainsbury's had reiterated its commitment to the Crescent development, by commissioning a 'fit out' from June 2015.

Members requested that an additional page be included in the MTFS which showed underspends over the previous few years, to indicate how surpluses had decreased year on year. It was agreed that this would be provided as an additional paper for Council.

RESOLVED – the Medium Term Financial Strategy be RECOMMENDED to Council, with the additional information requested.

423 HOUSING DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

Further to the request at the previous meeting, a report on the setting up of Hinckley and Bosworth Development, a company wholly owned by the Council, was presented to members. It was noted that the council's representation on the board was one of the matters still under discussion. The distinction between the properties purchased from the housing revenue account and those developed by the proposed company was clarified and it was noted that these would meet different housing needs.

Concern was expressed regarding the ethical grounds for creating the company and that it should not be set up solely for financial reasons. In response officers reported that the financial aspect was a key driver, but agreed it was important for clarity to be given around the ethical status of the company and therefore to revise the documentation to include an ethical statement.

RESOLVED –

- (a) An ethical statement be drafted and RECOMMENDED to Council;
- (b) Regular updates be provided to the Scrutiny Commission;
- (c) The recommendations be endorsed and RECOMMENDED to Council.

424 JOINT SCRUTINY OF THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Scrutiny Commission gave consideration to draft terms of reference for a joint overview & scrutiny body with Blaby District Council in order to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership. It was noted that there had been an informal merger of the partnership in the two authority areas since 2011 and that work was commencing towards a formal merger. Joint scrutiny was an essential part of this process. It was reported that there would be an annual joint meeting of both Scrutiny Commissions with the host authority and chair alternating. It was further noted that a full report for approval of the merger and setting up of the joint committee would be considered by council during the following municipal year.

RESOLVED – the terms of reference be endorsed and RECOMMENDED for approval by Council.

(The Meeting closed at 8.00 pm)

CHAIRMAN

SCRUTINY WORKSHOP

13 JULY 2015

Below are the suggested areas for reviews that both groups came up with during the break out sessions. These are split into internal (council services) and external scrutiny.

Scrutiny of Council Services	
<u>Group 1</u>	<u>Group 2</u>
Capital Expenditure	Major capital projects
Affordable Council Housing	Future of social housing, development of, meeting community need
	Rural social housing
Housing Repairs	Responsive repairs
Recycling service	Recycling services
Living wage	Local energy provision (council housing)
Avoiding redundancies	Housing Development Company
Ageing population, including housing needs	Communication with public (re services etc)
Neighbourhood Planning	Burial space, graveyards
	The devolution agenda
	Grant funding - income v expenditure
	Brownfield development

External scrutiny	
<u>Group 1</u>	<u>Group 2</u>
Combined authorities	Combined authorities (linked to devolution, above)
Community Safety	Community policing / anti social behaviour
Affordable housing	
Verge cutting	Grass cutting & weeds on highway, litter in rural areas
Safeguarding children / adults	Highways in light of new developments
Engagement with parishes	GP Services – out of hours & wait times
Charity sector to engage council's aims	Dentistry services – registering
Social support for ageing population	Public transport – buses, lack of, inconvenient drop off points, Sunnyside, Crescent, MIRA
Housing association – repairs and complaints	Libraries
	Sustainability of developments (housing)
	Financial service provision
	Food banks

Members are asked to prioritise the suggested review topics, having regard to the Corporate Plan and the Council's aims and objectives, to assist in development of a work programme for the ensuing two years.

The Scrutiny Commission can request that some of the work is undertaken by the Finance, Audit & Performance Committee or may set up its own task and finish groups when necessary.

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