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HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

13 SEPTEMBER 2018 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mrs R Camamile and Mr KWP Lynch – Vice-Chairman

Mr DC Bill MBE, Mr DS Cope (for Mr SL Bray), Mr WJ Crooks, Mr DW MacDonald, Mr RB Roberts and Mr R Ward

Also in attendance: Councillor MA Cook

Officers in attendance: Rachel Burgess, Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Rob Parkinson, Giles Rawdon and Sharon Stacey

168 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bray, Sutton and Williams, with the substitution of Councillor Cope for Councillor Bray authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

169 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Camamile, seconded by Councillor Bill and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

170 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

Councillor Crooks entered the meeting at 6.34pm.

171 COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP SIX MONTHLY UPDATE

Members were provided with a six monthly update on the work of the Community Safety Partnership. Inspector Emma Maxwell of Leicestershire Police and Chris Parsons of Leicestershire Fire & Rescue were also present to present their perspective. During the presentation, the following points were noted:

- The increase in hate crime and domestic violence was influenced by encouraging victims to report these crimes so did not necessarily reflect an increase in the incidents
- Theft from vehicles had decreased
- Some crimes could be pre-empted and plans put in place, for example addressing the increase in rural crime in September
- The decrease in antisocial behaviour was partly due to a change in the way it was recorded. The borough council had seen an increase in the number of anti social behaviour cases it was managing
- Knife crime, which is of increasing concern particularly in the city centre, was being addressed via talks in schools to raise awareness of the penalties and consequences associated with this type of crime

- There had been a 33% improvement on call handling since the previous year and online reporting was to be trialled
- In addition to the continuing high performance of the fire service highlighted in the report, there were other aspects of the role not reported including supporting the ambulance service and working with vulnerable people which involved increasing volumes of work.

Members felt that the output of the partnership for the funding available provided great value for money.

A member made reference to the Pride alarm scheme which had ceased previously and said they were not aware of a current scheme. Officers explained that the scheme was for vulnerable people and that members of the public could access the scheme if they fit the criteria. They agreed to send details to members.

It was suggested that community policing needed to strengthen links with the community, and concern was expressed that monthly newsletters created by the local policing teams didn't always seem to be received by the local councillors. Concern was also expressed that, on a few occasions, vehicle crime in progress had been reported using the 101 number but the call handler had claimed there was nothing they could do. Inspector Maxwell explained that the newsletters were sent to parish councils monthly and advised members to contact her if they were not being received. She also asked that parishes invite their local policing team to parish council meetings and that, whilst they would not be able to attend every meeting, if they didn't attend for long periods, she could follow up. She also asked members to contact her directly if they experienced negativity from call handlers when using the 101 number. She explained that, whilst struggling to recruit staff in the call centre, they were looking at best practice from companies with high performing call centres to learn from and improve their service.

Inspector Maxwell reported on the safer roads team that was being set up and asked members to let her know of any particular problem areas to be able to inform the team. Discussion ensued on the difficulty of co-ordinating with Leicestershire County Council to be able to install speed warning signs, even where the parish council purchased the signs there were issues with arranging for lampposts to be assessed to be able to erect the signs. Officers confirmed that these issues had been raised with the county council but would be taken back for discussion. In relation to concern about overweight lorries using particular roads, members were asked to make a note of the operating company so action could be taken against them if appropriate.

A member suggested they had reported drug crime a few times but no action appeared to have been taken. In response, Inspector Maxwell explained that the information would have been logged in order to build a picture of the activity to ensure there was sufficient evidence and she emphasised the importance of continuing to report even when it seemed that no action was being taken.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The work of the Community Safety Partnership be welcomed;
- (ii) The concerns expressed about detachment between the police and the community/parish councils be noted;
- (iii) The development of a web portal for reporting crime be supported and be proactively promoted when available.

172 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL UPDATE

Members received an annual update on air quality in the borough, hearing that there were not exceedances of limits and no air quality management areas had been designated.

In relation to higher levels of pollution alongside the A511 in Markfield, it was noted that a detailed assessment had been carried out in 2015 and monitoring had been increased but the average level had remained below the limits and DEFRA had agreed that an air quality management area was not necessary.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

173 CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Scrutiny Commission received a report on reductions in carbon emissions arising from HBBC operations from March 2008 to March 2018, hearing that the target set had been achieved. It was noted that those areas with the largest emissions had been addressed (for example the leisure centre and former council offices) so reductions would be more modest in future.

RESOLVED – the 40.2% reduction in carbon emissions be welcomed and noted.

174 COUNCIL TAX CARE LEAVERS DISCOUNT

Consideration was given to a report which recommended using discretionary powers to offer discounted council tax to young people leaving care following a campaign by the Children's Society. It was explained that the charge payable would be nil until the age of 25 and it was estimated that 35 young people in the borough would benefit.

RESOLVED – the initiative be welcomed and RECOMMENDED to Council.

175 UNITARY PROPOSALS FOR LEICESTERSHIRE AND PLANS FOR EAST MIDLANDS STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

The recent announcement by Leicestershire County Council (LCC) regarding its decision to develop proposals for a unitary structure of local government in Leicestershire and an East Midlands Strategic Alliance was discussed. The Chief Executive reported that work on alternative models had previously been commissioned and that this would be brought to the next cycle of meetings. He also informed members that the district leaders had agreed to send a joint letter to LCC and committed to responding to any consultation from LCC which was anticipated for the autumn.

Attention was drawn to the consultation that HBBC had put into the Borough Bulletin and a member said he had asked parish councils to put it on their notice board to encourage participation. Members were reminded that, in the 1990s, a consultation with residents showed that the majority did not feel any change to local government structure was required and it was reiterated that local services should be delivered locally. It was noted that the consultation was due to close at the end of September so a verbal update could be provided to the next Council meeting.

RESOLVED - the report be noted and RECOMMENDED to Council.

176 SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2016-18

In considering the overview & scrutiny work programme, it was noted that there would be a frontline service review of the planning service at the next meeting of Finance & Performance Scrutiny.

177 MINUTES OF FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

The minutes of the last meeting of Finance & Performance Scrutiny were noted.

178 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Councillor Lay seconded by Councillor Roberts, it was

RESOLVED – in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3, 5 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

179 FUTURE LEP GEOGRAPHY

Members received a report on the future of Local Economic Partnerships further to recent government guidance.

Members supported the recommendations within the report and it was moved by Councillor Bill and seconded by Councillor Lay that an additional recommendation be made to Council in private session. This was supported by all members and it was

RESOLVED – the recommendations contained within the report be supported and an additional recommendation be made to Council.

(The Meeting closed at 8.54 pm)

CHAIRMAN

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 5, 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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