

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

20 AUGUST 2020 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr MR Lay - Chairman  
Cllr C Ladkin and Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chairmen

Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr SM Gibbens, Cllr DT Glenville (for Cllr R Webber-Jones),  
Cllr K Morrell (for Cllr JMT Collett), Cllr A Pendlebury, Cllr MC Sheppard-Bools and  
Cllr HG Williams

Also in attendance: Councillor MA Cook

Officers in attendance: Bill Cullen, Malcolm Evans, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen and  
Julie Stay

436 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Collett and Webber-Jones, with the following substitutions authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10:

Councillor Morrell for Councillor Collett  
Councillor Glenville for Councillor Webber-Jones.

437 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Pendlebury, seconded by Councillor P Williams and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July be confirmed as  
a correct record.

438 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

439 AMBION COURT REDEVELOPMENT

Members received a report which provided an update on the Ambion Court sheltered housing scheme redevelopment and also sought a revised budget.

In response to a members' question, it was noted that some of the Homes England funding was at risk because the conditions on the government's funding required the construction to be completed by March 2021, however due to COVID-19, this would not be possible and the government had not yet confirmed that the deadline could be extended. It was noted that most authorities partnered with Homes England on similar projects were in the same position. It was noted that there was the possibility of taking any shortfall from the regeneration fund but all efforts would be taken to secure the full Homes England allocation.

Concern was expressed about the change in price resulting in the requirement for additional budget and the reason for not having a fixed price contract for public sector projects was queried. In response, it was explained that the initial budget was based on an estimation on costs at that time. Since 2018, costs of delivery had increased and

included a contingency, but it was felt that the 7% increase since 2018 was acceptable and was still considered to be value for money.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and RECOMMENDED to Council.

Councillor Sheppard-Bools entered the meeting at 6.45pm.

440 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2020/21

Consideration was given to the proposed HBBC Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21. It was noted that the pay structure had not changed since the previous year's report and there were no fundamental differences in the statement. It was requested that the gender pay gap be considered for inclusion in future years' reports.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and RECOMMENDED to Council.

441 PLANNING WHITE PAPER - UPDATE

The Chief Executive updated members on the Planning White Paper and other key national changes to the planning system which had been published recently. During discussion, the following concerns were raised by members:

- There was lack of clarity in the White Paper
- The proposal to lift the cap on S106 contributions, including for affordable housing, on small developments to 50 units would have an impact on local infrastructure improvements
- Zoning all land into the proposed categories may lead to a risk of land no longer being protected from development
- The proposed methodology for calculation of housing numbers may result in a large increase in required provision in Hinckley & Bosworth
- The issue of developers not building out the homes that have approval was a real issue, which would not be addressed by the proposed changes
- It would not be feasible to deliver affordable homes in the rural areas.

It was agreed that a scrutiny briefing would take place for all members to feed into the consultation.

442 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE

The Chief Executive updated members on discussions around devolution and local government reorganisation in anticipation of a Devolution and Local Economic Recovery White Paper expected to be published in September. It was anticipated that the White Paper would suggest creation of mayoral combined authorities and more unitary authorities. It was expected that the White Paper would suggest some areas of the country moving quickly on reorganisation and that elections for those areas may not take place in 2021 but proposals for reforms would be considered for implementation in 2022.

Concern was expressed about the notion of the authority being absorbed into a county unitary and the impact on the residents, service provision and non-statutory services which were currently provided by the borough council for the benefit of residents.

443 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Councillor Crook seconded by Councillor P Williams, 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.

444 MIRA ENTERPRISE ZONE

Members received a report on the MIRA Enterprise Zone.

RESOLVED – the report be supported and RECOMMENDED to Council.

(The Meeting closed at 7.50 pm)

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CHAIRMAN