

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

17 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mr SL Bray and Mrs R Camamile – Vice-Chairmen

Mr WJ Crooks, Mr KWP Lynch, Mr SL Rooney, Mr BE Sutton, Mr R Ward and
Mr HG Williams

Also in attendance: Councillor K Morrell

Officers in attendance: Richard Crosthwaite, Julie Kenny, Sanjiv Kohli, Joseph Matharu,
Rebecca Owen, Rob Parkinson and Judith Sturley

163 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Allen and Bill, with Cllr
Hodgkins substituting for Cllr Bill in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.

164 MINUTES

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 13 August be confirmed
and signed by the Chairman.

165 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

166 MTFS PROGRESS REPORT

The Scrutiny Commission received an update on the financial targets for 2016/17
outlined in the abbreviated Medium Term Financial Strategy. During the presentation, the
Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction) reminded members of the budget
pressures due in part to Leicestershire County Council's withdrawal of recycling credits
and the increased costs of the recycling contract. A revised deficit of £1.9m had been
projected, against which officers had identified savings to meet half of the deficit.

Options highlighted at previous meetings since Council in March were discussed,
including increasing Council Tax by 2%, going to a referendum to increase Council Tax
by more than 2%, removing Local Council Tax Support to parish councils, charging for
green waste collection, and vacancy savings.

Councillor Williams entered the meeting at 6.40pm.

The Chairman reminded members of discussions during the previous municipal year in
relation to a consultation on charging for green waste collections, and asked that, if the
same was to be considered at this stage, the wording of the consultation be brought to
the Scrutiny Commission again. In response, officers explained that the consultation
would need to be sent out early the following week and as such there would not be time
to bring back to the Commission, but that the proposed consultation was very similar to
that previously considered by the Scrutiny Commission.

The options for green waste charging were discussed, including 'opt in' and 'opt out' options. The possibility of increasing council tax was also discussed and it was suggested that an increase of 20% (approximately £20 per year increase for the average band D) would cover the cost of the referendum and the increasing budget requirements.

The Chairman requested that an urgent task & finish group be set up to look at the proposed consultation questions and asked that each group nominate two members to sit on the group, to meet on Thursday, 24 September.

Some members expressed concern in relation to the withdrawal of the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) grant to parish councils, which had been previously agreed to be phased out, but was now being suggested for complete withdrawal. It was requested that parish councils be notified of the suggestion to withdraw the grant as soon as possible by the Executive to enable them to plan for the possibility, particularly as the majority were already finalising their budgets.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The Executive be RECOMMENDED to notify parish councils of the possibility of withdrawing the Local Council Tax Support grant;
- (ii) A Task & Finish group be set up to consider the consultation on charging for green waste collection.

167 ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Scrutiny Commission received an annual update on work undertaken to fulfil the aims of the Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan. Members welcomed the report and the work that had been taken place.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and ongoing work be endorsed.

168 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY UPDATE

Members received the annual update on affordable housing delivery. Concern was expressed that the percentage of affordable housing delivered against the target was lower than the percentage of open market housing delivered against the target. In response, members were reminded that a slower rate of delivery in the first half of the plan period had always been predicted, and in April 2016 at the halfway point, the numbers would be reviewed.

Members requested a report on the numbers of planning applications where a viability assessment had reduced numbers of affordable housing provided.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The report be noted;
- (ii) A report be brought back to a future meeting on planning permissions that had been subject to a successful viability assessment.

169 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

The Environmental Improvement Programme for 2015/16 was outlined for members and a presentation of projects was displayed. Members emphasised the importance of the

scheme and the hope that it would continue into the future. A list of those projects not approved and reasons for this was requested and it was agreed that this would be sent to members.

170 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT POLICY

The Commission received the draft Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) policy which had been updated following an inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners (OCS) in 2014.

RESOLVED – the report be endorsed and RECOMMENDED to Executive for approval.

171 SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16

It was agreed that the work programme would be drafted by the Chair and Vice-Chairs.

(The Meeting closed at 8.35 pm)

CHAIRMAN