

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

10 AUGUST 2017 AT 6.30 PM

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

Mr DC Bill MBE, Mr WJ Crooks, Mr RB Roberts, Mr BE Sutton, Mr R Ward and Ms BM Witherford (for Mr SL Bray)

Also in attendance: Councillor K Morrell and Councillor M Nickerson

Officers in attendance: Daniel Britton, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Rob Parkinson, Caroline Roffey and Mark Tuff

83 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

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

84 MINUTES

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

85 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Camamile, Lynch and Roberts declared personal interests in the developing communities fund. Councillor Lay declared a personal interest which might lead to bias as a Markfield parish councillor (one of the applicants to the fund) and had been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer to enable him to remain in the meeting.

86 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Members received a report which informed them of work undertaken by the Environmental Health (Pollution) service on local air quality management. It was explained that the air quality objectives were the same across the country and based on the level at which pollution becomes harmful to health. The setting of a single national objective meant that there were several breaches in cities. Once a breach had been recorded, an air quality management area had to be declared, an action plan produced and in serious cases traffic flows would need to be controlled or low emission zones imposed.

It was noted that there were no areas of the borough where national air quality objectives were not being met, although it was noted that Shaw Lane in Markfield and Rugby Road in Hinckley had the highest levels of those measured. It was confirmed that there were no significant problems in the borough.

The contribution of large vehicles (lorries, vans, buses and trains) to the poor air quality was discussed, and it was noted that whilst the increasing use of electric vehicles would help, lorries and buses would not be able to make this change. It was, however, acknowledged that these vehicles were significantly cleaner than a few years ago.

A member requested air quality comparisons with previous years, and it was agreed that this would be sent to members following the meeting.

In relation to air quality management plans, it was stated that those authorities with these in place had to have particular regard to them when considering planning applications. The incremental effect of development was discussed and concern was expressed about large warehouses and industrial estates in a neighbouring district which had all created heavy traffic on the same route in the borough. It was proposed that a motion be put to Council to lobby the government on national planning policy in relation to air quality across local authority boundaries.

It was requested that an update on air quality be provided to the Scrutiny Commission annually.

RESOLVED –

- (i) A comparison with previous years be provided for members;
- (ii) A motion be put to Council seeking support to lobby the Government on national planning policy in relation to air quality;
- (iii) Further updated be provided to the Scrutiny Commission annually.

87 DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES FUND - ALLOCATION OF GRANTS

Councillor Lay reiterated his personal interest, for which he had been granted a dispensation.

The Scrutiny Commission was appraised of two schemes assessed in accordance with the agreed criteria for the Developing Communities Fund.

Concern was expressed in relation to the proposed scheme in Market Bosworth (market place redevelopment) due to the early stage of the project, the need for highway works, the poor traffic control plan as indicated, and the ongoing issue of the use of the land which had been maintained by the parish council for many years, but others claimed to have a right over the land.

Officers agreed to look into the matter prior to proceeding with the funding and to update members at the following meeting.

Members were supportive of the funding for the scheme in Markfield (community park).

RESOLVED –

- (i) The application from Market Bosworth Parish Council be not supported at this time;
- (ii) The application from Markfield Parish Council be supported.

88 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the Environmental Improvement Programme for 2017/18.

RESOLVED – the report be endorsed.

89 FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN COUNCIL DWELLINGS

Following a request at the previous meeting, the Scrutiny Commission received a report which informed members of the council's approach to fire safety and risk management. It was noted that, since the Grenfell Tower fire in London, DCLG had instructed all social landlords to review their housing stock and the use of ACM (aluminium composite material) cladding in relation to properties over six storeys or 18 metres in height. Officers reported that the council owned no properties of that height, nor any with ACM cladding.

Members were informed that fire risk assessments were kept up to date for sheltered housing (communal and personal property) and flats with communal areas, annual servicing of heating systems was carried out as well as electrical installation checks. All properties had smoke alarms and these were being updated with hard wired alarms rather than battery operated. Fire evacuation procedures were regularly tested in homeless accommodation.

It was also reported that commercial buildings had been assessed and, of these, two blocks had cladding, but this cladding did not use ACM.

A member asked whether fire safety of tenants' possessions was checked in council houses. In response, it was reported that whilst on all visits, housing officers were vigilant and trained to identify potential risks.

Concern was expressed in relation to privately rented housing and whether there were any fire risk assessments. In response, it was noted that properties would only be checked if a tenant raised a concern or complaint with the council.

90 RESIDENT SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES SURVEY - WINTER 2016

Members were informed of the findings of the resident satisfaction survey which took place in winter of 2016. It was reported that work was underway to improve response rates, including increasing the use of social media. Members felt that the report showed a high level of satisfaction with services and found it interesting that the majority of respondents felt that the media had not viewed local government positively recently.

91 SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18

It was noted that the October meeting would be moved to 9 October and that there would be a Scrutiny workshop on 11 October which would focus on scrutinising high level strategies.

It was requested that the CCG be invited to talk about the issues with GP surgeries due to the shortage of GPs and a general update on primary care in the borough. An update from the CCG on the changes to local healthcare provision was also requested.

92 MINUTES OF FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

The minutes were noted.

(The Meeting closed at 8.25 pm)

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CHAIRMAN

