

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

7 AUGUST 2007 AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: MR. K.W.P. LYNCH - MAYOR
MR. J.G. BANNISTER - DEPUTY MAYOR

Mr. P.R. Batty, Mr. P.S. Bessant, Mr. D.C. Bill, Mr. C.W. Boothby, Mr. J.C. Bown, Mr. M.B. Cartwright, Mr. D.S. Cope, Mrs. S. Francks, Mr. D.M. Gould, Mrs. A. Hall, Mr. P.A.S. Hall, Mr. D.W. Inman, Mr. C.G. Joyce, Mr. M.R. Lay, Mr. R. Mayne, Dr. J.R. Moore, Ms. W.A. Moore, Mr. K. Morrell, Mr. K. Nichols, Mr. L.J.P. O'Shea, Mrs. J. Richards, Mr. A.J. Smith, Mr. R. Ward and Mr. D.O. Wright.

Also in attendance: Messrs. R. Birch and M.D. Clarricoats, Independent members of the Standards Committee.

Officers in attendance: Mr. S. Atkinson, Miss L. Horton, Mr. S. Kohli, Ms. C. Lambert, Mrs. P.I. Pitt and Mr. T.M. Prowse.

140 **PRAYER**

The Reverend Canon F.D. Jennings offered prayer.

141 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mrs. M. Aldridge, Mr. S.L. Bray, Mrs. R. Camamile and Messrs. J.D. Cort, W.J. Crooks, C. Ladkin, T. McClure and B.E. Sutton.

142 **MINUTES (C18)**

It was moved by Mr. Lay, seconded by Mr. Wright and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2007 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

143 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Mr. & Mrs. Hall both declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in report no. C21.

144 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Mayor indicated that, on behalf of the Council, he had arranged for flowers to be sent to Mrs. Camamile and that Mrs. Camamile had asked that her thanks be conveyed to Members. Again Members' good wishes were extended to Mrs. Camamile for a speedy return to good health.

In recognition of their national awards in the Council Worker of the Year Competition the Mayor presented certificates to Dawn Beesley and the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator. Since Gordon Price, the other successful finalist was unable to be present, the Head of Health and Environment received Mr. Price's certificate on his behalf. In presenting these the Mayor extended the best wishes and congratulations to each of the three prize winners on behalf of the Council.

The Mayor indicated that in late October this year the Council would be hosting a delegation from Le Grand Quevilly and that it was his wish that as many Members as possible should accompany the visitors during their stay. Any suggestions from Members as to ideas for entertaining the delegation would be most welcome.

Referring to the Mallory Mile event the Mayor stated that £300 had been raised for his chosen charities.

The Mayor commented that response had been good to the tour of part of the Borough arranged for 8 September 2007. A limited number of places remained available (at a cost of £22.50 per person) and anyone wishing to take up these places was requested to contact the Civic Officer.

145 QUESTIONS

The following questions and replies were received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1.

(a) Question raised by Mr. L.J.P. O'Shea and addressed to Mrs. S. Francks

"We have a serious issue in the Parish of Ratby whereby young adults are binge drinking in public spaces, causing anti- social behaviour.

We believe that the introduction of Designated Alcohol-Free Zones in Ratby will help both the police increase their powers and make local residents feel safer.

We also hope and believe it will be a deterrent to youths who are travelling from well outside the village to cause these problems. Local residents and businesses feel it will be a positive move.

Could I ask, through the Chairman of the Licensing Committee, that the Council consider the adoption of the relevant legislation and set up a working group with the responsible authorities to specify areas within Ratby as an Alcohol Exclusion Zone?

I understand that funding would be required for signage should the Council adopt the legislation".

Response from Mrs. S. Francks

"Thank you for your question Cllr. O'Shea. I also share your concerns for issues of this nature.

An Alcohol Exclusion Zone is a name given to an Alcohol Designated Public Place Order or DPPO, which is a designated area in which the Police have additional powers at their disposal when dealing with alcohol possession and consumption on the street.

However, A DPPO is only as effective as the resources that can be committed to it.

The police are currently in the process of an operation in Ratby to address the problem described and are committed to taking a hard line. The Police will be working closely with the Council. Community Safety are to follow up any action taken with warning letters and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts as a first response.

Whilst an alcohol exclusion zone may be an ultimate result it should be only instigated when we have exhausted all other measures first.

Nevertheless I agree that a corporate working group needs be set up comprised of all relevant stakeholders to investigate the concept of an Alcohol Exclusion Zone.

I do not think that this issue is localised to the Parish of Ratby and therefore would ask that the working group seek the views of all areas of the Borough where Alcohol Exclusion Zones could be potentially beneficial.

The working group will need to assess the evidence and produce a draft report to be presented for endorsement by the relevant committee, prior to the potential adoption of a DPPO by Full Council.

A period of 12 weeks will be required to enable a full consultation to be carried out as per Home Office guidelines.

With regard to funding for potential signage the average cost per sign is fifty pounds; the level of signage per area is at the discretion of the Council. "

In response to a supplementary question from Mr. O'Shea, Mrs. Francks indicated that she was unable to give an exact response with regard to additional police presence in Ratby. In acknowledging Members' concerns and frustrations there were definite roles for all parties dealing with issues of drinking/anti-social behaviour and the Chief Executive indicated that the referral of these concerns to the Community Safety Partnership might result in more significant progress.

(b) Question raised by Mr. B.E. Sutton and addressed to Mr. P.A.S. Hall

This question fell since Mr. Sutton was unable to attend the meeting and had not previously asked that the question be put on his behalf, the procedure for which was governed by the terms of the Constitution.

(c) Question raised by Mr. K. Morrell and addressed to Mr. D.C. Bill

“Before and during the May 2007 elections, Councillor Bill repeatedly promised residents to stop the replacement of the Council Offices on the basis that it would be a waste of money. Can Councillor Bill confirm that it will now cost in the region of £10m to repair/replace the Council Offices and how does he justify claiming that this will be a waste of public money when he had the chance in 2000 to do the job for £2m but failed to do so?”

Response by Mr. D.C. Bill

“In response to these questions can I say that I am disappointed with the tone in which they are framed as I thought we had left the unpleasantness of the last four years behind. It is still my intention to try to ensure that we go forward with a sense of unity.

I will try to answer these questions in that spirit:

“In 2000 a report was prepared by Leicestershire County Council to assess the condition of the Council Offices prompted by the Government agenda to properly assess the condition of all Council assets. The report concluded that to give the Council Offices an extended life expectancy to 2026 a sum of £2,600,000 needed to be spent. The more recent proposal to “replace and re-site” the Council Offices by the last Administration is clearly a totally different project, with considerably more financial costs to this Council.

This Administration will, in line with its adopted property strategy, be carefully considering the way forward with appropriate investment in the existing Council Offices.”

Following a supplementary question from Mr. Morrell Mr. Bill responded that so far as the retention in Council ownership of the Mount Road car park and adjacent land was concerned he did not recognise the 10 million pounds figure now referred to for replacement/repair of the Council offices.

(d) Question raised by Mr. K. Morrell and addressed to Mr. D.C. Bill

“In May 2007 the Council received a report from consultants, Donaldsons, regarding the future of the Council Offices and related costs. Can Councillor Bill confirm that as this document does not contain any commercially sensitive information that it is in the public interest that the full report should be published without further delay and can Councillor Bill confirm that he will do everything in his power to ensure that this happens as soon as possible?”

Response by Mr. D.C. Bill

“Yes”.

(e) Question raised by Mr. K. Morrell and addressed to Mr. D.C. Bill

“Before and during the recent local elections Councillor Bill constantly informed residents that the replacement of the Leisure Centre would be a waste of public money by the then Conservative administration. Having read the report can Councillor Bill confirm that he was wrong and that it is in fact in the best public interest to replace the Leisure Centre and does Councillor Bill agree that it is in the best public interest to publish the "full" report into the replacement of the Leisure Centre and that he will ensure that as the report does not contain any commercially or personally sensitive information that the report is published as soon as possible?”

Response by Mr. D.C. Bill

“As far as the Leisure Centre is concerned, I saw the report for the first time last week. It was intended that this would be brought to the following meeting of the Scrutiny Commission and, indeed, this is still the case. In view of this question it might as well be released now and a copy will be available for everybody.

The previous Conservative administration commissioned a report into a project which, unfortunately, would have cost local Council Taxpayers something between £26m and £30m, assuming, of course, that there are no additional costs.

The consultants fees are £30,000.

This Administration will not be driven by such extravagant ambitions. We are committed to providing modern sport and leisure facilities for all but at a price that can be afforded by Council Taxpayers”.

146 MINUTES OF SCRUTINY COMMISSION MEETING 14 JUNE 2007

The Chairman of the Commission indicated that he would deal with these as part of the following item.

147 POSITION STATEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY COMMISSION

The Leader of the Council introduced the first of these (details of which were circulated at the meeting) and indicated the intention to use this mechanism as a means of advising the Council of the on-going work of the Administration. Adding to the details circulated the Council Leader referred to his attendance at the Scrutiny Commission meeting on 19 July 2007 to present the Administration’s vision and on the intention to examine the re-generation of areas other than Hinckley town centre. Before the end of September this year it was intended as part of the Local Development Framework to produce a document which would shape the future of the Borough for the next 20 years.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission highlighted issues from the two Commission meetings held on 14 June and 19 July 2007. In commenting

on the former meeting the Chairman referred to the consideration of neighbourhood improvements to Council-owned estates, the Parish and Community Initiative Fund and the Performance Management Framework 2006/07.

Whilst welcoming the introduction of Position Statements as a standing item on the Council agenda questions were asked as to the rules of debate which would apply following the presentation of these statements at Council meetings. It was agreed that the Chief Executive produce a report on this, with a view to the Council Procedure Rules within the Constitution being extended to provide for the presentation of and discussion on Position Statements.

148 ESTATES AND ASSET MANAGEMENT MAINTENANCE POLICY/ STRATEGY AND RESOURCE (C20)

In consequence of the Audit Commission requirement for local authorities to establish an Asset Management Policy presented to Members was a draft Policy which had been endorsed by both the Executive and the Scrutiny Commission.

On the motion of Mr. Bill, seconded by Mr. Wright it was

RESOLVED – the Estates and Asset Management Policy, Strategy and Resource document be adopted.

149 PLAY STRATEGY (C21)

In presenting the above the portfolio holder for parks and open spaces indicated that paragraph 4.9.4 of the report should be amended by the deletion of the word ‘teenage’ and the insertion of the words “toddlers”. Tribute was then paid to the officers involved in the production of this Strategy.

On the motion of Ms. Moore, seconded by Mrs. Francks it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) the Play Strategy be approved and the portfolio of projects identified within 4.9 of the report of the Head of Health and Environment which will be submitted as part of the Borough Council’s bid to the Big Lottery for Funding through the Children’s Play Initiative in September 2007 be endorsed; and
- (ii) agreement be given to the capital projects identified within 4.9 of the report being included in the Council’s capital programme to reflect the initial expenditure to be provided by the Big Lottery, subject to the bid being successful.

150 OVERVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE MONITORING OFFICER/DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER IN THE PAST YEAR (C22)

Presented to Members was an overview of the work of the above officers in the past year and on the motion of Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Cope it was

RESOLVED – the annual report of the Monitoring Officer 2007 be noted.

151 LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT (SHMA) (C23)

Council was advised of progress towards the procurement of a SHMA for the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area within the East Midlands Region and informed that the contribution by this Authority would be £6,000. It was then moved by Mr. Cope, seconded by Mr. Wright and

RESOLVED – agreement be given to:-

- (i) the approach and timetable completed and planned to date in respect of the Leicester and Leicestershire SHMA; and
- (ii) the Council's role as the administrator for the total cost of the project of £100,000 as Lead Member Authority.

152 CURRENT AND FUTURE PLANNED INSPECTION ARRANGEMENTS (C24)

Following endorsement by the Executive and the Scrutiny Commission Council approval was sought to the submission of an application in February 2008 for CPA re-categorisation from 'fair' to 'good'. Briefly outlined were details of the preparatory work necessary to promote the success of the submission.

On the motion of Mr. Bill, seconded by Mr. Wright it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) an IDeA peer review be undertaken within the Council in September 2007, with 'on site' works during week commencing 10 September 2007;
- (ii) an application be made to the Audit Commission in February 2008 for re-categorisation from 'fair' to 'good' under CPA arrangements, subject to satisfactory progress reports to Members; and
- (iii) work on an IDeA review of the Local Strategic Partnership in December 2007, to link with the work programme of the Scrutiny Commission, be supported.

153 POORS PLATT CHARITY, BARWELL

Arising from the need to appoint two representatives to succeed Mrs. Cook and Mr. Hinton, whose term of office had expired and three names

having been put forward a vote was taken, following which it was moved by Mr. Bill, seconded by Mr. Wright and

RESOLVED – Mrs. E. Hemsley and Mr. A. Wheeler be appointed to this Charity for a four-year period.

154 GOVERNING BODY, REDMOOR HIGH SCHOOL, HINCKLEY

It being necessary to nominate a representative to succeed Mr. J.E. Stanley on the above it was moved by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Bill and

RESOLVED – Ms. S. Moore be nominated to fill the vacancy on the governing body of Redmoor High School.

(The meeting closed at 7.38 p.m.)