

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

5 JULY 2011 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: MR R MAYNE - MAYOR
MR MB CARTWRIGHT - DEPUTY MAYOR

Mr R Allen, Mr JG Bannister, Mr PR Batty, Mr PS Bessant, Mr DC Bill, Mr CW Boothby, Mr SL Bray, Mrs R Camamile, Mrs T Chastney, Mr DS Cope, Mr DM Gould, Mrs A Hall, Mr PAS Hall, Mrs L Hodgkins, Mr MS Hulbert, Mr DW Inman, Mr C Ladkin, Mr KWP Lynch, Mr J Moore, Mr K Morrell, Mr T Mullaney, Mr K Nichols, Mr LJP O'Shea, Mrs J Richards, Mrs H Smith, Mrs S Sprason, Mr BE Sutton, Miss DM Taylor, Mr R Ward and Ms BM Witherford.

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Mr Michael Brymer, Mr D Bunker, Mr B Cullen, Miss L Horton, Mr S Kohli and Miss R Owen.

40 PRAYER

Prayer was offered by Dr Reverend Robert Stephen.

41 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr WJ Crooks and Mr MR Lay.

42 MINUTES (C1 & C2)

On the motion of Mr Bray, seconded by Mr Bill it was

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meetings held on 21 March and 17 May 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

44 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor referred to his recent visit to Le Grand Quévilly in France and to the forthcoming Youth Exchange which would start the following week.

45 QUESTIONS

a) Question asked by Councillor R Ward and addressed to Councillor SL Bray

"To avoid the possibility of a two centre town would the portfolio holder bring the council up to date on the initiatives in place to make certain this does not happen. The connection between the proposed Bus Station development and the main shopping centre of Castle Street will be key to the success of Hinckley Town Centre. The obvious route of Station Road between the two will require imaginative thought to deliver real connection between these key Town markets. Will the portfolio holder inform the members on the progress?"

Response from Councillor SL Bray

"Dear Councillor Ward

Thank you for your question and interest in the regeneration proposals for Hinckley Town Centre.

I am pleased to report that as part of a formal agreement with the Tin Hat Partnership, the Council has secured a major financial commitment of up to £300K to deliver improvements to Station Road and to introduce residents parking in the vicinity of the Bus Station site.

The plans for the improvements are being programmed to take place with the development of the Crescent scheme on the Bus Station site to ensure any disruption in the Town Centre is minimised and works are coordinated effectively. Full engagement with key stakeholders and businesses will take place during the development of the detailed scheme.

I am confident that with the measures I have explained above key improvements can be made to ensure enhanced connections are made between the new Crescent development and Castle Street."

In response to a supplementary question from Mr Ward, Mr Bray confirmed that all shopkeepers affected would be kept involved in the discussions and that Council would be informed of this.

b) Question asked by Councillor R Ward and addressed to Councillor DS Cope

"Would the portfolio holder inform the Council members of the progress made in carbon reduction and what initiatives are in place for cost saving combined with carbon reduction. Would the portfolio holder also inform the Council members all the costs involved in officer time and whether in these austere times these costs are justified?"

Response from Councillor DS Cope

“The Council has committed to a 20% reduction in the Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) it produces from its own operations by 2014 from a baseline in 2008-09. This is both to show a lead to the community in climate change mitigation and to also to reduce the costs of providing our services. The Council adopted a Carbon Management Plan in 2009 which helps identify measures to be taken to achieve this target. This plan is currently being refreshed due to the changes in proposals for council buildings and fleet, which will make a significant contribution to ensuring our targets can be met by 2014.

Measures already taken and continuing:

- Hinckley Leisure Centre- Pool covers, variable speed drives for pumps and ventilation fans, low energy lighting upgrades, temperature control changes, staff training
- Reconfigured heating at Middlefield Lane Depot
- Improvement of server rooms reducing server energy demand
- Replacement of leachate pumping station rising main.
- Upgrading of lighting at Sheltered Housing schemes funded through no interest SALIX funding.
- General staff awareness training and campaigns to ensure equipment is turned off.
- Trackers on vehicle fleet, rationalisation of rounds and fuel management, new fleet with better fuel consumption

Actions proposed

- Early move to Hinckley Hub which will have reduced floor space and a high efficiency building, release of Florence House, Depot and Argents Mead.
- Further Salix funded lighting upgrades
- Boiler replacement at Sheltered Housing as required

The Councils overall performance is currently severely affected by the performance of the Hinckley Leisure Centre which is operated by SLM. This single old building produces some 43% of the council's total CO₂ emissions for buildings. The cold winters have increased gas consumption at HLC by over 9% since 2008. Excluding the Leisure Centre the rest of the councils operations have achieved a credible minus 4.4% reduction despite the weather (Minus 8.1% weather corrected) including minus 11.4% in electricity consumption. These reductions equate to a direct saving to this authority of over £51,000 each year and as energy prices continue to rise, reduces additional pressures on the budget.

We currently have 1 fte Officer responsible for co-ordinating our work on environmental matters including reducing CO₂ emissions and we continue to make it “part of the day job” for other staff involved in the procurement or operation of services. This should be regarded as good management of the facilities and services we deliver.”

Mr Ward asked a supplementary question with regard to the cost in officer time of this work. Mr Cope agreed to provide a written response.

c) Question asked by Councillor PS Bessant and addressed to Councillor SL Bray

"Will the leader inform the Council how many Parish Councils have been consulted by this authority on the Government's 'Planning for Traveller Sites' consultation?"

Response from Councillor SL Bray

"Cllr Bessant. Thank you for your question.

It is not this Council's job to consult on Government Planning Policy but to respond to it. You will however be pleased to note we have ensured that it was forwarded to all Parish Council's on 9 June 2011.

The Government deadline for responses has just been extended until 3 August 2011 and I urge all Parish Councils to make their views known."

d) Question asked by Councillor PS Bessant and addressed to Councillor SL Bray

"Given the uncertainty around the financial split between Borough and Parishes in relation to the New Homes Bonus, what can the leader do to assure local residents that he will do whatever he can to ensure that our communities receive as much benefit from developers as possible?"

This question was answered with e) below.

e) Question asked by Councillor K Morrell and addressed to Councillor SL Bray

"Will the leader inform the Council how much, if any, extra income to date has been generated from the Government's changes to planning around the New Homes Bonus and what has this authority used this extra revenue for?"

Response from Councillor SL Bray to questions d & e

"Cllr Bessant and Cllr Morrell. Thank you for your questions. I've combined my response to address the points you raise on the New Homes Bonus.

You will be aware that the Minister for Housing and Local Government, in February 2011, announced the final design of the New Homes Bonus scheme which he confirmed was to address the disincentive within the local government finance system for local areas to welcome growth. He claimed that the scheme would remove this disincentive by providing local authorities with the means to mitigate the strain the increased population causes. In doing so, he claimed the New Homes

Bonus should help engender a more positive attitude to growth, and create an environment in which new housing is more readily accepted.

In simple terms, the way the scheme works is that the Government, through this New Homes Bonus, match the additional Council Tax potential from increases in housing stock created for the following six years. An additional element is included for affordable homes.

This Council was allocated £349,762 New Homes Bonus settlement for 2011/12.

Whilst this is to be welcomed, Members should be aware that there has been a far greater reduction in the Council's RSG settlement for 2011/12 (reduction of £908,250) and 2012/13 (further reduction of £700,331). It is, therefore, important to consider this in the wider context of the Council budget which underpins service delivery for our communities.

Despite this, I am pleased to confirm that I am considering allocating a proportion of the New Homes Bonus specifically for Parish development initiatives. I have commissioned a report which will be brought to a future meeting of this Council on how this scheme will operate, building on the much valued Parish Initiative Fund that is operated by the Council.

In addition to this, a joint report is being prepared for all Districts in Leicester in conjunction with the County and City Councils linked to developing a Strategy for the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy; a further initiative introduced by the Coalition Government to secure benefits for local residents in communities that accommodate new development. This is important going forward, as there will be further limitations to the extent of planning gain that can be secured through traditional S106 Planning Agreements.

It will be interesting to understand if Leicestershire County Council will be committing a proportion of its share of the Bonus Fund which has been top sliced from the local allocation."

In response to a supplementary question from Mr Bessant, Mr Bray stated that funding had been received but not yet allocated and work was currently being undertaken to formalise arrangements with Parish Councils.

Mr Morrell asked a supplementary question about the funding going to the relevant parish rather than into the Parish and Community Initiative Fund. Mr Bray reminded the Council that the Government had originally announced that the loss of the revenue support grant would be offset by the New Homes Bonus.

f) Question asked by Councillor JS Moore to Councillor SL Bray

"Will the leader explain why no summer activities for children and young people have been planned for the rural areas this year as in previous years the 'what's going down' initiative was Borough wide? This year the only FREE events are being offered by the County Council library service apart from those taking place in Hinckley so where is the funding coming from to provide these FREE Hinckley events".

Response from Councillor MT Mullaney

"Thank you Cllr Moore, for your question. Despite your pessimism, I can confirm that there is a good range of activities planning for young people across the Borough this summer.

For clarification, the What's Going Down brochure is a partnership publication that relies on the submission of activities throughout the summer from a range of external partners and **not just** HBBC led activities.

It is important to point out that the What's Going Down information that you have seen in the Borough Bulletin is a 'snapshot' of the activities that are being publicised. As page 9 of the Bulletin states "*The Full Booklet is available to download from www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk from 4 July*", and there are a variety of activities Borough wide, including the rural areas, in the Full Version.

There are over 30 activity schemes promoted in the booklet ranging from half days, morning or afternoon sessions e.g. Desford Tennis Club to comprehensive programmes across four weeks of the summer holidays (Earl Shilton Community House), Barwell Community House is running a five week programme.

Just as an example, projects funded through HBBC's Summer Activities Fund 2011, will be able to view in the full version. A breakdown of localities being supported to put on activities is as follows:-

Parish Area	Organisation	Activity	Grant Received (£)
Desford	Desford Lawn Tennis Club	Junior Tennis Programme	200
Desford	Desford Free Church	Summer Playscheme activities	199
Sheepy magna	Sheepy Magna Memorial hall	Theatre and Drama workshop	200
Hinckley (Wykin)	Red River Theatre / Redmoor High School	Filming and scripting activities	200

Market Bosworth	Market Bosworth Playscheme	Zumba and kickboxing	200
Newbold Verdon and Desford surrounding villages (based at Bosworth College)	Coach Unlimited	Sports Coaching programme	200
Earl Shilton	Earl Shilton Town Council	Play and crafting activities at Shilton by the Sea event	200
Stoke Golding	Lychgate Activity Club	Junior Fishing programme	200
Hinckley (Westfield)	Westfield Junior School	Sports Coaching and Olympic sessions	200
Burbage	Conkers Activity Club	It's a knockout day	200

As we are in an era of reduction in services, ultimately some summer activities for children and young people delivered by our **partners** will be affected. For example the recent restructure of Leicestershire County Councils Youth Service means that this has affected the planning of their Summer Programme. To date we do not have this information and so it will not be possible to promote through the What's Going Down Brochure.

National Play Week Celebrations, which is the FREE Hinckley event that is being referred to is a partnership event with contributions and support from Volunteers, Library Services, Young People, local playschemes, Hinckley and Bosworth Youth Council, SLM and parent help which is coordinated by ourselves (HBBC) on behalf of the Hinckley & Bosworth Play Partnership."

Mr Moore asked a supplementary question about whether the football club would again be running an Academy of Excellence at their own expense. Mr Mullaney agreed to respond in writing.

g) Question asked by Councillor Mrs S Sprason and addressed to Councillor SL Bray

"Will the leader update members on the development of 'Extra Care Housing' schemes as Hinckley is the only council in Leicestershire not to have a scheme, this denies older people this preferred choice in the Hinckley and Bosworth area?"

Response from Councillor DS Cope

“Thank you Cllr Sprason for your question. Firstly, can I correct your inaccurate statement. There are currently 5 extra care schemes in the county, in Market Harborough, Melton, Charnwood and Blaby. We are one of three districts, including North West Leicestershire and Oadby and Wigston which currently do not have provision.

The council remains committed to supporting the development of extra care housing and appreciates the contribution it makes to the wellbeing of older people. A bid was made for NHS funding to convert a council sheltered scheme to extra care in 2008 but unfortunately this was unsuccessful. Negotiations have taken place with developers regarding bringing an extra care scheme forward, most recently on the Spa Lane site in Hinckley. On this particular site HCA funding could not be secured to progress the provision.

The council will continue to work with developers, the county council and other funders to identify opportunities for the development of extra care, including consideration of the conversion of our own sheltered accommodation should the opportunities arise.”

Mr Cope agreed to respond outside of the meeting to Mrs Sprason’s supplementary question about whether the New Homes Bonus would be used to fund the scheme.

h) Question asked by Councillor CW Boothby and addressed to the Administration

“Given the incredible budgetary pressures public services are under I am aware the Partnership of which this Authority is a member is looking at the financial shortfall currently existing within the provision of Traffic Enforcement Officers and that this service is currently under review and consultation.

I believe these Enforcement officers provide a valuable service, with Ratby a case in point having just received double yellow lines along Main St and in the village centre. Cllr O'Shea and I negotiated directly to have TEO's patrol in the village to enforce the new traffic regulations.

Would the Administration let Councillors know what actions they as active members of this partnership have taken as part of this consultation process?”

Response from Councillor SL Bray

“Leicestershire County Council (LCC) have advised that they intend to undertake market testing on their on street parking enforcement responsibility. The current arrangements stand until July 2012. Ian Drummond, Assistant Director for Highways at LCC has given a commitment that “no traffic restriction will never be enforced”.

Meanwhile the District Councils who currently provide on street enforcement on behalf of the County Council have been working to identify where efficiencies can be made in order that the districts can submit a bid to continue providing this service. This bid will be based on a specification provided by Leicestershire County Council.

The level of enforcement provided for on street enforcement across the county is a decision for the County Council and as such Cllr Boothby is advised to raise this issue with the County Council.”

46 LEADER’S POSITION STATEMENT

In presenting his position statement the Leader congratulated officers on removing the recent gypsy incursion and noted the progress on plans for Hinckley Hub. He acknowledged the ongoing MIRA project which would bring employment into the area and the work with Swanswell to find alternative suitable premises.

Mr Bray referred to the financially sound position of the authority and the fact that it was the best performing in the county, with the lowest council tax. He went on to report back from the recent LGA Conference and District Councils Network Assembly.

Mr Bessant responded by welcoming the new Councillors and supporting Mr Bray in his thanks to officers regarding the gypsy incursion and support for MIRA.

47 MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION (C3 & C4)

The minutes of the Scrutiny Commission meetings held on 9 March and 14 April 2011 were received for information. In presenting these, Mr Hall reminded Members about the Scrutiny workshop on 7 July.

48 FINAL OUTTURN 2010/11 (C5)

Approval was sought for the General Fund Outturn for 2010/11. During discussions reference was made to disabled adaptations and the recent increase in waiting time following the initial success in reducing waiting times. In response it was clarified that the recommendation regarding housing repairs’ waiting lists was to reduce several waiting lists including kitchens, and did not refer only to disabled adaptations.

Concern was expressed regarding the fund for future capital projects and felt this should be available for other purposes. In response the Executive Member explained that the reserve would ensure a continuing capital programme into the future.

A Member referred to appendix 1 and the entry for UG&C Netherley Court. At this juncture Mr Bray and Mr Mullaney declared personal interests as property owners on the site.

On the motion of Mr Lynch, seconded by Mr Bray it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) the General Fund Outturn for 2010/11 and transfers to earmarked reserves and balances be approved;
- (ii) the carry forward to 2011/12 of the specific underspends on the General Fund incurred in 2010/11 be approved;
- (iii) the transfer of the year end underspend on the Housing Revenue Account to the HRA fund balance be approved;
- (iv) the year end outturn for the General Fund Capital Programme and the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme be approved.

49 APPROVAL TO FUND COST OF VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY (C7)

Members were presented with a report which sought approval to fund requests for voluntary redundancy and capital costs of early retirement from General Fund Revenue Balances. It was explained that this followed on from the loss of 23 posts as part of the recent restructures.

It was moved by Mr Lynch, seconded by Mr Bray and

RESOLVED - the redundancy costs and capital cost of early retirement as outlined in the report be funded from General Fund Revenue Balances.

50 REGENERATION SERVICE BUDGET ARRANGEMENTS (C6)

Formal approval was sought for the budget arrangements for the authority's regeneration team following the setting up of an agreement between this Council and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council for shared working. Members welcomed the positive regeneration work undertaken by Officers and supported the shared arrangements between the authorities.

On the motion of Mr Bray, seconded by Mr Bill it was

RESOLVED – the arrangements outlined be endorsed.

51 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11 (C8)

Approval was sought of the second annual report of the Standards Committee which looked at the work of the committee, the future planned work and work programme and complaints statistics. Concern was expressed that the standards regime was costly in terms of officer time and was not the most effective way of dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct. In response to further concerns it was confirmed that a report on the new local code of conduct would be put to Council before implementation.

With regard to the local complaints procedure, Members felt that the subject Member should be notified of a complaint against them at the earliest stage. It

was moved by Mrs Hall and seconded by Mr Bessant that this be taken back to the Standards Committee.

It was moved by Mrs Hall, seconded by Mr Inman and

RESOLVED –

- (i) the Standards Committee Annual Report 2010/11 be approved;
- (ii) the Standards Committee be requested to reconsider the process for notifying a subject member of a complaint against them.

52 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY END OF TERM REPORT 2007-2011 INCORPORATING ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11 (C9)

It was noted that this item had been deferred to the next Council meeting.

53 AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION (C10)

Proposed amendments to the Constitution, some of which had been agreed at Annual Council on 17 May, were presented to the Council and it was reported that these constituted mainly staffing changes, minor word changes and changes to the Overview & Scrutiny function. Further proposed changes would be put to the Council in due course.

It was moved by Ms Witherford, seconded by Mr Bray and

RESOLVED –

- (i) the proposed amendments be approved and adopted with immediate effect;
- (ii) the Constitution be updated at its next annual review date.

54 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2011/12 (C11)

Members were provided with the proposed calendar of meetings which had been revised following changes agreed at Annual Council. With regard to the Finance, Audit & Performance Committee it was agreed that, to avoid lengthy agendas, the previous 6-weekly cycle of meetings be reinstated.

On the motion of Mr Bray, seconded by Mr Bill it was

RESOLVED – the calendar of meetings 2011/12 be approved, but with the frequency of meetings of the Finance, Audit & Performance Committee being retained at the existing six-weekly cycle.

55 MEMBERSHIP OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

On the motion of Mr Bray, seconded by Mr Bill it was

RESOLVED – Mr O’Shea replace Mr Lay on the Planning Committee.

56 REPRESENTATION ON CHARITABLE BODIES

It was moved by Mr Bray, seconded by Mr Bill and

RESOLVED – the following be appointed as the Council’s representatives on the bodies indicated:-

- (1) The Dixie Educational Foundation (revision) – Mrs JM Glennon, Mr AJ Goodwin, Mr BE Sutton and Mr R Ward (until May 2014);
- (2) Poors Platt Charity Barwell – Mrs E Hemsley and Mr M Hulbert (from August 2011 to August 2015).

57 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Mr Bray, seconded by Mr Bill, it was

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

58 IMPROVEMENT TO RECYCLING CONTAINERS (C12)

Approval was sought to make improvements to the recycling service through the use of new containers. Members sought clarification on the scheme and the containers which would be in use should the improvements take place.

It was moved by Mr O’Shea, seconded by Mr Hulbert and

RESOLVED – the recommendations contained within the report be approved.

(The meeting closed at 8.07 pm)

MAYOR