

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMISSION
15th JULY 2004 AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Mr. M.R. Lay - Chairman

Mr. D.C. Bill, Mrs. R. Camamile, Mr. K.W.P. Lynch and Mrs. E.A. Spencer.

Officers in attendance: Mr. G.B. Gethin and Mrs. P.I. Pitt.

103 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Messrs. P.T. Andrews and M.A. Hall and Mrs. M.L. Sherwin and the substitution of Mrs. Spencer for Mrs. Sherwin authorised in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

104 MINUTES (SC9)

On the motion of Mr. Lynch, seconded by Mrs. Camamile, it was

RESOLVED - the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2004 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

105 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

106 ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chairman reminded Members that he had called for an additional item relating to the Constitution to be considered at tonight's meeting. This report (SC12) had been previously circulated and would be considered later in the meeting.

Members expressed disappointment that, as called for under minute No.47, no report had been forthcoming from the Head of Finance relating to the Council's targets for the level of council tax, government grants and expenditure restraints. An assurance had been received that this would be available for the next meeting, with the appropriate officer present. Similarly, arising from minute No. 46 concerns were raised that report SC11 on this evening's agenda failed to address issues raised at the last Commission meeting.

Concerns were again raised as to the need for dedicated officer support for the Commission to assist in an effective Scrutiny process and the Chairman undertook to produce a suitably worded motion for the Council meeting on 3rd August emphasising the need for such support, as recently highlighted in the Peer Challenge Review and as recommended in the Constitution.

107 DATES OF SCRUTINY (SC10)

Placed before Members was a suggested calendar of dates for Scrutiny. Subsequent to this having been circulated the July meeting of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Panel was now to be held on 19th July. Additionally, at the request of Mrs. Camamile, the Chairman of the Contracted Services Scrutiny Panel, the date of the September meeting of that Panel was brought forward to 23rd September.

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

RESOLVED - subject to the amendments referred to above the suggested dates of meetings be approved.

108 PROCEDURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE AFTER THE CLARENDON PARK UNAUTHORISED TRAVELLERS ENCAMPMENT (SC11)

As discussed earlier in the meeting Members were agreed that this report of the Head of Planning & Leisure did not address the issues raised at the last meeting. The Scrutiny Commission on 17th December 2002 (minute No. 320) had agreed to the preparation of a procedure manual to cover all aspects of dealing with future incidents which would be reviewed at least annually by the Head of Law & Administration and concerns were expressed that this appeared never to have been enacted.

On the motion of Mr. Lay, seconded by Mr. Lynch, it was

RESOLVED -

- (i) the Director of Community Services be requested to convey to the next Commission meeting the information expressly called for at the last meeting; and
- (ii) the Acting Head of Paid Service be advised of the dismay of Members that no officer was available at tonight's meeting to address this issue and that the Commission require an officer to now write to all Commission Members indicating whether a manual was ever produced and acted upon and, if not, the reasons why.

109 E-GOVERNMENT SCRUTINY PANEL

Members were advised of the Labour and Liberal Democrat nominations to this Panel. The Commission considered the benefits of this Panel, once established, being supported by a member of Internal Audit proficient in IT skills and the designation of this person as Lead Officer of the Panel, subject to their other duties and expenditure costs.

On the motion of Mr. Lay, seconded by Mrs. Camamile, it was

RESOLVED -

- (i) a Member of the internal audit team be designated Lead Officer of this Panel; and
- (ii) the Democratic Services Manager contact the Leader of the Conservative Group in order to establish nominations from that group.

110 ARTICLE 6 OF CONSTITUTION, SCRUTINY/SELECT COMMITTEES AND SCRUTINY (SC12)

At the request of the Chairman Members considered the above. This draft document had been considered by the Constitution Working Party on 7th July and formed part of the Constitution being referred to Council on 3rd August.

Commission Members were unanimous in that they considered it more appropriate for the Body being constituted to be entitled Scrutiny Commission as against Select Commission. So far as the Standing Select Committees were concerned reference was made to minute No. 46(iii) of 3rd June 2004 whereby it had been agreed that once the task of refining key performance indicators was complete, the remit of the Performance Panel should be merged into that of Contracted Services, which the Commission considered should be more appropriately termed "Council Services Select Committee". Additionally, certain issues previously considered by the Performance Panel could in future be addressed by the Finance & Audit Services Select Committee.

With regard to 6.03 (specific functions) of the draft document Members were of the view that (a)(vi) should be deleted.

On the motion of Mrs. Camamile, seconded by Mr. Lay it was

RESOLVED - the following amendments be incorporated in the draft document to be considered by the Council:-

- (i) once the remit of the Performance Scrutiny Panel has been completed, the following then be considered by the Council Services (formerly Contracted) Select Committee:
 - (a) scrutiny of the Council's performance in relation to its key performance indicators and wider performance measures; and
 - (b) investigation into how under-performance can be remedied and all key measures of performance improved to the top quartile; and
- (ii) item 6.03(a)(vi) relating to the receiving of reports from the Leader of the Council on policy and strategy proposals and from the Council's Topic Debate be deleted.

(The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.)