

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMISSION
7th OCTOBER 2004 AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Mr. M.R. Lay - Chairman
Mr. M.A. Hall - Vice-Chairman

Mr. D.C. Bill, Mrs. R. Camamile, Mrs. M.J. Crooks, Mr. R.D. Ellis, Mrs. S. Francks, Mr. K.A.J. Hunnybun, Mr. K.W.P. Lynch, Mrs. M.L. Sherwin, Mrs. E.A. Spencer and Mr. R. Ward.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.4 Mr. J.F. Collins also attended the meeting.

Officers in attendance: Mr. M. Donovan, Mr. G.B. Gethin, Mrs. P.I. Pitt, Mr. T.M. Prowse and Mr. D. Tilley.

209 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Ms. J. Price and Mr. K. Vessey, the latter being substituted by Mr. Hunnybun in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

210 MINUTES (SC19)

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

RESOLVED - the minutes of the meeting held on 26th August 2004 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

211 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

Mr. Bill entered the meeting at 6.35 p.m.

212 INCREASING THE RATE OF RECYCLING HOUSEHOLD WASTE (SC20)

Prior to presenting his report the Head of Environmental Services gave a presentation reminding Members of the changes to the recycling and refuse collection services. He then reported on progress with regard to meeting the Council's statutory recycling target of 27% for 2005/06.

Mrs. Crooks and Mr. Lynch withdrew from the meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Whilst welcoming the likely achievement of the Government's objective Members were of the opinion that a more challenging local target should be considered and an objective review undertaken of the recycling service. Following on from Mr. Collins' suggestion that any review should more appropriately be considered after the Christmas period it was moved by Mr. Lay, seconded by Mrs. Sherwin and

RESOLVED -

- (i) Cabinet be requested to consider the relevant section of the Corporate Plan being reviewed so as to put in place a more challenging and progressive target for recycling; and

- (ii) the Commission's thanks to the public and staff for supporting recycling targets be placed on record.

Mr. Collins left the meeting at 7.46 p.m. and Mr. Bill at 7. 48p.m.

213 COUNCIL TAX WITHIN THE LOWEST 25% IN ENGLAND (SC25)

Further to minute number 163, the Acting Head of Finance presented financial information relating to:-

- The average Shire district budget requirement for Leicestershire districts
- The effect on data with Barwell likely to become a Parish
- Comparison with neighbouring districts which have town councils within their areas

Mr. Bill returned to the meeting at 7.55 p.m.

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

RESOLVED - the information continue to be monitored.

214 FINANCE AND AUDIT SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING - 17TH JULY 2004

The Commission gave consideration to a recommendation from the above Scrutiny Panel that an approach be made to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) with regard to relaxing data protection restrictions in the sharing of information between council tax/the recovery of non-domestic rates and benefits. On the motion of Mr. Bill, seconded by Mr. Lay it was

RESOLVED - the Council be advised that the Commission is wholly supportive of this proposal and requested to give full support to an appropriate approach being made to the ODPM.

215 MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL MEETINGS

Placed before the Commission were the minutes of the following Scrutiny Panel meetings:-

- (a) Performance - 29th July (SC21)
- (b) Finance and Audit - 11th August (SC22)
- (c) E-Government - 19th August (SC23)
- (d) Performance - 9th September (SC24)

RESOLVED -

- (i) on the motion of Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Lay, and in relation to the priorities contained in the Council's Corporate Plan as indicated, Cabinet be requested to consider the following recommendations put forward by the Performance Scrutiny Panel:-

Priority A: Increase the vitality and economic viability of our town and village centres

Footfall, vacant shop premises and the number of housing units in the town centre all be measured at six-monthly intervals.

Priority B: To improve access to and increase participation in cultural, sporting, leisure and tourism activities

Burbage Common and other council facility usage is measured over the course of a six-month period.

Priority C: Continue to improve people's knowledge and take-up of our services – in rural as well as urban areas, by better information, consultation, accessibility and quality

The level of complaints about Council services be assessed on a regular basis to ensure that quality levels remain high.

Priority D: Improve the availability of a range of different housing to reflect different needs and levels of income

Regular monitoring take place to ensure that the Council is meeting its target of ensuring that 20% of new homes built are 'affordable', and that monitoring of housing waiting lists take place.

Priority E: Help achieve a safer community, working with the Police and other organisations through the Community Safety Partnership

The existing vehicle crime and domestic violence targets be reviewed and that anti-social behaviour and criminal damage (most notably graffiti) be given a higher priority as they directly affect the quality of people's lives.

Priority F: Meet the Government target to be recycling 27% of waste from local households by 2005/06

The target of recycling 27% of waste by 2005/06 be monitored at quarterly intervals and, in light of the success achieved in 2003/04 when 22.5% of waste was recycled, a more challenging target be set in future years.

Priority G: Develop partnerships with young people to give them a voice in helping to shape our services and to develop ideas for their communities

The plans to deliver this priority, particular with respect to involving young people in the decision-making process, form part of the measures currently being looked at by Cabinet.

Priority H: Keep the Borough's share of the Council Tax within the lowest 25% in England, whilst improving quality services and achieving value for money

A series of 'value for money' comparison measures be developed to ensure that despite low levels of council tax, service quality remains comparatively high.

- (ii) On the motion of Mrs. Sherwin, seconded by Mr. Lay, and arising out of Minute No. 7(a) of the Finance & Audit Services Select Committee Meeting, an update be presented to the next meeting of that Committee on the submission of absence forms.

216 FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SCRUTINY COMMISSION

1. Next Meeting

- (a) Groundcare
- (b) The Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Improvement Plan Process
- (c) The Corporate Plan objectives to increase the vitality and economic viability of our town and village centres.

2. By the End of the Year

Consultation procedures and the tendering process undertaken prior to the introduction of the new refuse and recycling arrangements.

(The meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.)