

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMISSION
17th NOVEMBER 2005 AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Mr. M.R. Lay - Chairman

Mr. P.R. Batty, Mrs. R. Camamile, Mr. R.D. Ellis, Mrs. D. Finney, Mrs S. Francks, Mr. R.J. Furniss, Mr. K.A.J. Hunnybun, Mr. K.W.P. Lynch, Ms. J.E. Price, Mrs. M.L. Sherwin and Mr. J.E. Stanley.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.4, Messrs. J.F. Collins, N.B.L. Davis and Mrs. R.W. Wright also attended the meeting.

Officers in attendance: Mr. S. Atkinson, Mr. Michael Brymer, Mr. P.F. Cash, Mr. B. Cullen, Mr. R. Palmer, Mrs. P.I. Pitt, Mr. T.M. Prowse and Mr. D. Tilley.

279 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr. D.C. Bill, Mr. M.A. Hall, Mrs. E.A. Spencer and Mr. R. Ward and the following substitutions authorised in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3:-

Mrs. Finney for Mr. Bill
Mr. Furniss for Mrs. Spencer

280 MINUTES (SC31)

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

RESOLVED - the minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2005 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

281 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr. Stanley declared an interest in area 8 of the Hinckley Town Centre Renaissance Masterplan and indicated that if there was to be detailed discussion specifically on this he would not participate.

282 REVIEW OF RURAL AREAS – LEISURE AND ACCESS TO SERVICES (SC35)

Further to minute No. 227 of 6th October 2005 the Commission again considered rural area issues arising from its scrutiny of the Corporate Plan. Members were reminded that it was the intention of this review to ensure that services were available to all and that the rural areas were not disadvantaged.

Members then received information from the Head of Health and Environment as to the arrangements which currently applied in the rural areas with regard to grounds maintenance and street cleansing, pest control, noise and other pollution, the Dog Warden and abandoned vehicles.

Mr. Lynch left the meeting at 6.55 p.m. returning at 6.59 p.m.

In endorsing the report of the Head of Corporate Services the Commission was of the opinion that:-

- Following consultation with his Managers, the Head of Health and Environment arrange for a schedule of dates for grounds maintenance and street cleansing to be circulated to Parish Councils on a regular basis;
- A comprehensive report re: the appointment of neighbourhood wardens be awaited once the six month pilot scheme is completed; and
- Members' specific queries regarding dog walking on recreational land be made direct to the Head of Health and Environment.

Mr. Collins left the meeting at 7.12 p.m.

283 HINCKLEY TOWN CENTRE RENAISSANCE MASTERPLAN (SC32)

The Commission was advised of responses received subsequent to the consultation exercise undertaken with the community and key stakeholders and of resultant changes to the Masterplan.

Following extensive advice from officers the Commission specifically discussed the executive summary of the Masterplan.

Messrs. Furniss and Lynch left the meeting at 8.00 p.m. returning at 8.05 p.m. At 8.02 p.m. by mutual agreement the meeting was adjourned for 5 minutes. Mrs. Wright and Ms. Price left at 8.07 p.m. and 8.10 p.m. respectively.

Whilst generally in agreement with the concept of a Masterplan the Scrutiny Commission determined that the following be conveyed to Council for its meeting on 6th December, which would consider the final draft Masterplan:-

- Consideration be given to an early traffic assessment;
- Investigations continue into the possible use of the former crematorium site as an alternative venue for the Leisure Centre;
- The proposed car parking strategy include reference to residents' parking provision;
- The development of the Concordia Theatre involve discussions with that body's Management Body;
- A detailed feasibility study be carried out to determine the development of land to the north of Mount Road;
- Consideration be given to the potential for any suitable alternative sites for new Council Offices;
- Development of the railway station/Southfield Road involve discussions with the railway authority in order to enhance this development as a town gateway; and

- Appleton House be not excluded from the Masterplan.

Mrs. Francks left the meeting at 8.42 p.m. returning at 8.43 p.m.

284 EFFECTIVENESS OF SCRUTINY IMPROVEMENTS (SC33)

Members were called upon to recognise achievements in the overview and scrutiny function over the last 12 months and to acknowledge that current successes should be built upon to aid the decision making process and make for improved governance.

On the motion of Mr. Ellis seconded by Mr. Hunnybun it was

RESOLVED

- (i) a package of 'scrutiny training' for Councillors be started in January 2006 as part of the Members' Development Programme, a strand of the Leicestershire and Rutland Improvement Partnership Initiative;
- (ii) the Council's current executive scrutiny criteria be refined to reflect the principles of effective scrutiny identified by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and this be incorporated into the revised Constitution;
- (iii) the Scrutiny Commission report to future meetings of the Council on the achievements of the overview and scrutiny function against the effective scrutiny criteria identified by the Centre for Public Scrutiny;
- (iv) closer collaborative working arrangements be developed with the Cabinet in the interests of ensuring effective and transparent decision-making;
- (v) issues of development of the county wide Local Area Agreement; options for PCT reconfiguration; and police authority consultation be included in the overview and scrutiny work programme;
- (vi) other local authorities in Leicestershire be contacted in order to consider how overview and scrutiny can be developed within the county and in particular to discuss an arrangement for joint scrutiny of the local area agreement;
- (vii) there be co-option of voluntary sector representatives to particular overview and scrutiny meetings when appropriate topics are being discussed;
- (viii) the configuration of the overview and scrutiny work programmes as specified in section 6 of the report of the Head of Corporate Services be revised;
- (ix) all Councillors engaged in the overview and scrutiny function be encouraged to attend the scrutiny training events once organised;
- (x) the submission of a recurring growth bid item in the sum of £5,000 as part of the revenue budget process for research and development of the overview and scrutiny function be endorsed; and
- (xi) the improvements achieved in overview and scrutiny over the last 12 months be acknowledged.

285 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE PLAN – PROGRESS WITH OBJECTIVES (6 MONTHS)(SC34)

The Commission monitored progress on the objectives and initiatives in relation to the above. To improve assessment of progress in the future it was suggested that milestones and targets were allocated to each of the initiatives in the Plan, with future reports containing details of dates and times for progress against the objectives. On the motion of Mr. Lay, seconded by Mrs. Camamile it was

RESOLVED – the report of the Head of Corporate Services be endorsed and future reports be expanded as referred to above.

286 MINUTES OF SELECT COMMITTEE/SCRUTINY PANEL AND TASK GROUP MEETINGS (SC36, SC37 AND SC38)

Placed before the meeting were minutes of the following:-

(SC36)	E-Government Scrutiny Panel	-	8 th	September	2005
(SC37)	Housing Task Group	-	10 th	September	2005
	Finance & Audit Services Select Committee	-	31 st	October	2005 (SC38)

Arising from this the Commission noted that:-

- A further meeting of the E-Government Scrutiny Panel is to be arranged shortly.
- The allocation of Members to the Housing work programme is to take place on 21st November 2005.
- The presentation to Members on allocations is also to be given to the TAP representatives.
- Absence monitoring information is to be examined by the Council Services Select Committee.
- A report is being prepared relating to Members' attendance at meetings.

287 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET FORWARD PLAN (SC39)

In monitoring these the Commission welcomed the future attendance by the Police and a possible future meeting with the PCT. Arising from report SC33 discussed earlier at this meeting it was agreed that the work programme be extended to include the areas of work referred to in that report and on the motion of Mr. Ellis, seconded by Mr. Lay it was

RESOLVED – subject to the additions referred to above the report be endorsed.

(The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.)