

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMISSION
8 FEBRUARY 2007 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr M R Lay - Chairman
Mrs K W P Lynch - Joint Vice-Chairman

Mr P R Batty, Mr D C Bill, Mrs C M Claridge, Mr J F Collins, Mr R D Ellis, Mrs D Finney, Mr K A J Hunnybun, Ms J E Price and Mrs M L Sherwin.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.4, Mrs M J Crooks and Mr N B L Davis also attended the meeting.

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Mr Michael Brymer, Mr P F Cash, Mr B Cullen, Mr M Evans, Mr S Merry, Miss R Owen, Mr T M Prowse and Mrs S Stacey.

497 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mrs R Camamile, Mr D E Hinton, Mrs E A Spencer and Mr J E Stanley.

498 **MINUTES (SC84)**

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

499 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared at this time.

500 **SCRUTINY REVIEW – POVERTY IN THE BOROUGH**

Members were informed that research had now been commissioned for the review on Poverty in the Borough and that a report would be brought to the meeting on 19 April.

501 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – 9 MONTH REPORT 2006/07 (SC85)**

Members received a quarterly progress report and presentation on performance against set targets. It was explained that action plans and resource reallocations were in place to achieve top quartile positions in as many areas as possible by the end of March 2007 and that targets would be increased each year in line with the Council's aim of continuous improvement. Members challenged particular performance areas including sickness absence.

Mr Bill left the meeting at 6.40pm and returned at 6.47pm.

RESOLVED – the substantial assurance given to the data quality of performance indicators awarded by internal audit be noted and endorsed.

502 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – 9 MONTH REPORT (SC86)

Members received a quarterly progress report outlining progress of the Risk Management Strategy. It was noted that during the past 3 months further risks had been added with regard to non-compliance with financial regulations. Members were informed that the fact that risks had been identified and had actions in place to address them was a positive move. The Finance and Audit Services Select Committee would look at the report in greater detail at their next meeting.

Mrs Finney and Mr Stanley returned at 8.01pm.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and the Finance and Audit Services Select Committee be asked to comment on the report.

503 HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH COMMUNITY PLAN 2007-2012 (SC87)

The Scrutiny Commission was presented with a report which sought approval of the Hinckley and Bosworth Community Plan and presented the Year One Action Plan for the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Strategic Partnership.

It was suggested that wider consultation should have been undertaken. However officers in response felt that they had consulted with a wide range of people, but had had a relatively low return.

RESOLVED – the recommendations contained in the report be supported.

504 RURAL ISSUES (SC88)

Members were informed of the outcome of the Rural Summit which had stemmed from debates of the Scrutiny Commission. It was reported that the event had been well attended and the information gathered would be of great use for the future.

Mrs Crooks and Mrs Finney left the meeting at 7.31pm.

RESOLVED – the outcomes of the Rural Summit and the planned response be noted.

Mrs Crooks returned to the meeting at 7.34pm.

505 HOUSING STRATEGY (SC89)

Members were presented with the comments and recommendations received from the Government Office for the East Midlands. It was explained that the Authority had now met the Fit for Purpose criteria.

Mrs Finney returned to the meeting at 7.35pm.

Members expressed concern that Local Occupancy Clauses were not being used. However in response officers felt they were doing as much as possible to ensure housing was offered to local people.

It was suggested that it would be useful to go back to new development once occupants had settled in to find out their opinions, which may then assist in planning new developments.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the amendments to the Housing Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1 be supported;
- (ii) the achievements made by the Council as detailed in Appendix 2 be noted.

506 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY (SC90)

The Scrutiny Commission was presented with the Housing Allocations Policy which had been finalised by the Housing Task Group following consultation. It was explained that the Housing Task Group had looked at each aspect of the Policy in great detail before re-writing it. It was agreed that operation of the policy would be monitored and reconsidered if necessary.

RESOLVED – The Housing Allocation Policy be endorsed.

507 INTRODUCTION OF CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT (SC91)

The Commission received a report which outlined plans for the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement in the summer of 2007. Members expressed concern with regard to Leicestershire County Council having control of the scheme, but it was explained that wardens working in the Hinckley and Bosworth area would work from this Council's offices. It was also suggested that fines for late return to vehicles in pay and display car parks should be reconsidered so as not to deter shoppers – it was felt that it was inappropriate to impose the same fine for late return to a vehicle as for illegal on-street parking.

A 6-month review was requested including an indication of the number of people who had received fines for being less than half an hour late returning to their vehicle in pay and display car parks. It was also suggested that the Chamber of Trade be contacted 6 months into the scheme to find out if there had been an impact on town centre trade.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the scheme be reviewed after 6 months of operation;
- (ii) a record be kept of the number of people fined for returning to their cars less than half an hour late in pay and display car parks;
- (iii) the Chamber of Trade be contacted after 6 months;
- (iv) the report be endorsed.

508 LEICESTERSHIRE PROMOTIONS ANNUAL REPORT (SC92)

It was noted that this had been deferred to the next meeting of the Commission.

509 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (SC93)

Members gave consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2006/07. It was noted that Leicestershire Promotions Annual Report would be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Commission.

RESOLVED – the Work Programme be noted.

510 CABINET FORWARD PLAN (SC94)

Members received the Forward Plan of Cabinet and Council decisions and were given the opportunity to ask to scrutinise any of the reports listed.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan of Cabinet and Council decisions be noted.

511 MINUTES OF SELECT COMMITTEES / SCRUTINY PANELS

Minutes of the following meetings were received:

- (i) Council Services Select Committee, 7 December 2006 (SC95);
- (ii) Housing Task Group, 19 December 2006 (SC96).

Mrs Crooks, Mr Hunnybun and Ms Price left the meeting at 8.40pm.

512 IMPROVED ACCESS TO LAND EAST OF THE A47 LEICESTER ROAD / CARRS HILL (SC98)

Members received a report which advised them of current developments with the proposed Earl Shilton By-Pass.

RESOLVED – the recommendations in the report be supported.

Mr Hunnybun returned to the meeting at 8.43pm.

513 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Mr Lay, seconded by Mr Hunnybun, it was

RESOLVED - in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the remaining 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.

514 ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL STRATEGY (SC97)

The Scrutiny Commission was advised of progress made on the Acquisition and Disposal Strategy. Members welcomed the report, although felt that they would like the opportunity to go through the details of the strategy at a later date.

In order to reflect concerns that some Members had expressed, it was agreed that the first sentence of the recommendation be amended.

RESOLVED – Members endorse the content of the Acquisition and Disposal Strategy in Appendices A and B of the report and note those sites highlighted with potential for disposal for further consideration in due course.

(The meeting closed at 9.05 pm)