

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL  
SCRUTINY COMMISSION  
19 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 6.32 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman  
Mrs R Camamile - Joint Vice-Chairman  
Mr KWP Lynch - Joint Vice-Chairman

Mr JG Bannister, Mr PR Batty, Mr PS Bessant, Mr DM Gould,  
Mrs A Hall, Mr DW Inman, Dr JR Moore, Mr K Morrell and Mr K  
Nichols.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.4, Messrs DC Bill, SL Bray and  
R Ward also attended the meeting.

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Mr Michael Brymer, Mr B Cullen, Mr M  
Evans, Mr S Jones, Mr S Kohli, Mr S Merry, Mr D Moore, Miss R Owen and  
Mr T Prowse.

Also in attendance: Mr A Roberts and Mr A Wright, Ci Research.

472 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr C Ladkin and Mr AJ  
Smith and the substitution of Mr Inman for Mr Smith authorised in accordance  
with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

473 MINUTES (SC82)

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2008 be  
confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

474 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made at this stage.

475 POVERTY REVIEW – FINAL REPORT (SC83)

Andrew Roberts and Andrew Wright from Ci Research gave a presentation to  
the Commission.

Mr Bessant arrived at 6.44pm and Mr Morrell arrived at 6.47pm.

Members felt that although the Council was not responsible for some aspects  
linked to poverty, they needed to champion the cause. It was suggested that  
those Members who wished to become involved could do so, and that some  
officers had already expressed their interest in becoming involved.

Mr Bray arrived at 6.56pm and Mr Ward arrived at 6.59pm.

A Member suggested that the report did not focus sufficiently on elderly people, and also that with regard to youth, attitude and culture needed to be considered. In response it was stated that the report was produced from feedback of the perceptions of people in the areas, and that this indicated that their perceptions needed to change.

Members felt that a meeting should be set up to discuss the issues in detail with officers and agree a way forward.

Ci Research were thanked for the helpful and informative report.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the report be welcomed;
- (ii) a cross-party Member and Officer Action Group (including Scrutiny and Executive Members) be formed to scope the recommendations into practical proposals for implementation by the Executive and the Local Strategic Partnership.

476 CONCRETE STRUCTURAL SURVEY & REFURBISHMENT OF ARGENTS MEAD (SC84)

The Scrutiny Commission was updated with regard to the recommendations made in the independent concrete structural survey carried out by The Concrete Consultancy 2000 Ltd and the likely expenditure (around £6million) associated with the internal refurbishment of Argents Mead to provide “fit for purpose” office accommodation up to 2028.

Members were reassured that the building was not unsafe, but that repair and refurbishment was not viable or sustainable in the longer term. It was also explained that staff surveys had shown that a large number of staff based at Argents Mead were generally unhappy with the office accommodation.

Mr Bill left the meeting at 7.42pm and returned at 7.45pm.

Some Members had concerns with regard to the plans, including the future of the site, but were informed that the objective of this report was simply to support the recommendations to explore options including flexible working and a phased relocation to energy-efficient offices. It was stated that further details of this would be provided at the Council meeting on 26 February.

It was moved by Mr Nichols, seconded by Mr Hall and

RECOMMENDED to Council

- (i) flexible working and phased relocation to energy-efficient offices be supported;

- (ii) it be agreed that the repair and refurbishment of the Argents Mead Council Offices is not a viable or sustainable option;
- (iii) officers be asked to produce costed options for the retention / renewal of the civic facilities for the future;
- (iv) officers be asked to produce costed options for the future use of Argents Mead for public consultation.

477 SIX MONTHLY REVIEW OF THE INTRODUCTION OF CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT (SC85)

In response to a previous report to the Scrutiny Commission, Members received a report which informed them of progress made since implementation of a Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme in July 2007.

Concern was expressed that there was a perception in rural communities that wardens patrolled infrequently and therefore there was no deterrent against illegal parking in rural areas. It was suggested that they should patrol each area more regularly. Officers advised that the wardens did visit rural areas frequently but agreed to investigate ways of raising their profile and tackling illegally parked vehicles.

Officers also agreed to review the role of the Neighbourhood Wardens and Parking Wardens once the Parking Wardens had received training on Environmental Crime and a report would be brought back to the Scrutiny Commission.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the report be noted;
- (ii) a report be brought to a future meeting on the roles of Neighbourhood Wardens and Parking Attendants on the enforcement of Environmental Crime.

478 PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT APPEAL DECISIONS (SC86)

Members were informed of planning and enforcement appeal decisions that had gone against the Local Planning Authority since the last report. It was noted that three of the decisions that went against the authority had been Member decisions against officer recommendation.

A Member felt that there was a lot of pressure on the Planning Committee, for example the financial implications of deferring a decision. It was suggested that this concerned the way in which the Committee operated and was a matter for discussion with the Chairman.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

479 HINCKLEY CLUB FOR YOUNG PEOPLE PROJECT – GO AHEAD (SC87)

The Scrutiny Commission was updated on the scheme to relocate Hinckley Club for Young People from Stoke Road to Richmond Park. It was noted that there was an updated recommendation which included an amendment to the legal agreement to reflect the agreement that the total cost of the project would not exceed £1.5million.

Mr Bill left the meeting at 8.21pm and returned at 8.24pm.

RECOMMENDED – the project be endorsed.

480 HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (SC88)

A report was presented to Members which set out costs, achievements and added value of the Local Strategic Partnership.

RESOLVED – the report be reviewed in conjunction with the final report of the IDeA before making final recommendations.

Mr Bray left the meeting at 8.28pm.

481 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – 9 MONTH REVIEW (2007/08) (SC89)

Members were provided with the Council's performance position for the first nine months of 2007/08 and an update on the Council's future planning arrangements. It was stated that the Council Services Select Committee had looked at the indicators in detail.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the Council's current performance position be noted;
- (ii) the actions taken to address areas that were underperforming be endorsed;
- (iii) the positive results received for the Data Quality and Use of Resources Assessments be noted.

482 REVENUE BUDGET 2008/09, CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/08 TO 2010/11 AND HRA REVENUE BUDGET 2008/09 (SC90)

Members received a combined report briefly outlining the Revenue Budget 2008/09, Capital Programme 2007/08 and HRA Budget 2008/09. It was noted that these had been looked at in detail by the Finance and Audit Services Select Committee.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

483 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2007/08 (SC91)

Members gave consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2007/08.

RESOLVED – the Work Programme be noted.

484 FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL DECISIONS (SC92)

Members received the Forward Plan of Executive and Council decisions.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan be noted.

485 MINUTES OF SELECT COMMITTEES / SCRUTINY PANELS

Minutes of the following meetings were received:

- (i) E-Government Scrutiny Panel, 13 December 2007 (SC93);
- (ii) Housing Task Group, 13 December 2007 (SC94);
- (iii) Finance and Audit Services Select Committee, 17 December 2007 (SC95);
- (iv) Council Services Select Committee, 20 December 2007 (SC96).

(The meeting closed at 8.44 pm)