

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

28 AUGUST 2008 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mrs R Camamile - Joint Vice-Chairman
Mr P Hall - Joint Vice-Chairman

Mr DM Gould, Mrs A Hall, Mr DW Inman, Mr CG Joyce and Mrs BM Witherford.

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Mr C Bellavia, Mr Michael Brymer, Mr B Cullen, Ms E Grant, Mr C Merriman, Mr D Moore and Miss R Owen.

Also in attendance:

LSP Board Members: Bill Cullen, HBBC; Greg Drozdz - Chief Executive Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth; Garry Forysthe - South Area Commander, Leicestershire Constabulary; Helen Harris - Head of Better Places Team, Leicestershire County Council.

NAT contributors: Howard Crane - Neighbourhood and Stronger Communities Manager; Peter Wilson – PCT; Roger Ellis - Mayor of Earl Shilton; Simon Oddy - Adult Learning, Leicestershire County Council.

159 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr PR Batty, Mr PS Bessant, Mr C Ladkin, Mr K Morrell and Mr K Nichols.

160 MINUTES (SC23)

On the motion of Mrs Camamile, seconded by Mrs Hall, it was

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2008 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

161 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr and Mrs Hall declared personal and prejudicial interests in report SC25 – Voluntary Sector Infrastructure.

162 LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP REVIEW – INTERVIEW OF WITNESSES

Howard Crane, Greg Drozd, Roger Ellis, Garry Forysthe, Helen Harris, Simon Oddy and Peter Wilson attended the meeting as witnesses representing the Local Strategic Partnership and Neighbourhood Action Teams. Each attendee introduced themselves and some outlined their role. Mr Forsythe, LPU Commander, stated that he sat on four Local Strategic Partnerships throughout the county, and Hinckley and Bosworth's partnership was the most effective. From his point of view the reduction in crime would not have been as dramatic without the work of the partnership.

Mr Crane explained his involvement with the Neighbourhood Action Teams and outlined progress in creating Action Plans for the three priority areas (Barwell, Earl Shilton and Bagworth & Thornton) and in setting up SureStart schemes which were working closely with the Neighbourhood Action Teams.

Mr Ellis explained that the Earl Shilton Radio Group had been set up as a result of a Neighbourhood Action Team meeting which had identified a need for more effective methods of communication within the community. The Commission was informed that the radio station would involve young people, who had already been instrumental in securing funding for the project. Mr Ellis stated that this would not have been possible without the LSP.

Other areas of work were outlined, including physical activity sessions and health advice, first aid classes and employability activities such as literacy.

At the conclusion of the representations and testimonies, Members put questions to the representatives.

In response to Members' questions, it was firstly explained that projects such as Radio Earl Shilton were 'owned' by the community, with residents involved in the setting up and running of the station, and that engagement with the community were essential to the delivery of the projects, which showed that the LSP and NATs were accountable to and were communicating with the community. Representatives also stated that they were happy to attend Scrutiny Commission, and any other, meetings to answer questions and show their accountability to the local authority.

With regard to any gaps in services, one of the representatives felt that communication was still an area that required more work, as there were still areas of the community that were not aware of the work of the LSP. However it was stated that actions were in place to address this gap. It was noted that one of the challenges for the partnership had always been resources.

When asked about successes of the Partnership, it was suggested that it had brought together people with a common purpose in order to lead change. It was also felt that the Hinckley & Bosworth LSP was more effective than the other LSPs within the County because it had clarity of purpose, established relationships and accountability structures.

In response to a Member's question with regard to meeting the objectives

originally set for the LSP, it was explained that the Partnership had recognised through its recent review that too many objectives had been identified at the commencement of the Partnership, but that that had now been addressed with four key priority objectives being identified.

Representatives felt that although some of the work undertaken would have been possible without the LSP, there would have been duplicated effort throughout the borough which would have wasted time and money. It was also reported that previously in some areas the agencies were not communicating with each other, but the LSP had led to engagement and interaction of key agencies and the community.

Members thanked representatives of the LSP for their attendance and their testimonies.

Having declared personal and prejudicial interests in the following item, Mr and Mrs Hall left the meeting at 7.25pm. Mr Gould also left the meeting at 7.25pm.

163 VOLUNTARY SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE (SC25)

Mr Gould returned to the meeting at 7.28pm.

The Scrutiny Commission received a report which provided an update on the progress of the review of voluntary and community sector infrastructure in Leicestershire. Mr Drozd, representing the voluntary sector, explained that whilst Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth welcomed and would work with change, there were concerns with regard to funding and that continuation would not be sustainable within the financial confines suggested. Mr Drozd was also concerned that voluntary organisations should be locally focussed, and that those involved in voluntary organisations would not respond to sub-regional structures in the same way as they currently respond to the local presence of organisations in volunteering.

The Chief Executive explained that the idea of the countywide infrastructure organisation was to give specialist support to small voluntary action organisations, which they could not provide themselves locally, to improve and expand their services, and that Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth was in a strong position as they already offered extensive “pure” infrastructure services which it would be important to maintain.

Members felt that their support for Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth and the voluntary sector should be recorded and Leicestershire County Council should be requested to provide funding to keep the organisation in a sustainable position. Members also requested that adequate resources to sustain the community hub in the Borough be maintained. It was felt that the views of voluntary sector workers should be paramount and they should be allowed adequate voice.

Mr Joyce left the meeting at 7.50pm.

Mr Drozd thanked the Scrutiny Commission for the time spent on this matter.

RESOLVED – the Scrutiny Commission

- (i) wishes to express strong support for Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth and voluntary sector activity and their positive contribution to the borough;
- (ii) supports the views of the voluntary sector with regard to community hubs and that this will be taken into account as part of the tender process;
- (iii) requests that the County Council provides adequate financial resources to sustain the continued work of the voluntary sector in Hinckley & Bosworth and throughout the county in the future.

Mr and Mrs Hall and Mr Joyce return at 7.50pm.

164 OUT-OF-HOURS HEALTHCARE REVIEW – INTERIM REPORT (SC24)

Members were provided with an overview of the Out of Hours review to date and considered recommendations which would feed in to the Community Hospital Consultation.

Members clarified the following to be fed into the Community Hospital Consultation:

- Minor injuries out-of-hours provision to operate until midnight with GP provision attached;
- Bus service requested to enter the site of the hospital on Ashby Road rather than drop off passengers on the main road.

With regard to a previous discussion with the East Midlands Ambulance Service, it was requested that the Scrutiny Commission continues to review the service provided.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the abovementioned points with regard to out-of-hours minor injuries units and public transport accessing the Hinckley Hospital site be fed into the Community Hospitals Consultation;
- (ii) the additional service provided by East Midlands Ambulance Service be reviewed annually by this Commission.

165 PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT APPEAL DECISIONS (SC26)

The Scrutiny Commission were informed of planning and enforcement appeal decisions that had been determined contrary to the decision of the Local Planning Authority. It was noted that the authority had recently enjoyed a significantly higher success rate on appeals.

It was noted that one of the decisions had been made by Members against officer recommendation, and whilst the inspector had allowed the appeal, strict conditions had been added. Members asked whether these had been more restrictive than those originally recommended by officers in the committee report. Officers did not have the information available but agreed to respond to the question in writing.

RESOLVED – the report and improvement be noted and a further update be brought to the Scrutiny Commission in 6 months.

166 STREET SCENE SERVICES – VALUE FOR MONEY & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT (SC27)

Members were informed of proposed improvements to the Street Scene Services and considered the value for money of the service. It was noted that the authority was in the top quartile for recycling and overall satisfaction was improving. It was hoped that improvements to the kerbside collection service would further improve performance and satisfaction and that changes in the way the contract was managed would further improve value for money.

With regard to the South Leicestershire Partnership, it was explained that HBBC got to the final five on the 'longlist' but concerns had been expressed about the legal commitment and cost of formal agreement. The bid submitted by the three South Leicestershire Authorities was higher than the three successful bids for shortlisting. Whilst contract management had been deemed good, services management had been deemed only fair. The exercise had, however, been worthwhile as the work was in place should it be required again, and improvements had been identified.

Members congratulated those concerned for the service improvements and gave the proposals their strong support.

RESOLVED – the report be strongly endorsed.

167 ICT SCRUTINY PANEL

Members were asked to consider the re-appointment of the E-Government Scrutiny Panel and the suggested change of title to 'ICT Scrutiny Panel'

RESOLVED – the Scrutiny Commission agrees

- (i) the title change to 'ICT Scrutiny Panel';
- (ii) the re-appointment of previous Members with the exception of Mr KWP Lynch, who was now a member of the Executive.

168 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2008/09 (SC28)

Members gave consideration to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2008/09. It was reported that the LDF reports would now go to a special meeting of Council on 30 September and would no longer be brought to the Scrutiny Commission.

RESOLVED – the Work Programme be agreed.

169 FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL DECISIONS (SC29)

Members received the Forward Plan of Executive and Council decisions.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting closed at 8.50 pm)