

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

4 MARCH 2010 AT 6.30 PM

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

Mr JG Bannister, Mr PR Batty, Mr DM Gould, Mrs A Hall, Mr DW Inman, Mr CG Joyce, Mrs S Sprason and Mrs BM Witherford.

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Mr C Bellavia, Ms V Bunting, Mr B Cullen, Mr M Evans, Mr R Grantham, Miss L Horton, Miss R Owen, Mr T Prowse and Mrs S Stacey.

Also in attendance: Anthony Riley (Waterloo Housing Group), Gurmeet Virdee (De Montfort Housing – part of the Waterloo Housing Group), and Neil Whittenbury (Midland Heart).

448 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mrs Francks, Mr Morrell and Mr Sutton.

449 MINUTES (SC66)

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

At this juncture, the Chairman announced that there would be a launch event of Clockwise Credit Union at 2pm on 23 March. A briefing note was circulated to Members.

450 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

451 SCRUTINY REVIEW: REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS

The Scrutiny Commission received a short presentation from representatives of De Montfort Housing and Midland Heart and then asked questions of the representatives in order to progress the review of Registered Social Landlords operating in the Borough.

The representatives were thanked for their attendance.

452 SCRUTINY REVIEW: AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK (SC67)

Members received a report which provided feedback from the Scrutiny Working Group on 10 February 2010. In response to a Member's question, the criteria for allocating points to housing applicants was outlined. It was also explained that there could not be a local lettings policy for every area of the Borough, that there still needed to be flexibility and that people could not be excluded from joining the housing register. Members reiterated that an important aspect was encouraging people to get onto the housing waiting list. In response it was explained that a Communications Strategy would be formulated to cover this.

It was stated that a review of the Allocations Policy would go to the Executive in May, but that work on the Communications Strategy would commence as soon as possible.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the content of the report be noted as a way forward for considering the allocation of affordable housing;
- (ii) the recommendations of the Working Group be supported to progress the review of the way properties are allocated in the Borough.

453 COMMUNITY SAFETY REVIEW (SC68)

As agreed in October 2009, Members were provided with a progress report on the actions and outcomes undertaken by this Council and its partners in response to the Inquest in September 2009 into the tragic deaths of Fiona Pilkington and Francessca Hardwick.

The Chief Executive reported that a multi-agency 'Gold' recovery group now met fortnightly and had also received support from Melton Borough Council in respect of Family Intervention and was supported by the Silver and Bronze groups responsible for delivering recovery plans. It was also reported that the Weekly Information Sharing Team (WIST) had been recognised as good practice and was now being set up in other districts. It was stated that many actions had been completed and signed off, but that there were still some to do, including ensuring that the IT systems were in place to share information more easily. It was also highlighted that an issue had been raised about the definition of vulnerability and it had been agreed that there were many definitions so a checklist had been created to assist in identifying vulnerable people.

It was requested that the work undertaken be publicised, and in response it was noted that there would be an article in the next Borough Bulletin to include initiatives for the Pride in Barwell campaign.

A Member asked if information on the initiatives could be passed to Parish Councils to encourage them to address issues in their communities. It was

agreed that this could be done via the Parishes Forum or the Bosworth Safety Group.

Members thanked officers for the excellent and very informative report and progress made.

RECOMMENDED – the actions taken and outcomes being achieved be endorsed.

454 COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES REVIEW (SC69)

A report was presented which provided an update on progress since the Community Health Services review consultation in 2009. A Member expressed concern about the lack of investment in health services in the northern parishes. It was agreed that a representative of the PCT be invited to discuss its future plans.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The Scrutiny Commission notes the feedback on the latest developments;
- (ii) A representative of the PCT be invited to the meeting of the Commission in May.

455 UPDATE ON CAPITAL PROJECTS (SC70)

Members received a report which advised them of progress made with regard to the Atkins Development, Council Offices Relocation, Argents Mead Enhancement, Bus Station Development, Hinckley Club for Young People and the Greenfield's Enterprise Centre.

The Chairman of the Civic Facilities Scrutiny Group highlighted the points that had been raised at the meetings of that group, stating that the Members room and meeting rooms were suitable, but expressing concern with regard to the main meeting room being primarily a room for weddings and the Mayor and Leader sharing an office. It was agreed that the group would meet again when the plans for the layout of the main meeting room in the basement of the Atkins building were available from the Council's architect.

Officers reminded Members that any accommodation in the Atkins building would be temporary, and that Members had requested that the meeting facilities should be multifunctional and not just for Members' use.

RESOLVED –

- (i) progress on the capital projects be noted;
- (ii) the Civic Facilities Working Group report back to the Scrutiny Commission after looking at the plans for the main meeting room layout.

456 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 (SC71)

Members received the Work Programme for 2009/10.

RESOLVED – the work programme be agreed to include any additions agreed during this meeting.

457 FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL DECISIONS (SC72)

Members received the Forward Plan of Executive and Council decisions.

It was requested that the reports on Housing Allocations (Local Lettings) Policy, Tenant Satisfaction Survey results, Sustainable Urban Extension and Neighbourhood Wardens Enforcement Policy be brought to the Scrutiny Commission.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan be noted and the abovementioned item be added to the Scrutiny Commission Work Programme.

458 MINUTES OF SELECT COMMITTEES

The minutes of the following meetings were received:

- (i) Finance & Audit Services Select Committee, 11 January & 1 February 2010 (SC73 & SC74);
- (ii) Council Services Select Committee, 14 January 2010 (SC75);
- (iii) Civic Facilities Scrutiny Group, 9 & 23 February 2010 (SC76 & SC77).

(The meeting closed at 9.00 pm)