

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

8 APRIL 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, Mrs S Francks, Mrs A Hall, Mr DW Inman, Mr CG Joyce, Mr C Ladkin, Mr K Morrell, Mrs S Sprason, Mr BE Sutton and Mrs BM Witherford.

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Miss L Horton, Mr A Jones, Ms L Kirby, Mr S Kohli, Ms T Miller, Miss R Owen, Mr P Scragg and Mrs S Stacey.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.4 Messrs DS Cope and WJ Crooks also attended the meeting.

Also in attendance: Elaine Johnston and Chris Jones (Orbit Heart of England).

475 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Mr Gould.

476 MINUTES (SC78)

On the motion of Mr Bannister, seconded by Mr Hall it was

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

477 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr and Mrs Hall and Mr Inman declared a personal interest in report no 'SC81', Parish & Community Initiative Fund Allocation of Grants for 2010.

478 SCRUTINY REVIEW: REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORDS

The Scrutiny Commission received a short presentation from representatives of Orbit Heart of England Housing Association 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 and Members agreed that the closer partnership working proposed would be beneficial.

479 PARISH & COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FUND ALLOCATION OF GRANTS FOR 2010 (SC81)

The Scrutiny Commission was provided with details on applications to the Parish and Community Initiative Fund 2010/11, including those schemes proposed to receive grants and those who had not met the criteria.

In response to a Member's question, it was stated that an officer from the Green Space team visits all schemes when complete to ensure that the funding has been used as allocated.

Members felt that the slight underspend should be carried forward but acknowledged that they had recommended this the previous two years but it had not been agreed and asked that instead the underspend be shared between the successful schemes. In response the Chief Executive explained that in previous years the Fund had been undersubscribed so there had been no grounds to carry monies forward, but this year the position was different as there was an oversubscription, although some of the schemes had not met the criteria. In addition, it was felt that allocating additional funding to each project would not be appropriate.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the recommendations of the Panel be supported;
- (ii) the Strategic Leadership Board be RECOMMENDED to carry forward the underspend to next year's Parish & Community Initiative Fund.

480 SUB-REGIONAL CHOICE-BASED LETTINGS SCHEME (SC79)

An update on the Council's participation in the sub-regional choice based lettings scheme was provided. It was reiterated that allocations policies would still be in operation and the chance of being allocated a property in another district would depend on that authority's allocations policy.

With regard to advertising of vacant properties, it was noted that this would need to be done every two weeks and would be online and also in newsletters for those on the housing register who did not have access to the internet. It was also highlighted that support for vulnerable people would be provided.

Mrs Francks left the meeting at 8.15pm.

RECOMMENDED – the report be noted and progress be endorsed.

481 LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF COUNCIL FLATS ON MAUGHAN STREET / ALMEYS LANE, EARL SHILTON (SC80)

The Scrutiny Commission was advised of the proposal for the introduction of a Local Lettings Policy for the allocation of flats on Maughan Street / Almeys Lane, Earl Shilton, to achieve sustainable tenancies and to help improve the

reputation of the area. The intention to allocate these properties to over 40s was noted.

RESOLVED – the introduction of a Local Lettings Policy for the allocation of flats on Maughan Street / Almeys Lane, Earl Shilton be supported.

482 ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL CREDIT UNION PROVISION (SC82)

Members were informed of progress in relation to the establishment of a local credit union provision. Members were reminded of the need to recruit more volunteers.

Mr Cope left the meeting at 8.28pm.

Concern was expressed that there may be some duplication between the advice provided by Orbit and that of the Credit Union. Officers agreed to check this.

It was agreed that promotional material be provided for Members and a briefing session be run.

RESOLVED – progress be noted.

483 BARWELL AND EARL SHILTON SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION MASTER PLAN UPDATE (SC83)

The Commission was updated on progress on the Barwell and Earl Shilton Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) Masterplan. The wide consultation and events attended by residents and key stakeholders were outlined and it was noted that further consultation would be undertaken on the Area Action Plan and related documents over a longer period of time.

Mr Batty left at 8.46pm and returned at 8.50pm.

The problems in designing the Earl Shilton SUE were outlined and it was noted that a response from the Government Office was awaited with regard to alternative options. In response to a Member's question it was reported that there would not be such problems with the Barwell SUE as there was no hard boundary to the site.

A Member expressed concern with regard to Government policy on density, suggesting that developers had encountered problems selling properties at this density and if the requirements could not be met on this site, further sites would have to be identified.

RESOLVED – the actions taken and outcomes achieved be endorsed.

484 PEOPLE STRATEGY 2010-12 (SC88)

Attention was drawn to the late item which had been accepted at the request of the Chairman. It was noted that the People Strategy had been updated since 2008 due to internal and external factors. Members asked that the positive factors in employment at the Council be highlighted, including the fact that HBBC was one of the best public sector organisations to work for (as featured in the Sunday Times).

RESOLVED – the People Strategy and Action Plan be endorsed.

485 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10 (SC84)

Members received the Work Programme for 2009/10.

RESOLVED – the work programme be agreed.

486 FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL DECISIONS (SC72)

Members received the Forward Plan of Executive and Council decisions.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan be noted.

487 MINUTES OF SELECT COMMITTEES

The minutes of the following meetings were received:

- (i) Finance & Audit Services Select Committee, 1 March 2010 (SC86);
- (ii) Council Services Select Committee, 18 February 2010 (SC87).

(The meeting closed at 9.07 pm)