

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

14 APRIL 2011 AT 6.30 PM

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

Mrs A Hall, Mr C Ladkin, Mr K Morrell, Mr K Nichols, Mrs S Sprason, Mr BE Sutton and Ms BM Witherford.

Mr Crooks was also in attendance as the relevant Executive Member for items 8 and 10 on the agenda (minutes * and * refer).

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Ms E Grant, Miss L Horton, Ms P Lavender, Miss R Owen, Mrs C Roffey and Mrs S Stacey.

Howard Crane of Community Action Hinckley & Bosworth was in attendance for item 9 on the agenda (minute * refers). Inspector Rich Ward, LPU Commander, was in attendance for item 6 (minute * refers).

554 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Messrs Batty, Gould and Inman.

555 MINUTES (SC78)

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

556 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Ladkin declared a personal interest in report 'SC80' as Treasurer of Community Action Hinckley & Bosworth.

557 COMMUNITY SAFETY 6-MONTH UPDATE

Members were provided with an update on the effectiveness of the Community Safety Partnership and on local crime statistics including information on the reduction in antisocial behaviour and the current battle against travelling criminals. Important projects, such as the use of the 637 bus to engage young people, the taxi marshal scheme and the victim support project, were highlighted.

In response to a question about the value of the partnership, Inspector Ward referred to the good relationship between partners, particularly the Borough Council and the Police, and stated that should the partnership no longer be enforced by statute, they would still continue with it as positive outcomes had been achieved through the partnership that would not otherwise have been realised.

Some Members expressed concerns with regard to current issues such as speeding and the use of mobile phones whilst driving and it was noted that a lot of work had been, and would continue to be, undertaken on these issues. Inspector Ward encouraged local initiatives such as community speed watch.

Members welcomed the very positive progress and outcomes reported to them in respect of Community Safety in the Borough in 2010/11

558 CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

Members were provided with a verbal update on the implementation of the Choice Based Lettings scheme. It was reported that the scheme had been successful so far in that many bids for properties had been received, the site had been well used for viewing properties, bidding on them and updating personal details, and those properties that were usually hard to let had received bids.

Members noted the progress made on choice based lettings.

559 PARISH & COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FUND ALLOCATION OF GRANTS FOR 2011/12 (SC79)

Members received a report which outlined the proposals of the assessment panel in relation to allocation of the Parish & Community Initiative Fund. It was reported that the fund had been oversubscribed and allocations had been based on the lowest quoted cost to allow as many applications as possible to be approved.

At this juncture Mr Lay declared a personal interest in this item as Chairman of a parish council which was a proposed recipient of funding.

The Executive Member highlighted the positive aspect of the number of applications received, and that this included smaller parishes. He also thanked Caroline Roffey and her team for processing all of the applications.

With regard to the future management of the fund in light of Participatory Budgeting, it was agreed that if the scheme was continuing to work in the right way for all communities then it would not need to change. However the Chief Executive advised that, should any change be considered appropriate by the Strategic Leadership Board, the Scrutiny Commission would have an input into the proposed changes before they were finalised.

On the motion of Mr Nichols, seconded by Mr Ladkin, it was

RESOLVED – the proposals of the assessment panel be endorsed for approval by the Strategic Leadership Board.

560 VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT SERVICES REVIEW 2010/11 (SC80)

The Scrutiny Commission was informed of the outcomes of the infrastructure support services review 2010/11 which had been commissioned in autumn 2010 to assess the effectiveness of the new arrangements.

Howard Crane, representing Community Action Hinckley and Bosworth, reported that the infrastructure had been found to be working less well than had been anticipated, which had led to a decision to consider the merits of setting up a regeneration and social enterprise organisation, enabling the facility to bid for funding and service delivery contracts and therefore creating a sustainable model going forward. Help in setting this up would be received from Voluntary Action LeicesterShire and it was hoped that Transition funding would be received for the project.

RESOLVED – the intention to apply for Transition Funding be supported.

561 RURAL AREAS REVIEW – ANNUAL REPORT (SC81)

The Scrutiny Commission was informed of the outcomes of the annual rural areas review 2010/11. Members discussed the Parish Forum and the need to review the Parish Forum meetings as, whilst they were well supported and attended, they had become very busy meetings and had the potential to lose some of the objectives of the forum. Concern was also expressed by some Members that the Council Chamber was too formal a venue for the meetings and also that it would be more appropriate to hold them in different venues in the rural area.

RESOLVED – the good progress on service delivery within rural locations in 2010/11 be noted and a fresh approach to delivery of the Parish Forum in future be endorsed.

562 UPDATE ON FUTURE CIVIC FACILITIES (SC82)

Councillor Bron Witherford presented a report following a meeting about civic facilities in the new Council Offices. It was reported that the facilities would be multi-functional, there were “ample” meetings rooms, lifts and disabled access. She agreed to report back following receipt of design proposals.

Members welcomed the positive progress report.

563 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11 AND END OF TERM REPORT 2007-2011 (SC83)

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission presented the draft Overview & Scrutiny End of Term report 2007-2011 which incorporated the draft 2010/11 Annual report, stating that he was proud of the work and achievements of the Overview & Scrutiny function. He highlighted some key reviews that had been undertaken over the four years including the review of the Community Safety Partnership and Income Poverty. Successes with regard to reducing the waiting time for disabled adaptations were also acknowledged. All Members involved in the Overview and Scrutiny function including panels and working groups were thanked, along with the Executive Members for their support. The Chairman also thanked officers for their support.

Mrs Camamile as Vice-Chairman thanked Mr Lay on behalf of Members for his hard work and dedication as Chairman of the Commission. Members agreed that the Overview & Scrutiny function had been impartial, pragmatic and effective and hoped that the culture and ethos of the work would continue into the future with the new Council.

RESOLVED – the draft End of Term and Annual report be endorsed and RECOMMENDED to Council for approval.

564 FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL DECISIONS (SC84)

Members received the Forward Plan of Executive and Council decisions.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan be noted.

565 MINUTES OF SELECT COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

The minutes of the Council Services Select Committee on 17 March 2011 were received and noted.

(The meeting closed at 8.05 pm)