

HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

28 JULY 2011 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mr PAS Hall - Joint Vice-Chairman
Mr C Ladkin - Joint Vice-Chairman

Mr PR Batty, Mr PS Bessant, Mrs L Hodgkins, Mr M Hulbert, Mr DW Inman, Mr JS Moore, Mr K Nichols, Mrs S Sprason and Miss DM Taylor.

Mr Cartwright was also in attendance for item 9 on the agenda (minute 86 refers)

Officers in attendance: Mr S Atkinson, Mr Michael Brymer, Mr M Evans, Miss L Horton, Mr S Jones, Mr P Langham, Mr S Merry, Ms J Neachell, Miss R Owen and Ms J Sturley.

83 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mrs Hall and Mr Morrell with the substitutions of Mr Hulbert for Mrs Hall and Mr Moore for Mr Morrell authorised in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

84 MINUTES (SC1)

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

85 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs Sprason declared a personal interest in report SC7 as a Council tenant.

86 MEMBERS' ICT UPDATE (SC4)

Members were updated on the current status of the Members' IT project and heard that, whilst there were 12 Members currently on the pilot, electronic delivery of information was not being enforced. It was reported that a meeting to review the project was planned for the following week.

During discussion, Members expressed the following concerns:

- that laptops were not being used in meetings which meant that the savings were reduced as paper copies were still required;
- that the project required clear objectives;

- that an IT skills audit for Members was required;
- that information was currently duplicated and sent on paper and by email.

The Scrutiny Commission requested that the review group take account of the concerns expressed and feed back to the Commission.

87 CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2011-14 (SC3)

The Scrutiny Commission received the draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2011-14 which was a refresh of the existing 2008-11 strategy.

In response to Members' questions the following was noted:

- the aim for the new council offices was an 'excellent' BREEAM rating for sustainability and cost effective operation;
- meetings were being held with planning officers to ensure they were taking the Climate Change Strategy into account in their considerations;
- HBBC's performance in relation to climate change measures was similar to other authorities.

RESOLVED – the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2011-14 be endorsed.

88 MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCRUTINY ENVIRONMENT GROUP

The Commission was reminded that the group had previously been appointed by the Scrutiny Commission but any interested non-Executive Member could become a member of the group. It was agreed that Political Group leaders would be asked to nominate members to the group and to inform the Democratic Services Officer of these nominees.

89 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (SC2)

The Environmental Improvement Programme for 2011/12 was outlined for Members. The Commission expressed concern that funding for the scheme had been reduced due to reductions in county council funding. Information was requested on the amount that the County Council had withdrawn from the programme and any amount withdrawn by the Borough Council. Members were also concerned about the large number of schemes on the reserve list and whether the position of these would be further affected when the Burbage and Hinckley Conservation Areas had been reviewed over the next few months.

RESOLVED –

- (i) information on the breakdown of withdrawn funding be provided to the Commission;
- (ii) the Scrutiny Commission's concern with regard to the reduction in funding be expressed to the County Council.

90 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Members were provided with updates on the Atkins development, Greenfields, Council Offices, Argents Mead enhancements, the Bus Station redevelopment, Hinckley Club for Young People and the Leisure Centre.

Atkins Building

The Estates & Asset Manager reported that the first tenant had moved into the building in August 2010, the offices were 76% occupied and there was a waiting list for Creative Hinckley units. Members requested information on the financial breakdown before the next meeting of the Commission. Concern was expressed that businesses had moved from other parts of the borough to move into the Atkins Building which had been detrimental to the economy outside of Hinckley.

Greenfields

The units were fully occupied and receiving further interest. Members requested information on the yield of the development. Members suggested offering an incentive for businesses from outside of the borough moving into a unit at Greenfields. However in response it was suggested that this may discourage new businesses moving to the units.

Council Offices

It was intended that this would be a gateway development to the town and would be a shared location with other agencies. Strong disappointment was expressed that the Police Authority had not supported a move to the site despite agreements having been met with regard to the requests they had made. It was stated however that there were many other interested partners and discussions were continuing with them.

Argents Mead Enhancements

It was reported that consultation on this site was moving forward. Those Members who had previously sat on the Finance & Audit Services Select Committee expressed concern that the recommendation of the Select Committee to secure a substantial capital receipt had not been implemented and the financial target which was required to fund a future capital programme would not be met. Members also felt they had not been given the opportunity to see the options or to scrutinise the plans. It was requested that details be brought to the next meeting.

Bus Station redevelopment

It was noted that the development was due to open in 2014 and an agreement had already been made with the anchor tenants.

Hinckley Club for Young People

The Cultural Services Manager reported that the facility had opened on time and on budget and now had a large membership. It had received two awards for the best community facility in the East Midlands and had been shortlisted for a national award. Members offered their congratulations on the success of the project. During discussion the following issues were raised:

- The possibility that the wide membership of the Club could detract from smaller facilities outside of Hinckley;
- The ongoing maintenance of the building, bearing in mind the fact that the construction company was no longer operating;
- The financial information for the operation not having been made available to Members.

Mr Nichols, who had recently been appointed to the Management Committee of the Club, stated that the accounts would be prepared in September, and it was agreed that these would be requested for a future meeting when available subject to the consent of the HC4YP charity.

Leisure Centre

It was reported that options for the procurement of a new leisure centre were currently being scoped as the current contract would expire in 2015. Concern was expressed that whilst the lifespan of the current Leisure Centre had been extended slightly following a recent investment, there would still be a need for a new facility or for a significant sum to be spent on the current Centre. It was agreed that a report would be brought to a future meeting outlining the options and timescales.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The Scrutiny Commission be provided with information on the yield of the Greenfields Development;
- (ii) The options with regard to Argents Mead Enhancements and the Leisure Centre be brought to the next meeting of the Commission;
- (iii) A financial summary for Hinckley Club for Young People be brought to a future meeting of the Commission.

91 BARWELL & EARL SHILTON SCRUTINY GROUP (SC5)

Members were reminded of the Terms of Reference of the Barwell and Earl Shilton Scrutiny Group to facilitate a discussion on the future of the group. It was agreed that there was a continued need for the group and that the Ward Councillors for Barwell and Earl Shilton should meet to discuss objectives for the group and consider any changes required to the Terms of Reference.

92 SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

Following the Scrutiny Workshop held on 7 July members were thanked for their input and informed of the next stage of the process in prioritising highlighted topics for review by the Commission. It was agreed that the areas highlighted as priorities would be considered by the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen and the list of priority topics would be sent to Members as soon as available and would be used to create a work programme.

93 FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL DECISIONS (SC6)

Members received the Forward Plan of Executive and Council decisions. It was requested that items on Regent Street, Charnwood Forest Regional Park and the Protocol for Section 106 contributions be brought to the Commission before any final decision was made.

RESOLVED – the Forward Plan be noted and the abovementioned items be brought to the Commission.

94 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

RESOLVED - in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3, 4 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

95 INTERNAL DELIVERY OF THE RESPONSIVE REPAIRS CONTRACT (SC7)

Members were advised of progress regarding the future delivery of an in-house responsive repairs service. It was reported that benefits would not only be financial, but also tangible, particularly in reducing time taken to manage the partnership arrangements which were currently in operation. Information was requested on the options for use of any money saved as a result of the changes. It was agreed that an update would be brought back to the Commission on a six monthly basis.

RESOLVED –

- (i) the report and progress be noted;
- (ii) an update be brought to the Scrutiny Commission in six months.

(The meeting closed at 9.11 pm)