



Date: 03 December 2013

Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

*A Borough to be proud of*

To: **All Members of Council**

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear Councillor,

Please see overleaf a Supplementary Agenda for the meeting of the **COUNCIL** on **TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2013 at 6.30 pm.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen  
Democratic Services Officer

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

7. **QUESTIONS**

The following questions have been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1, and answers provided as follows:

- (a) Question from Councillor Ward to the Executive Member for rural affairs

Given that we now know the amount budgeted by the Council for rural broadband will be match funded by the same amount by BT and mindful of the importance of the growth of the rural economy to the future of this Borough, will the Council now substantially increase the amount it is prepared to commit to delivering this much needed service.

Response from Councillor Gould

The Council has agreed nearly £60,000 toward rural broadband, which we agree is an important matter. No payments have been made yet by any Council, pending a review of the model by BT. This Council is committing more than three other Councils in Leicestershire, two of which are Tory controlled.

- (b) Question from Councillor Morrell to the Leader of the Council

Can the Executive member please explain why the Council's Executive voted unanimously to make a contribution of £49,000 from tax payer funds to a private members' squash club to provide an extra squash court at their new facility at Tungsten Park, when this facility should be included for the unrestricted use of Borough residents in the Council's new leisure centre.

Response from Councillor Cope

The Officers report to Executive in November set out quite clearly the rationale for supporting the contribution of £49,000 to the new state of the art Hinckley squash facility, proposed to be built at Tungsten Park. The facility, which will cost approximately £1m, will not only replace the existing and outdated courts on the site of the bus station (which have to be relocated, as part of the overall development), but will provide four courts with ancillary modern facilities. In addition, the Council contribution will lever support from Squash and Racket England, who will contribute at least another £25,000.

The contribution will be conditional on a management agreement being put in place to open up the facility for public and school use. I am advised such agreements are in place with other local authorities in partnership with Squash and Racket England for similar facilities elsewhere in the country.

This initiative will guarantee the provision of professional, state of the art squash facilities for the public.

The added benefit for the area is that this will enable regional competitions to be played which cannot be hosted anywhere else in the Borough because of the lack

of suitable facilities.

(c) Question from Councillor Morrell to the Leader of the Council

Car parking at the Hinckley Hub continues to present challenges not only at the Hub itself but in surrounding areas, so much so that it has recently been referred to by members of the public as a pantomime. Does the Leader now regret the hasty move to this site when a more considered approach could have delivered new Council offices and a new leisure centre with all the shared savings on the old Council offices site and surrounding area and at the same time kept Council staff and visitors in the Town centre, giving Castle Street a much needed boost.

Response from the Leader of the Council

I agree with the previous Conservative Leader that the move to the Hub was “a no-brainer”. The speeches at the official opening by Steve Atkinson, a senior civil servant from DWP and a Conservative County Councillor highlighted the huge savings to the public purse.

Locating the new Leisure Centre on the Argents Mead site will ensure its users, estimated to be in excess of 600,000 per year, will be attracted to not only the shops in Castle Street, but the new shopping and leisure facilities in the Crescent scheme.

I have asked for an urgent review of car parking linked to the Hub to be undertaken, and am reassured there are a number of potential options for increasing parking nearby.

(d) Question from Councillor Batty to the Leader of the Council

When adopting the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study at a meeting of the Executive in October 2013 the Leader of the Council stated that he welcomed this document as it illustrated that the Borough Council had a 5 year supply of pitches and that the Council did not need to accept any more applications. In view of recent conflicting claims that this evidence base may be flawed and in the light of an impending application for a gypsy/traveller caravan site in my ward, can the Leader please confirm whether the statement that the above statement made by him in October still applies?

Response from the Leader of the Council

I take issue over your claim that the evidence base is flawed. As you are well aware, the methodology adopted by this Council has substantially reduced the requirement that was identified both in the Core Strategy and the more recent county wide Gypsy and Traveller Needs Study.

It was interesting that Councillor Batty attended the Executive meeting but never requested to speak on the item.

(e) Question from Councillor Batty

Can the Executive member please explain the significance of the long delay in the Council completing its site allocations document in the context of developer appeals and provide an indication of the cost of appeals for the financial years from 2009/10 through to 2014/15, this to include all the Council's costs and costs

awarded against the Council.

#### Response from the Leader of the Council

The Site Allocations and Development Management document is programmed to be reported to January Scrutiny and January Council prior to consultation on the submission draft to Government for formal examination. There has been extensive work undertaken on reviewing representations from the previous draft document, which you recall attracted over 13,000 representations. Over the last year, there has been dialogue and meetings with local Ward Members in respect of the proposed sites and a cross party Member Working Group has been reviewing the draft Development Management policies that form a key part of the document, a process with which you have been involved.

In addition, you will also be aware that extensive work has had to be undertaken on technical evidence based documents (which are all available on the web site), to underpin the proposed allocations and policies. We know from the experience elsewhere in Leicestershire that, without this work, the Government is rejecting plans and providing a 'free for all' for developers to push forward speculative applications for development.

The estimated cost of appeals for the period 2009/10 to 2013/14 is £241,474.00 over the 5 years 2009-2014.

(f) Question from Councillor Ladkin to the Leader of the Council

- (i) Bearing in mind the huge amount of publicity given to the Council's very significant financial commitment to the Bus Station development and its' determination to deliver the completed scheme in 2015 can the Executive member please advise us on whether this has led to an increased level of interest from potential tenants in the scheme and whether the developer has any firm interest in any of the retail or restaurant units.
- (ii) Having waived the £2.75m capital receipt in exchange for a speculative profit share agreement, can the Executive member provide any assurance that the developer now benefitting from this "windfall" will not be approaching existing town centre businesses offering "incentives" to induce them to relocate to the Bus Station development, hence undermining the future viability of Castle Street and the established town centre.

#### Response from the Leader of the Council

The Crescent regeneration scheme for the bus station site is an exciting new shopping and leisure scheme, which will feature a new cinema (Cineworld) and major new supermarket (Sainsbury's), which of course the Conservative Group opposed. Tin Hat Regeneration Partnership are in ongoing dialogue with other operators and announcements will be made in due course. These discussions remain commercially confidential.

Decisions for all commercial enterprises are for them to determine. We will not be encouraging the developer to target existing businesses. We can not prevent such businesses from taking their own investment decisions, particularly if the alternative is for the businesses to choose to close and relocate out of the town centre, due to lack of suitable premises.

(g) Question from Councillor Allen to the Leader of the Council

Can the Executive member please confirm when the document "Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study" dated January 2013 was received by the Council and whether it has been necessary to make any changes from that document prior to it being considered by the full council.

Response from the Leader of the Council

The Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs study was finally completed in April 2013 following the completion of the surveys of potential of existing sites to be accommodated additional pitches.

(h) Question from Councillor Richards to the Leader of the Council

Can the Executive member please explain the logic behind recommending a supplementary budget of £30,600 for parking permits for Hinckley Hub staff when it has requested £25,000 from businesses in the Town Centre Partnership to help provide parking concessions to generate more shopping footfall in the Town centre.

Response from the Leader of the Council

The supplementary budget approval at Executive recently was required under Finance Regulations to account for the long stay parking permits purchased by Leicester County Council for their staff on their occupation of the Hub in July 2013. This was forecast within the 13-14 budget. As of last night, the Council has now secured contribution of £10,000 from the BID for the next year, subject to a positive ballot second term.

8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

Madam Mayor, Fellow Councillors, Officers, members of the public and media

It gives me great pleasure to make this statement tonight, as, in addition to the many positive items on the agenda, it gives me the opportunity to highlight what an exciting time it is for the Borough, its citizens and businesses.

**Hinckley BID – Ballot for second term**

First of all, we are in the middle of the ballot which will determine whether the Hinckley Business Improvement District (BID) will secure a further five year term. The first BID has achieved a great deal for the town, working with local businesses and with the Borough and County Councils. It is notable that vacancy rates and footfall have largely bucked the national trends, despite a very difficult economic and commercial period. As an example, the annual Christmas Lights 'Switch On', on 22 November, a joint venture between the Council and the BID, proved, yet again, to be an exciting and very well-attended event, with over 14,500 footfall counts recorded. This Administration is fully supportive of the continuation of the BID and the votes of the Council have been cast in favour of a further five years.

**Sporting Excellence**

The Council has been active also on the sporting scene. In the last week, thanks to some hard work behind the scenes, four matches in the Women's under 17's European Football Championships have been held at our local football stadium ... with great success. The F.A. has commended this Council on its support to the events, which have secured great

crowds. In addition, with the support of our Cultural team, notably Graeme Chilvers, Colin Magee won the East Midlands 'Unsung Hero' accolade and will be competing against other regional winners for the national award to be announced at the BBC sports Personality of the Year event in mid December. This is the second year in succession that someone from Hinckley and Bosworth has won the regional award; testament to the rich vein of talent and sporting commitment in our area and to Graeme's skills in identifying and showcasing that talent, I am sure that we all wish Colin success later this month.

Furthermore, on 28 November, the Borough Sports Awards event proved yet again to be very popular and very successful in showcasing the massive talent within the Borough. Thanks to Graeme and his colleagues for such a wonderful event!

### **Hinckley Hub – Official Opening**

Last Friday, I was joined by Neil Couling from DWP and Cllr Peter Lewis from the County Council at an event formally opening the Hinckley Hub. Both Neil and Peter had nothing but praise for the building, its facilities and the potential now offered for greater integration and efficiency of the services we can offer to our public. Work on that integration of management and grass roots service integration has begun already and I am looking forward to that progressing further over the next few months.

### **Effective Partnership**

As further evidence of our effective partnership working, Cllr Keith Lynch, our representative on the Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee, was very pleased to tell me that the consolidated performance of our partnership with Harborough and North West Leicestershire Councils is showing steady improvement in all aspects, with performance now at its highest level. Again, this is a considerable achievement, given the pressures faced by families and services over the last few years. Members should be pleased that this partnership is ensuring that more people than ever are in receipt of the benefits to which they are entitled (whilst those not so entitled are effectively identified), more swiftly and more effectively than before. In addition, our collection rates are holding up, against most expectations.

### **Discussions at the Executive**

In the last fortnight, the Executive agreed to recommend to this meeting an 88% 'cap' on Council Tax Support. With the majority of other councils in the county looking to set their cap at 85% or less, this Council will be giving those who need it the maximum support we can in the financial circumstances. The Executive considered also the finalisation of negotiations on the two City Deals in which we continue to be engaged: Coventry/Warwickshire and Leicester/Leicestershire. Final Government 'sign off' is expected very soon on both 'Deals'. I think that to have been continuously engaged so actively and positively in both 'Deals' as they have been developed is testament to our commitment to get the best for our communities and to the positive perception others have of this Council as a constructive partner in the wider world of economic development.

### **MIRA Technology Park – New Partner**

On that very point, I was pleased last Thursday to be joined by Secretary of State, Eric Pickles, in the unveiling of a new sign to mark the growth of the MIRA Technology Park, enhanced by the announcement at the same event of the decision by Haldex Research and Development (a £400m Swedish company) to relocate from Germany to the MIRA Technology Park. There are now some 30 companies operating within the Park and I know that more will follow. Dr George Gillespie, the MIRA CEO, was fulsome in his praise (in front of Mr Pickles) for the way in which this Council has supported MIRA in its endeavours on this site in a speedy and expeditious manner, almost unique in his experience. MIRA has also recently been successful in securing £7.4m Local Infrastructure Fund investment by the Government for on-site roads and, with the support

of the LLEP and Council, has submitted an exciting bid for a new Training Academy on site which could see NWHC and Leicester University occupy this facility. Can I thank Bill Cullen and his Planning team for their continuing efforts on this world class development.

### **Presentation to APPG**

To highlight our work on regeneration and skills development, the Council was invited to give a presentation on 26 November to the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Growth at Portcullis House. To emphasise our partnership credentials, Bill Cullen was joined in the presentation by Terry Spall (MIRA) and Mike Motley (North Warwickshire and Hinckley College). I am told that the presentation was very well received, as was our contribution to the work of the APPG, recognised also in its recent publication 'Rising to the Challenge: how LEPs can deliver Local Growth Strategies'. Positive acknowledgement was given to the partnership working with both Leicester and Leicestershire and Coventry and Warwickshire LEPs.

### **Local Democracy Week**

On 15 October, the Council held a half day event for local schoolchildren and their teachers, as part of Local Democracy Week. Some 25 children and their teachers participated in this highly interactive event, led by Cllr Mathew Hulbert and Rebecca Ball. The feedback from both children and teachers was very positive and we intend to repeat the event next year. Can I thank Rebecca and Mathew for their time and leadership in the development and delivery of such a successful event.

### **Hiring of Hub Facilities**

The following day, the De Montfort Suite in which we now sit was hired for its first external event – on Business Growth. Not only was this event well-attended, the comments received about our new facilities were all very positive. This bodes well!

### **Delegation from Shanghai**

On 12 November, we hosted a session with a delegation from Shanghai, who were visiting this country to learn about our economic regeneration. The Mayor, Cllr Bill and I were privileged to lead an interactive session, supported by Bill Cullen and Steve Atkinson, which was followed by a tour of our regeneration sites. Yet again, we received very complimentary feedback and it was heartening to know that our efforts are now gaining international recognition. It served to remind me also of how much has been achieved over the last seven years by this Council and our partners; well beyond what was expected and planned and in circumstances not propitious for such successful developments.

### **Planning Issues**

At a previous Council a commitment was given that we would engage a Highways Consultant to provide bespoke advice on relevant matters in relation to Planning Applications, so that Planning Committee could have greater reassurance in making robust responses to applications. That commitment has been followed through and a Consultant has been engaged. We hope that he will be starting with us no later than the beginning of January 2014.

Can I take the opportunity also to express my sympathies to Ernie White, Leader at Blaby District Council, in respect of the difficulties his Council is now experiencing with developers and the 'special measures' into which his Council has been placed to address the speed of making Planning decisions. I take no political pleasure from the plight of Blaby, as I know it could happen to many of us in the current climate, which is weighted almost solely in the favour of development and against the wishes of local people. I am sure that all members will share this view.

## **Council Finances**

Finally, Madam Mayor, I can advise Members that the finances of the Council remain very sound. Yet again, we anticipate that we will operate within our means for this year and plans are well-advanced not only for 2014/15, as you will see in our budget proposals in due course, but also for the very difficult year of 2015/16. I have asked our officers to prepare our budgets on two foundations: no service reductions and no enforced job losses. I am reliably informed that both these requirements will be met in the next two years; a commitment which you will all know can not be met by many other Councils across the country. This is a tremendous achievement again, for which I thank Sanjiv Kohli, Katherine Plummer and the Finance team. Members will be pleased to know that Sanjiv is recovering well from his latest operation and is back working full time, although not yet able to physically travel to work. I am sure we all look forward to his full recovery.

Having earlier today participated in a meeting of District Leaders in the county, I am aware that the very real pressures faced by Leicestershire County Council could add to the pressures already faced by Districts, including this one, if we are to ensure service continuity to our citizens for the medium term. Full details are yet to emerge, but this Council will do everything we reasonably can to maintain support to our most vulnerable citizens over the next few years.

Madam Mayor, I commend this Statement to the Council.

### 17. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION (Pages 1 - 4)

The following amendments to the recommendations in the report are proposed:

- Paragraph 3.7 – Proposed changes relating to members and committees:

Amendment of first bullet point to read:

- Changes required to seating arrangements at planning committee due to new meeting room layout following the move to the Hub to state that members of the committee shall sit in their allocated places on the inner row and those in attendance as ward councillors or observers may sit on the outer row.

Additional bullet point to read:

- The above seating arrangement shall be used for all committees.

- Paragraph 3.8 – member development:

Removal of the first bullet point regarding training for Chairs and Vice-Chairs

- Additional paragraph – Planning Committee

The following changes are recommended to Planning Committee Procedure:

- The Member of Parliament and County Councillors may speak on matters affecting their constituency or division for a maximum of two minutes (to be added into paragraph 28.2 of the Constitution (previously page 113-4) after point f));
- Amendment to paragraph 27.6d) (previously on page 113 of the Constitution) to read: if a decision on an application is deferred, any speakers on that item will be offered the opportunity to speak again when the application returns to committee.



Amended recommendation:

The changes to the Constitution listed in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.10 of the report and as amended in the supplementary agenda be approved.

22. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS, NOTICE OF WHICH HAVE BEEN RECEIVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES 13.1 AND 13.2:-

Motion B – paragraph E) ii.: [local authority] should read 'Hinckley & Bosworth'.

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