

Public Document Pack



**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

Bill Cullen MBA (ISM), BA(Hons) MRTPI
Chief Executive

Date: 02 October 2018

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, 2 OCTOBER 2018** at **6.30 pm**.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Officer

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

6. **QUESTIONS**

- (a) Question from Councillor Cartwright to the Executive member for culture, sport & leisure, communications & partnerships

“WW1 Silhouette Memorial to Fallen Troops

The 6ft aluminium Tommy Silhouettes have been purchased by cities around the world. But for hundreds of British Councils it seems honouring those who made the ultimate sacrifice is not a priority.

Former head of the Army Lord Dannatt personally wrote to 433 local Council leaders asking them to support the charity campaign. At the time of me writing this question to Council only 160 councils had agreed to make a £750.00 donation to buy one of the silhouettes to display in their town or city for the centenary of the end of the war.

Did Lord Dannatt write to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council?

Has Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council purchased any WW1 silhouettes?”

Response from Councillor Cook:

“Thank you for your question

This Council has, and always will, honour those who serve today, those who fought, the many who died in conflict, and those who survive as veterans of our armed forces, and merchant navy.

General the Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL, writing as Patron of There But Not There, The 2018 Armistice project for the Charity Remembered, sent an e-mail to the Leader of the Council in late June.

The e-mail set out the campaign objectives of ‘There but not There’, described simply as:

- To commemorate the Fallen, highlighting the sacrifices made by so many through Tommy installations across the country
- To educate all, particularly our younger generation, to help them understand why and how 888,246 British and Commonwealth service personnel lost their lives
- To help heal those suffering from the hidden wounds of post-traumatic stress disorder and other legacies of recent combat operations, by raising funds for our beneficiary charities

The e-mail also offered support and advice for those wanting to purchase Tommies for their own installations.

I am very pleased to inform you and fellow Councillors that we have recently

purchased two 6ft aluminium Tommy Silhouettes for installation at Hinckley War Memorial. One has been funded by our Economic Regeneration Team and the other has been kindly funded by volunteers from Hinckley Past & Present.

These two silhouettes will be installed within the Hinckley War Memorial setting during the month of October, in readiness for Remembrance Sunday.

We have also written to all parish councils giving information about the silhouettes and the charities that a purchase will help to support, suggesting that parishes may be able to raise the funds to purchase a silhouette for installation in their town or village.

These silhouettes compliment a number of initiatives which aim to ensure our War Memorials are looking their best allowing us to mark the 100 year Anniversary of the end of WW1.

We hope that you and other Members support and welcome our positive approach.”

(b) Question from Councillor Cartwright to the Leader of the Council:

“Would the leader of the Council please explain to me and all other members how he believes the Scrutiny function of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council works?”

Response from Councillor Hall:

“The formal bodies of the overview & scrutiny function operate in accordance with the council’s constitution as outlined in part 2e (responsibility for functions – overview & scrutiny) and part 3g (overview & scrutiny procedure rules).

The constitution gives a wide range of powers to the scrutiny function, not just to review performance and decisions but to be able to have a say in determining policy.

Amongst other things, overview and scrutiny is able to review proposals before they come to Council and to influence policy through its own recommendations. There are specific processes, such as budget setting, where Scrutiny can play an important part in shaping policy, where the responsibility is defined as follows:

The Executive's initial proposal shall be referred to Scrutiny Commission or to Finance & Performance Scrutiny. At the end of the consultation period, the Executive will draw up firm proposals having regard to the consultation responses. If the Scrutiny Commission or Finance & Performance Scrutiny wishes to respond to the Executive in that consultation process then it may do so. As the Scrutiny Commission and Finance & Performance Scrutiny have responsibility for fixing their own work programme and those of any scrutiny panels, it is open to the Commission (directly or through a panel) to investigate, research or report in detail with policy recommendations before the end of the consultation period. The Executive will take any response from the Scrutiny Commission or Finance & Performance Committee Scrutiny or a panel into account in drawing up firm proposals for submission to Council, and its report to Council will reflect the comments made by consultees and the Executive's response.

Members make a range of decisions including, as we see in our agenda this

evening, decisions to support a recommendation, suggestions of additional comments to be included in the final recommendation to Council, or neutral feedback simply noting the report. Personally I do not find a decision to simply note the report particularly helpful when the report under consideration has significant policy impacts, because it implies that scrutiny members have no views to express, when I know that is not always the case. I have noticed recently that it is being used less frequently and I hope that will continue.

I'm sure that there is far more work that Scrutiny could undertake within its remit, which may require more panels and meetings, which could be introduced if that is the wish of members of the scrutiny committee."

8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

Last time we had a full Council meeting I reflected on some of the examples of the hard work that officers of this council do on behalf of our communities. This time I have great pleasure in reflecting on a couple of examples where that work is being recognised by others.

Firstly I want to congratulate everybody who has been involved in Snapdragon this year. Not only did they deliver the best Snapdragon festival ever, but they have now been nominated in the category of the best free festival in the Leicestershire Tourism Awards 2018. We all wish them well in the judging and look forward to the continued growth and further success of this festival.

The council has also been awarded the RSPCA Stray Dog Footprint gold standard for the 7th year in a row and we will also be given a platinum award in recognition of this continued achievement at PawPrints tenth anniversary and winners' reception in November this year. Another great achievement and right that we should be proud that our officers should get such recognition.

Because of my reduced mobility at present I was not able to attend the grand opening of the extension to the Barlestone Village Hall, which this Council supported through its Developing Communities Fund. Officers, the Deputy Leader and Mayor attended the event and I am delighted that we are now seeing the results of this Council's long overdue investment in our rural communities. I'm sure more of these projects will be completed in the coming months and years and I'm hopeful that we shall be able to commit even further funds to more new schemes in the future.

I attended Planning Committee last week and we determined the MIRA TIC-IT application. After much consideration I supported the officer's recommendation to approve the application and I do believe that this will be a good development for our area. But we must also do what we can to develop further the interest in the battlefield and to make sure that we celebrate what we have in our borough. We must do more to enable people to follow the steps of those who fought and to understand what the battle was like. We should also seek to make 22nd August a day when the whole borough can take part in remembering the events of that day in 1485. In deciding what we can do to make more of our history we need to involve our communities as well as local parish councils and businesses. We should also take care to involve those groups who have an interest in what we do, including The Battlefields Trust and The Richard III Society. Members from all areas will be able to get involved in the development of these proposals.

Moving to the business on our agenda this evening we have a proposal before Council to give council tax support for some of the borough's most vulnerable individuals, specifically young people leaving care. Whilst this is a small number of people to add to the more than 3,000 pensioners and over 2,500 working age households who already receive some

council tax discount, it sends a clear message that we will support those most in need as they move into the next phase of their life. I think this is a proposal that all members can support, and I'm pleased that the proposal is supported by the Scrutiny Commission.

LCC approved a motion last week in which they continue to exclude borough and district councils from the development of proposals for local government reform in Leicestershire. The motion included a point that Council

vi) recognises that Leicestershire County Council must be allowed to pursue its right to self-determination of policy via the democratic process and that this Council respects the rights of other local authorities to do the same.

That may be true, but when it comes to developing a policy to scrap this council they have no right to do so without our involvement.

LCC further agreed

iv) that plans for an East Midlands Strategic Alliance to counterbalance the West Midlands Combined Authority requires further work and agreement amongst regional leaders and stakeholders before a business case is submitted to the Secretary of State.

I am aware that by regional leaders the County Council is not involving districts and boroughs in their discussions, and they do not want us influencing the outcome, but the statement itself shows a lack of vision for what can be achieved in the East Midlands.

I personally find it ridiculous that LCC takes that attitude over something which could so dramatically affect this council and the people of the borough, yet when it comes to something that LCC want support for, such as key elements of the Strategic Growth Plan it is happy to work with us. In being selective, LCC is not acting like the true partner it should be, and they risk losing our trust and respect in doing so.

In August this Council approved a motion to work with other local authorities to deliver a better alternative to the re-organisation model being proposed by Leicestershire County Council. Leicestershire County Council has refused to join us in those discussions and tonight we have an update on the options being considered at agenda item 12.

In light of the most recent developments and analysis I shall also table a motion to amend the recommendations in that item. This council can sit back and wait for LCC to develop proposals to scrap it, or we can take positive action to determine what is the best course of action for our community, I shall recommend the latter.

12. UNITARY PROPOSALS FOR LEICESTERSHIRE AND PLANS FOR EAST MIDLANDS STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Councillor Hall, seconded by Councillor Morrell, will propose the following amendment to the printed recommendation:

Motion to amend the recommendation:

I have spent significant time in recent weeks working with colleagues across Leicestershire in considering the Borough Councils response to the LCC proposal for Local Government Reform in Leicestershire and the East Midlands.

Whilst I and other district leaders are working together to consider a range of options, LCC have refused to join with us insisting that they will only speak with us after they have

tabled their own proposals.

In an e-mail response to me on 12th September the County Council Leader reiterated that it would help the debate if the districts were to put their proposals out.

This is not how we should be discussing things, but I hope this evening that members will support this motion to give LCC at least part of what they ask for.

Officers of this council are working with colleagues from other councils to consider the options available for Leicestershire and the East Midlands region. They will be looking at ways of collaborating to reduce overall cost, possible district mergers and unitary structures.

I have however made a decision that for Hinckley and Bosworth we can move more quickly to introduce change without affecting the overall outcome of these discussions, and in doing so we shall send a clear message to our community, the County Council, our officers, the rest of the East Midlands and Westminster.

Since 1997 Leicester City Council with a population of 450,000 and Rutland County Council with a population of around 38,000 have operated successfully as Unitary Councils. I believe it is now the time for Hinckley and Bosworth to follow that course. We can either sit back and wait for others at County Hall to plot our demise, or we can take a positive step to deliver a council which will work better for our residents, I believe that the time is right for HBBC to take steps to become a unitary council.

In Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Greater London, national and regional governments are supported by a single tier of unitary councils ranging from 22,000 people in Orkney to 600,000 in Glasgow. The size of those councils are determined not by economics but by community geography and cohesion.

We are a council representing a population of some 110,000 people, we are big enough to shed the shackles of the County Council and in doing so we would enable our officers to focus their efforts on addressing all of the issues which matter to our residents.

This change would be consistent with the creation of a regional government for the East Midlands, could be modified to support the outcome of district councils' collective work in Leicestershire, and indications are that it would have the support of our residents.

I therefore propose that the recommendation in this report is amended as follows.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the decision of LCC for a unitary structure of local government in Leicestershire and its timetable for formally consulting and considering its proposal.
- 2.2 To note the initial appraisal of a range of options that have been investigated with the support of specialist consultants.
- 2.3 To endorse a request to East Midlands Councils and LCC that consideration be given to the review of options for establishing a strategic body for the East Midlands, that could be responsible for strategic commissioning of social care, public health, transport and education.
- 2.4 To reaffirm that this council does not believe that it is in the best interests of the

borough's residents to scrap Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council in favour of a unitary council for Leicestershire.

- 2.5 To note the outcome of a borough-wide survey on residents' views on retaining the district council and on options for a town council for Hinckley.
- 2.6 To agree a timetable for reporting on the outcomes of LCC's stakeholder engagements exercise and its Cabinet decision on its preferred option.
- 2.7 That a review be undertaken in conjunction with other Leicestershire districts over the potential for direct local delivery of a range of services currently provided by Leicestershire County Council.
- 2.8 This council should take all necessary steps to become a unitary borough council for the Hinckley and Bosworth area.
- 2.9 A timetable covering the steps required to move to unitary status, and the key issues to be resolved, are to be brought to our next council meeting.

This page is intentionally left blank