

# Public Document Pack



Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

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

Date: 26 February 2020

To: **All Members of Council**

(other recipients for information)

Dear Councillor,

Please see overleaf a Supplementary Agenda for the meeting of the **COUNCIL** on **TUESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2020** at **6.30 pm**.

Yours sincerely

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

Rebecca Owen  
Democratic Services Manager

## **COUNCIL - 25 FEBRUARY 2020**

### **SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

#### 6. QUESTIONS

Question received from Councillor Webber-Jones to the Executive member for Planning:

“I would like to ask the Executive Lead for Planning to explain the position following the publication of LCC’s Cabinet report in December and the further Cabinet update in February concerning Barwell SUE and the S106 Agreement. Can he respond to the issues raised in the report which implies that the county council has not been engaged in the s106 agreement since 2013, and also confirm what steps have HBBC taken to secure a resolution to the planning application and section 106 agreement?”

Response from Councillor Bill:

“I would like to thank Councillor Webber-Jones for drawing attention to this most important matter.

The Barwell SUE has been in the adopted Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan since 2009 and has been an essential part of the need to deliver new homes to meet the growing needs of this community in line with the requirement to demonstrate that we have a five year supply of building land. The scale of the proposed development makes delivery a complicated matter because of the wide range of landowners involved, as well as a wide range of organisations including the developers and the county council. The developers behind the scheme have taken a long time to finalise the legal documentation associated with the resolution to grant planning permission but throughout this time the borough council and county council have been working with the developers to finalise these details. We have engaged Homes England, the government’s national advisor on the delivery of homes, to bring any assistance it could to move this forward. We were informed by the developers in November that they had finalised the paperwork and the section 106 agreement could now be signed.

I must highlight that since the resolution to grant planning permission, the county council has been fully engaged in both the section 106 agreement and the planning permission. It came as a real surprise therefore to see the report that went to the county council’s Cabinet in December. A reader of that Cabinet report may be under the impression that the county council had not been involved in the section 106 for a number of years. I can reassure the Council that the county council has been working on the document up until 2019. To emphasise the point, the county council prepared some further changes to the document at the start of last year and continued to work with our officers on the planning permission details since then. There has been a series of meetings throughout last year where the Barwell SUE was under consideration by both the county council and Homes England as a priority site for attention. It is rather concerning that the county council did not realise when they drafted the latest document early last year that the two schemes for which they were seeking funding could not be delivered. Even more worrying was the suggestion from the county council that more investigations on highways were needed and that this could take 12 months.

I am also extremely concerned to read that the potential highway mitigation that the county council had identified was necessary can no longer be delivered. Having been closely involved with seeking improvements to Hinckley’s northern perimeter, in other words the A47, throughout this time I can report that it has always been my understanding that the proposed developments would fund the improvements needed to ensure the safe and efficient operation of this route in and out of the area.

We must now find a way forward and I can inform the Council that our officers recently convened an urgent meeting with the developers and the county council's highways and education teams. They have put forward a pragmatic approach to enable the county council to reconsider the highway impacts, although it is likely that this will still take up to six months to finalise. We have also asked the county council to update all of their section 106 requirements to ensure that we are maximising the mitigation of this development on local infrastructure."

## 8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

Tonight is our annual Budget Council where we are required to set our budget for the forthcoming year.

### **Budget**

There are a series of budget reports for consideration which have been reviewed by a joint meeting of the Scrutiny Commission and Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee. These include the General Fund Budget, the calculation of Council Tax for 2020/21, the Housing Revenue Account, the Capital Programme and Capital Strategy, Fees and Charges and Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators.

I do not wish to steal the thunder of the Finance and Resources Executive Lead, suffice to say we will be presenting a balanced budget and sticking to our manifesto commitment of below inflation rise in council tax for 2020/21. We will be continuing to invest in our council housing stock to maintain good quality homes.

Our Capital Programme continues to remain ambitious, focussed around continuing and enhancing the Parish and Community Initiative Fund, the delivery of our crematorium, which will be a great asset for our community; the exciting Heritage Action Zone Public Realm Improvement Project for Hinckley and the Bosworth 1485 Sculpture Trail Project. The latter two projects are awaiting final sign off of external funding from Heritage England and the Leicestershire Local Economic Partnership, which we are confident in securing.

I am also pleased to say provision will be included in the Council's Capital Programme to invest in our first publicly available electric charging points, just one of the many initiatives the Council will be introducing linked to its climate change declaration.

### **Community Safety Partnership Award**

At last Council I highlighted that the Council's joint Community Safety Partnership with Blaby District Council was shortlisted for the Police and Crime Commissioners 2020 Safer Community Celebration Awards.

I am delighted to report that our partnership won the Community Safety Partnership award for "Building Public Confidence through Community Safety" and was recognised for the contribution the Partnership makes to support the Police and Crime Plan. The award submission focussed on vulnerability protection and victim services as well as prevention and engagement work with young people. The work of the Partnership involves providing support to more than 500 victims of domestic abuse including 300 children affected by domestic abuse.

The work to engage young people around anti-social behaviour, healthy relationships, road safety, drugs and knife crime saw over 4,500 young people involved in interactive workshops.

I would like to express my congratulations and appreciation to the Executive Lead for Housing and Community Safety and the staff in our Community Safety team and our partners at Blaby District Council.

### **Strategic Alliance**

All seven districts and borough councils in Leicestershire have formed two alliances to develop more collaborative working, building on the long and successful track record in collaborating to deliver local, high quality and award winning services.

The southern Leicestershire strategic alliance would comprise Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, Oadby & Wigston and Blaby councils, while the northern alliance would include Melton, Charnwood and North West Leicestershire councils. These are not formal arrangements but agreements that will help build on the existing shared services and collaboration that takes place. In practice this will help coordinate important work on a number of issues such as carbon footprint reduction, supporting communities and strengthening town centres.

### **Free parking**

I'm delighted that our "free after three" parking scheme on Trinity Lane East, Lower Bond Street and Castle car parks has now been introduced following the statutory consultations. This is another key manifesto commitment delivered to help boost town centre trade and ease the on-street parking problems that occur in the evening.

### **X-ray facilities**

We continue to press for the promised return of the x-ray facilities at Hinckley. We were promised that funding had been found by NHS bosses following our offer to loan them the cash. The town has been without these facilities for too long and we now expect them to deliver the promised upgrade without delay.

### **Sustainable Urban Extensions**

Further progress is being made on addressing outstanding issues on Barwell S106 Agreement which is subject to a question on the agenda tonight. Following all of the bluster from the County Council, it would appear issues around educational requirements and highway matters are being addressed and I would like to thank our officers for pulling the developer and senior officers of the County around the table to seek a resolution around the changes LCC are requesting. There remains concern over what, if any, improvements will be required for the A47 which I understand requires further highway and traffic assessment by LCC and the developer.

On Earl Shilton SUE, I can confirm that I have been advised we can expect to see a planning application submitted by early summer.

### **Five Year Land Supply**

As Members will be aware the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites to demonstrate delivery over a minimum of five years. The Council published its five year housing position in its 'Residential Land Availability Paper' in spring 2019 which confirmed the Council had a supply of 4.15 years.

Saying my Administration having inherited this position is very unhappy is an

understatement.

This situation and the system continues to put pressure on us to approve applications perhaps where we would prefer not to. To be clear the Council cannot refuse to determine an application. Failure to do so would mean the applicant has the right to appeal against non-determination and we have seen that this often means a scheme is approved with less stringent conditions than we would otherwise have applied had we approved it.

We must all continue to lobby government on this incredibly unfair process whereby we are being punished for the development industry not delivering houses in a timely manner particularly when we have tried to meet our responsibilities of granting consent. I will be seeking meetings with both our MPs in order to raise this and other concerns.

A report is to be considered at next Scrutiny Commission along with an action plan to help us get back in control by re-securing a five year supply and to meet the Government's 'housing delivery test'.

### **Triumph Motors**

Members may have picked up over the weekend the news of Triumph's plans to develop a new Global Centre of Excellence and Research at its UK headquarters in Hinckley, which will help cement its long term future in Hinckley. This very positive news was slightly tainted by the news that the company is in consultation with its staff over some reductions in its manufacturing workforce.

I have publicly welcomed Triumph's investment decision and pledged the Council's support to work with our partners, such as DWP, to help and advise any workers who may be at risk of losing their job.

### **DCN Conference**

Earlier this month I attended, along with the Council's Chief Executive, the annual District Councils' Network (DCN) conference in Warwick. Here we heard from leading speakers on a range of topical issues and case studies ranging from climate change, new house builds, modular build housing, prevention work, council companies, waste strategies and promoting our high streets. A key theme running through the conference was around district councils being the local catalysts for change and being able to get things done.

The Chair of the conference highlighted that towns and cities are our territory "we know what makes them tick" and that we "make great places for people and families".

The conference helped showcase the great work that district councils do around developing healthy communities and prevention work, tackling homelessness, initiatives on work and skills, tackling ASB and knife crime and championing our high streets.

The conference called for more devolved resources and powers to enable districts to continue delivering great local services to our communities. The outcome of recent research commissioned by the DCN indicated the £382m impact on districts arising from the Government's proposed Waste Review Strategy.

A key highlight of the conference was a session from Jonathan Porritt, the Director of Forum for Future, about tackling climate change.

## Climate Change Strategy

I am pleased to report that the first meeting of the cross-party climate change working group, chaired by my colleague Cllr Martin Cartwright, took place last week to discuss a draft Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.

### Strategic transport priorities

A draft document on Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities has been prepared by the County and City councils which outlines the priorities for the two local transport authorities. A 13 week consultation is taking place and I urge all Members to review and respond. I have asked officers to prepare a report on its implications for the borough which will be reported to Executive.

A link to the document can be found at:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/strategic-transport-priorities>

### A5 Partnership

At the recent meeting of the A5 Member Partnership, Midlands Connect presented the outcomes of a key study demonstrating the economic significance of the A5 corridor and impacts of current congestion. On the basis of this work the Partnership meeting were advised of a request that is being made to Government with the support of local MPs for a £20m investment package as part of the Route Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2), to secure detailed technical studies to form the basis of major improvements for implementation in the RIS3 period from 2025 to 2030. Announcements for the RIS2 Government commitments is expected by spring of this year.

Stuart Bray  
Leader of the Council  
25 February 2020

#### 11. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The recommendations will be proposed by Councillor Bray and seconded by Councillor Bill, with the following amendment:

“That paragraphs (viii) and (ix) be merged and amended to read:

- (viii) attendance by Executive members at meetings and events within the borough that directly relate to their lead member role on the invitation of an officer of the council or with prior consultation with the Democratic Services Manager or Monitoring Officer”.