

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

26 APRIL 2012 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mr PAS Hall – Vice-Chairman

Mr PR Batty, Mr MB Cartwright (for Miss DM Taylor), Mrs WA Hall, Mrs L Hodgkins, Mr DW Inman, Mr K Morrell and Mr K Nichols

Also in attendance: Councillor JG Bannister, Councillor CW Boothby, Councillor WJ Crooks, Councillor JS Moore and Councillor BE Sutton

Officers in attendance: Steve Atkinson, Bill Cullen, Louisa Horton, Sanjiv Kohli and Simon Wood

516 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Ladkin and Councillor Taylor, with Councillor Cartwright substituting for Councillor Taylor in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.1.

517 MINUTES

It was

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

518 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this juncture.

519 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

The Head of Planning gave a presentation on the NPPF and it was reiterated that the tone of the document was set by Greg Clarke in the foreword.

Subsequent to the presentation, the following was discussed:

- Neighbourhood Plans – how much weight they carried and how they should be developed. The possibility of using the Parish & Community Initiative Fund to enable parishes to develop plans was suggested, however it was reported that the Big Lottery had been cited as a source of funding;
- Developer contributions in relation to windfall sites – particularly with regard to education and Academy schools;
- The importance of having a five year land supply in order to help protect rural areas, as development was likely to be approved unless it could be proven as unsustainable;
- The need for Members to be able to understand the formulas for calculating the housing requirements in the Borough as a whole and in villages;
- The large number of empty properties in the Borough which should be brought back into use before building new housing. In response it was stated that receipt of a Government grant by HBBC would help to tackle empty homes;

- The suggestion in the NPPF with regard to enforcement that Local Planning Authorities should act 'proportionately' and the risk that this imposed to communities. In response, Members were assured that a soft approach would not be taken.

Councillor Batty left the meeting at 7.28pm.

Members felt that a cross party working group should be set up to look at policies in light of the NPPF. It was agreed that this would be pursued.

(The Meeting closed at 8.05 pm)

CHAIRMAN