

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

28 MARCH 2019 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman  
Mrs R Camamile and Mr KWP Lynch – Vice-Chairman

Mr DC Bill MBE, Mr WJ Crooks, Mr RB Roberts, Mr BE Sutton, Mr R Ward and  
Ms BM Witherford (for Mr SL Bray)

Officers in attendance: Edwina Grant, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Jacqueline Puffett  
and Nicola Smith

424 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bray, MacDonald and Williams, with the substitution of Councillor Witherford for Councillor Bray authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

425 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Camamile, seconded by Councillor Sutton and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

426 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

427 HEALTHCARE IN HINCKLEY

Sue Venables, Communications Manager and Spencer Gay, Chief Finance Officer of West Leicestershire CCG were in attendance to provide an update on the healthcare services review. The options included moving some services into the health centre or to Sunnyside hospital from the current Hinckley Hospital and the porta cabins on site. The strategic outline case had been approved by NHS England and £8m funding had been agreed. The land on which the current Hinckley Hospital stood would be disposed of for capital return. It was noted that a public consultation on the proposals would be held.

Members discussed statistics showing that only 13% of patients in beds in Sunnyside were from the borough so the reduction of 19-20 beds to make way for increased services would not necessarily adversely affect local residents.

Discussion ensued on the shortage in practitioners and it was noted that, since 2016, over 200,000 practitioners who were European citizens had left the health service. Members asked for a report to a future meeting on the future of primary care in the borough. It was also agreed that the issue of use of S106 contributions to health would be included in that update.

Representatives of the CCG were thanked for their attendance.

428 SECTION 106 UPDATE

The Scrutiny Commission was updated on S106 contributions received, spent, held and requested in 2018. The chairman informed members that he had received a letter from the Cabinet Member for education at Leicestershire County Council in response to a letter he had sent following consideration of the S106 report the previous year and he agreed to circulate a copy.

A member asked whether the authority tracked spending of the contributions by other agencies, and in response it was noted that some were paid directly to Leicestershire County Council and it was entirely their responsibility to monitor or return if not spent and whilst information on spend was requested from the CCG, information was not forthcoming.

In relation to contributions to health, a member asked whether it would be possible to allocate to a specific facility, for example Hinckley hospital. In response it was noted that if the impact of an application on a particular facility could be demonstrated, the contribution could be specific. It was further noted that if the CCG then said the money was not required, it could not be used for a different project and would have to be returned, and that no more than five contributions could be used on a single project (although they could be used on multiple projects at the same facility).

A member highlighted that on two recent applications that provided contributions to bus services, there were no bus services in the village to contribute to. Officers also reported that they had started to challenge requests for contributions to bus passes as this relied on applications from residents of new developments which may not be forthcoming yet it reduced the available money that could be used for other beneficial contributions. In relation to travel packs, it was suggested that developers could produce these themselves at lower cost than the value of the contribution or could provide links for residents to information held online.

Concern was expressed about bus services being added as part of S106 agreements and subsequently underused buses running. In response, members were reminded that as part of the DPD application, a contribution to existing bus services was requested to prevent this as officers strongly had argued that the contributions would be better used to provide a cycle link from Hinckley.

A member felt that there was a lot of misunderstanding about section 106 contributions and asked that a briefing be provided so it could be more effectively scrutinised.

Concern was expressed that the contribution for the new school as a result of the Hinckley west application had been agreed four years previously but had not been used so may be clawed back. In response, members were reminded that there were trigger points in the agreement meaning the time would not start until the trigger had been met.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

429 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Members received the revised Communications Strategy 2019 – 2021. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- The council's high online presence
- The planning portal not being user friendly
- The decrease in people saying they use the Borough Bulletin to find out about and keep up to date with HBBC activities

- The continued use of paper to capture those not online
- The poor access to broadband in some rural areas.

RESOLVED – the report be endorsed and work undertaken be welcomed.

430 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The pay policy statement for 2019/20 was presented to the Scrutiny Commission. It was noted that the pay multiple had reduced since the previous year's report due to the new pay structure.

Concern was expressed about difficulties in recruiting and retaining planning officers which was a national problem. It was noted that career grades had been introduced to provide a structure for progression.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

431 SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2016-18

Consideration was given to the work programme. It was requested that a section about retention of staff be included in the Planning frontline service review which was scheduled for Finance & Performance Scrutiny in October.

(The Meeting closed at 7.56 pm)

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CHAIRMAN