



Date: 14 February 2012

Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

Dear Sir/Madam

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Hinckley at these offices on **THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2012 at 6.30 pm**

Yours faithfully

Miss RK Owen
Democratic Services Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Presentation of the Colin Smith Award to Irene Ashton
3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2011 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. To be advised of any additional items of business which the Mayor decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting.
5. To receive verbally from Members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the Agenda.
6. To receive such communications as the Mayor may decide to lay before the Council.
7. To receive petitions in accordance with the Council's Petitions' Scheme.
8. To deal with questions under Council Procedure Rule number 11.1.
9. To receive the Leader of the Council's Position Statement.
10. To receive for information only the minutes of the Scrutiny Commission meetings held on 8 December 2011 and 5 & 19 January 2012 (Pages 9 - 20)

11. Pay Policy Statement (Pages 21 - 36)
12. General Fund Budget 2012-2013 (Pages 37 - 54)
13. Capital Programme 2012 to 2014/15 (Pages 55 - 68)
14. HRA Subsidy Buyout (Pages 69 - 72)
15. Housing Revenue Account Budget (Pages 73 - 80)
16. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/15 (Pages 81 - 144)
17. The Prudential Code for capital finance in local authorities - setting of Prudential Indicators 2011/12 - 2014/15 and Treasury Management Strategy 2012/13 - 2014/15 (Pages 145 - 166)
18. Council Tax setting

Report to follow when information regarding the level of precept or a firm recommendation of level of precept to be set has been received from Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Police Authority and the Combined Fire Authority who are holding their budget meetings on 21 February, 22 February and 15 February respectively.

19. To approve the calendar of meetings 2012/2013 (Pages 167 - 168)
20. To consider the following motions, notice of which have been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 13.1 and 13.2:-

From Councillors MR Lay and S Sprason

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council is alarmed at the decision of Leicestershire County Council (LCC), who in removing the assisted home to school bus service which takes children from Field Head to Groby Community College is now seeking to charge £400 a year for a safe travel to school option which for many years had been provided by the County Council as a right.

This decision was taken midway through the school year causing hardship for parents and yet in a similar case the free bus from Kirby Muxloe to Groby has been allowed to continue until the end of the school year. At a minimum the route should qualify for assistance as other historic exception routes do and continue as stated in the final report of the LCC scrutiny review panel on home to school transport. We believe that the qualifying criteria are met by this route and the failure not to acknowledge this falls foul of the Equalities Act 2010.

The County Council has claimed the route from Field Head to Groby is "suitable" and available for children to walk almost 3 miles to school but do not regard safety to be an issue while many reasoned neutral observers would totally disagree with the assessment that the route is either "suitable" or safe for children to walk.

The route leads children to walk right alongside the A50 one the busiest stretches of road in the County carrying over 24,000 vehicles per day, many travelling along a good part of the route in excess of the speed limit and with the footpath running right alongside. A section of the route on the steep gradient of Bradgate Hill is a recognised accident hot-spot known by locals as "Accident Alley" which claimed another fatality as recently as Tuesday 7th February 2012. The aftermath caused the route to be closed to vehicles and pedestrians for over 7 hours.

The irony is that the school transport that is provided for eligible children by LCC

school bus that children at Field Head used is the same bus that picks up children from Markfield and this assisted service will continue. However this bus will now pass Field Head children being exposed to having to walk along this dangerous route, with obviously visible empty seats as most parents in these difficult times cannot afford the £400 extra now being demanded from them, in some cases for 2 children. A ridiculous situation from which there is no gain for the County Council who will not achieve any additional revenue while no additional cost is incurred by having to continue to provide the assisted bus service, which has existed since Markfield and Field Head children began attending Groby Community College many years ago. The only negative impact with potentially serious consequences are the children who are being encouraged to walk to and from school along what is potentially a very dangerous route as borne out by an independent Risk Assessment and recent fatalities.

The County Council should therefore reflect on the comments made in Parliament on the 10th of January 2012 by Andrew Bridgen MP (North West Leicestershire) who said that “under current guidelines common sense sometimes appears to go out the window” and Nicky Morgan MP (Loughborough) who said “Common sense has been lost as part of the debate in the County Council reviewing these routes”

The motion calls on the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council to

1. Make the strongest representations to the County Council asking them to revisit their decision on home to school transport removing the assisted transport service from Field Head to Groby CC, to put child welfare and safety at the top of its priorities, remind the County of the pressing nature of this issue, and reports back to this Council on its response as soon as possible.
2. To ask the County Council to comply in full to the statutory guidance in particular sections 82, 84, 85 & 86 provided on these matters by the Department for Education.
3. To ask the County Council to take into full consideration the data on the number of road traffic accidents on the route, the ever increasing volume and speed of the traffic travelling along the route and the percentage of it which is HGV traffic.
4. To ask if the 3 miles + safe walking route criteria apply to the Kirby Muxloe and Field Head route
5. To ask for copies of relevant equality impact assessments in regard to the County Council’s home to school transport policy + EIA for the above routes.