

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

3 OCTOBER 2019 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr MR Lay - Chairman
Mr C Ladkin and Mr P Williams – Vice-Chairman

Mr JMT Collett, Mr DS Cope, Mrs MJ Crooks, Mr SM Gibbens, Ms A Pendlebury,
Mr MC Sheppard-Bools and Mr R Webber-Jones

Officers in attendance: Bill Cullen, Edwina Grant, Stephen Meynell, Rebecca Owen,
Madeline Shellard, Sharon Stacey and Ashley Wilson

163 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor H Williams. It was also noted that Councillor Webber-Jones would be late.

164 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor P Williams, seconded by Councillor Sheppard-Bools and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 22 August 2019 be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

165 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

166 HINCKLEY HEALTH SERVICES REVIEW

Representatives of the CCG and The Alliance (the healthcare provider) updated on the future of care services in Hinckley. It was noted that the pre-consultation business case was being developed for approval by NHS England, after which the plans would go out to public consultation. Following the consultation, an outline and a full business case would be prepared. This was likely to be 12-18 months from now.

During the presentation and discussion, the following points were noted:

- Funding from with UHL's capital expenditure programme was being explored in order to replace the x-ray unit within Hinckley but this would be a decision for UHL, who had already earmarked the funding
- The possibility of a mobile x-ray unit was being explored
- X-ray patients were having to travel to other facilities, but this had not resulted in increased waiting times
- If new x-ray equipment could be funded, it would be at least 3-6 months before it was operational
- Public transport to healthcare facilities outside of Hinckley was poor
- The future plans would see endoscopy and day case beds moving to the community hospital, displacing the current beds (most of which were not used by local residents) to other facilities
- S106 money could potentially go towards x-ray facilities if specified as part of the agreement.

Councillor Webber-Jones arrived at 6.46pm.

It was suggested that HBBC could provide the CCG with a loan to purchase the x-ray equipment and agreed that this would be considered further with NHS England.

167 COUNCIL TAX - LOCAL DISCOUNTS AND PREMIUMS

Members received a report which recommended changes to council tax discounts and premiums as follows:

- An increased charge for long-term empty properties to 100%, and the maximum allowed under legislation where possible up to 300% for properties empty more than ten years
- A reduction in the major repairs discount from 50% to zero
- Removal of the one month empty property discount.

Members supported the ambition of encouraging bringing empty properties back into use and also noted the loss in New Homes Bonus as a result of a high number of empty properties. It was noted that there was still discretion for example following bereavement.

Councillor Ladkin arrived at 7.22pm.

Whilst in support of the first recommendation, members did not support the reduction of the major repairs discount or the removal of the one month empty property discount. They felt that if major work was being undertaken, this was beneficial in order to bring the property back into use and should not be discouraged and suggested it may discourage people from purchasing a property that required work.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The increased premium charge for long-term empty properties be supported and RECOMMENDED to Council;
- (ii) The Executive member for Finance be RECOMMENDED to reconsider recommendations 2 and 3 before bringing a report to Council.

168 BUSINESS RATES PILOT - PROPOSED SPEND

An update on the areas of proposed spend on schemes to be funded from the HBBC share of the business rate pilot gain was provided, along with a recommendation to Council to approve the expenditure budget and use of the business rate equalisation reserve. Attention was drawn to the other funding streams to be accessed and bids that had been submitted towards the projects listed.

Concern was expressed that the majority of the projects were focussed on Hinckley. In response, it was explained that a joint district bid had been submitted to the LLEP for a county-wide scheme that could see electric charging points provided across the borough and the funding for variable message signs in Hinckley was linked to a developer contribution specifically for that purpose.

It was noted that the CCTV item included some provision for CCTV in rural areas.

Members supported that provision of a central rural pot of funding to allow parish councils to request funding towards initiatives.

In relation specifically to the electric car charging points, it was requested that this be part of a wider plan to introduce them in all council-owned car parks across the borough and that a report be brought to the next meeting to show delivery of charging points across the borough.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The report be welcomed;
- (ii) Concerns raised about the projects benefitting only the Hinckley area be noted;
- (iii) A report be brought to the next meeting with plans for roll out of electric car charging points across the borough.

169 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The Scrutiny Commission was briefed on the approval of the Housing Allocations Policy in February 2018 by the Executive and progress in relation to implementation of the new IT system. It was noted that due to the changes in the policy, everyone on the register would need to re-apply but would be supported to do this.

Members were pleased to see the greater weight being given to local connection in the new policy.

RESOLVED – the briefing be noted and a progress report be brought in six months.

170 SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2019-2021

Members were updated on the outcome of the prioritisation exercise to inform the work programme. It was noted that the chairman and vice-chairmen would meet to discuss and to create the work programme.

171 MINUTES OF FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

The minutes were received for information and it was noted that it had been a positive meeting with a lot of debate.

172 CORPORATE PLAN 2017 - 2021 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Members received a report containing outcomes of an exercise to identify the key priorities with the corporate plan. It was noted that the aims and objectives within the plan hadn't changed, but this exercise added detail of how these would be achieved.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

173 OFF STREET PARKING PLACES ORDER - VARIATION OF CHARGING TIMES

Consideration was given to the proposal to vary the Off Street Parking Places Order to provide 133 spaces prior to 8.30am to support residents where there is limited on street parking and 264 free parking spaces after 3pm to support Hinckley town centre. It was noted that the costs would be funded from the special expenses area budget.

RESOLVED – the report be supported and RECOMMENDED to Council subject to comments of the Hinckley Area Committee.

174 OFF STREET CAR PARKING ORDER - HOUSING LAND

The Scrutiny Commission received a report which recommended amendments to the Off Street Parking Places Order to control parking on designated HBBC housing land. It was explained that distress had been caused to residents in Westfield Court, Castle Court and Royal Court residents car parks due to nuisance parking and in one case an ambulance with a patient on board had been blocked in. It was noted that consultation would take place with residents on the best way of controlling parking before the variation being made.

On a separate matter, the issue of parking problems in rural areas was raised and it was hoped that the particular problems around schools may be helped when the pavement parking legislation is implemented. It was highlighted that many cars leave their engines running, which was in breach of legislation implemented in 2017.

RESOLVED – the report be welcomed and RECOMMENDED to Council.

(The Meeting closed at 8.30 pm)

CHAIRMAN