

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

25 MARCH 2021 AT 6.30 PM

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

Cllr JMT Collett, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr SM Gibbens, Cllr K Morrell, Cllr A Pendlebury,  
Cllr MC Sheppard-Bools and Cllr R Webber-Jones

Also in attendance: Councillor CM Allen, Councillor RG Allen, Councillor MB Cartwright,  
Councillor MA Cook and Councillor HG Williams

Officers in attendance: Matthew Bowers, Valerie Bunting, Bill Cullen, Malcolm Evans,  
Simon D Jones, Julie Kenny, Stephen Meynell, Rebecca Owen, Sharon Stacey and  
Ashley Wilson

677 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

It was noted that Councillor Ladkin would arrive late and Councillor Cope had sent apologies due to having technical issues.

678 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor M Crooks, seconded by Councillor Pendlebury and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February be confirmed as a correct record.

679 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

680 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY

Members received an annual update on delivery of affordable housing in the borough. During discussion, the following comments were made:

- Registered providers were more interested in sites offering 100% affordable as it gave them greater freedoms in how and where plan delivery
- There were different tenure types within the definition of affordable housing and registered providers tended to favour shared ownership
- The possibility of reducing the requirement for affordable housing where local need had been met
- Due to the need to statutory duties in relation to allocations, a local connection could not be applied to every settlement such as Hinckley and Burbage
- The table in the report took account of completed schemes only and not where permission had been granted but development had not commenced
- The authority was approximately 70% through the local plan period and had delivered 65% of the affordable housing needed but there was a lag from permission to build
- A delivery programme had been developed to ensure a long term structured strategy of affordable housing delivery

- The delay in development of the sustainable urban extensions had impacted delivery of affordable housing.

Councillor Ladkin entered the meeting at 6.40pm.

It was requested that a report be brought to the next meeting on the five year housing land supply including the sustainable urban extensions and progress on the local plan.

The chairman thanked officers for the report and the ongoing work to deliver affordable homes and asked that in future this annual report includes information on small rural sites where it was difficult to get RSLs on board and on how we can ensure we don't overburden rural communities that have already taken a large share of affordable housing and have met local need.

Councillor Pendlebury left the meeting at 7:15pm.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The report be noted and officers thanked for their hard work;
- (ii) A report be brought to the next meeting on the five year land supply and progress on the local plan.

681 ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY 2021 TO 2025

Consideration was given to the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021-2025 which had been through a period of consultation. It was noted that the strategy followed on from the previous edition which expired in 2020. The following points were noted:

- Responses to the consultation from businesses were included in the document
- The document followed the themes of the corporate plan and visions associated with those themes
- The action plan for the final year of the previous strategy was included.

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- An action plan would be created from the strategy once the strategy had been adopted
- The reference to young people in relation to skills and economy was welcomed
- The pandemic had had an impact on residents and activities would take place to support people and also the subsequent impact on businesses in the borough
- The document needed to be updated to reflect the fact that the UK had left the single market
- Concern about the amount of logistics developments as communities were suffering but not necessarily benefitting from the jobs created.

A member expressed concern about the sustainability of the town centre and in response it was noted that over 80% of businesses in Hinckley were independent and it was evident from the banking crisis and more recently that these had fared better in difficult economic climates. It was also noted that the Heritage Action Zone had secured investment for the town centre.

It was suggested that representatives from the logistics sector be invited to a future meeting to provide evidence relating to employment.

RESOLVED – the report be endorsed.

682 MASTERPLAN FOR LAND SOUTH OF STATION ROAD, MARKET BOSWORTH

The Scrutiny Commission received a report on the masterplan for land south of Station Road, Market Bosworth which was an allocated site within the current Local Plan and the Market Bosworth Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that the masterplan would be a Supplementary Planning Document.

It was noted that the borough council had previously been involved but took a more proactive approach in 2019 with the commissioning of a masterplan when there had been no progress in relation to the site. Access to the site had been a potential issue but it was noted that, as a landowner on the site, the council could assist with that. The authority had been working with tenants on the site who were supportive of the scheme.

A member asked whether aspirations, for example relating to adoption of roads, could be included in such a document. In response it was noted that the local plan would probably be a more appropriate document for such matters as the SPD would be a material consideration rather than a policy.

Concern was expressed about the noise impact from the railway on residents of the new properties. In response it was noted that in the masterplan the commercial units were indicated closer to the railway and would act as a noise buffer to residential properties.

Councillor Gibbens left the meeting at 8pm.

With regard to the authority's investment in the masterplan, it was noted that the biggest cost had been officer time, but that a consultant had been procured to undertake the masterplanning in agreement with the church commissioners and that the costs would be offset once the development deal had been agreed.

It was noted that the majority of commercial tenants were on long term leases and would need to be compensated. If a developer wished to take on the site with tenants they would need to compensate, whereas if we were to hand over the site with a clear title, we would need to compensate the tenants but the land value would be adjusted to take account of this. A separate report on any land disposal would need to be prepared and considered by members at the appropriate time.

The ward councillor thanked officers for bringing the plan forward and reported that the parish council and residents were also supportive, particularly as residents had voted for development on the site in the Neighbourhood Plan.

In relation to the timescale for the plan, it was noted that it would be taken to the next meeting of Council and would become a material consideration thereafter.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and endorsed.

683 URGENT ITEM: REMOTE MEETINGS

The Monitoring Officer reported that notification had just been received that the government would not be extending the legislation to allow remote meetings, so arrangements would be made for returning to meetings in the Hub.

684 MATTERS FROM WHICH THE PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED

On the motion of Councillor Ladkin seconded by Councillor Crooks, it was

RESOLVED – in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

685 HINCKLEY LEISURE CENTRE - UPDATE

The Scrutiny Commission received an update on the impact of Covid-19 on the operation of Hinckley Leisure Centre.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

(The Meeting closed at 8.43 pm)

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CHAIRMAN