

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

28 JANUARY 2013 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: MR MB CARTWRIGHT - MAYOR
MRS L HODGKINS – DEPUTY MAYOR

Mr RG Allen, Mr JG Bannister, Mr PR Batty, Mr Bessant,
Mr DC Bill MBE, Mr CW Boothby, Mr SL Bray, Mrs T Chastney,
Mr DS Cope, Mr DM Gould, Mr PAS Hall, Mrs WA Hall, Mr MS Hulbert,
Mr DW Inman, Mr C Ladkin, Mr MR Lay, Mr KWP Lynch, Mr R Mayne,
Mr JS Moore, Mr K Morrell, Mr MT Mullaney, Mr K Nichols,
Mr LJP O'Shea, Mrs H Smith, Mrs S Sprason, Miss DM Taylor,
Mr R Ward and Ms BM Witherford

Officers in attendance: Steve Atkinson, Katherine Bennett, Bill Cullen, Louisa Horton,
Julie Kenny, Sanjiv Kohli and Rebecca Owen

344 PRAYERS

Reverend Louise Corke offered prayer.

345 PRESENTATIONS

A presentation was made to Sue and Jim Houghton who had won the “Unsung Heroes”
award at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Event.

346 APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Camamile, Crooks, Richards and
Sutton.

347 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER AND 18 DECEMBER 2012

On the motion of Councillor Nichols, seconded by Councillor Cope, it was

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meetings held on 13 November and 18
December 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

348 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Boothby declared a pecuniary interest in item 12 and an interest in
accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 in items 13 and
15.

Councillors Allen, Smith and Sprason declared a pecuniary interest in item 12.

349 MAYORS' COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported a busy Christmas period.

350 PETITIONS

The Leader announced that he had received a petition regarding parking in the Coventry
Road area, Hinckley, to be sent to Leicestershire County Council.

351 QUESTIONS

The following questions had been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 11.1:

- (a) Question received from Councillor Smith and addressed to the Leader of the Council

“Radically altered shopping habits and a much changed retail environment is putting great pressure on high streets and town centres throughout the country. The Town Centre Partnership in Hinckley has worked well with the Borough and County councils to try to boost local trade but our area is not immune from the difficulties affecting the retail sector so what measures over the next year or so will the Council be taking to promote Hinckley as an attractive shopping choice?”

Response from Councillor Bray

“Thank you for your question Councillor Smith.

You are correct in that the Council works very closely and successfully with its Town Centre partners. Numerous measures are being planned to assist in ensuring Hinckley town centre remains a vibrant place to visit and shop. These include:

- The continued development of the Loyalty Card Scheme which encourages local spend – over 4500 participate.
- £20k external funding has recently been secured via Portas and LCC for online and social media training and new business support.
- A dynamic events calendar has been produced and distributed aimed at increasing footfall – 54,000 participants in 2012
- The Council is working alongside traders who stand on our Markets with the aim to sustain and grow its excellent reputation
- The Business Improvement District Team continues to offer an excellent service to local stakeholders
- Car parking fees have been reduced at certain times encouraging easier and more affordable access to shoppers.

Please be assured that Town Centre partners are working collaboratively to maximise opportunities.

I can also confirm that from April 1st we will be cutting the bottom two tariffs short stay parking charges in an effort to boost the numbers of people visiting the town.”

- (b) Question received from Councillor Bessant and addressed to the Leader of the Council

“Would the Leader of the Council please update Members on the status of the Bus Station redevelopment? Can he especially confirm to Members that the Administration is still on track to deliver the redevelopment exactly as he has promised to the people of this Borough?”

Response from Councillor Bray

“Thank you Councillor Bessant for your question.

As you will be aware, the Council resolved to amend the Development Agreement which it has with Tin Hat Regeneration Partnership at its meeting in November 2012. The reason explained for this was that following discussions with the Developer, it had become clear that due to the challenging economic climate, the most effective way of delivering the development would be in two stages, the initial stage being the food store, the Cinema, the family restaurants and bus station and public realm.

Following that decision, Sainsbury's have been considering the impact of the changes proposed by Tin Hat. These matters are still under discussion between all parties with a view to securing the most positive outcome. I have requested that Officers bring back a report to Council once they have clarity over any further changes to the phasing and delivery timetable."

As a supplementary question, Councillor Bessant asked for more specific information on timescales. In response, the Leader stated that he would seek to have an item on the agenda for the next Council meeting if possible.

352 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

In presenting his position statement, the Leader outlined the busy forthcoming Executive agenda, the recommendation to reduce the car parking charges in Hinckley Town Centre, and the work being prepared on the 2013/14 budget.

353 MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON 8 NOVEMBER & 20 DECEMBER 2012

The minutes of the previous Scrutiny Commission meetings were noted.

354 CITY DEALS

Members received a report which informed them of the second wave of City Deals and of the invitation to be part of the Coventry and Leicester City Deals. Members welcomed the report and reiterated the need to improve skills provision locally. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bill and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) the invitation to be part of the Coventry and Leicester City Deals be noted;
- (ii) the expressions of interest to Government for the Coventry & Warwickshire City Deal and the Leicester & Leicestershire City Deal be endorsed;
- (iii) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, or their representatives, to negotiate details of the final 'City Deal(s)' on behalf of the authority, and to report back to Council in due course, should either or both expressions of interest be confirmed as successful in February 2013.

Councillor Taylor entered the meeting at 7.15pm.

355 DECC LOCAL AUTHORITY FUNDING COMPETITION

Members were informed of the award by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) of £3,092,600 to the seven district councils of Leicestershire and Rutland

County Council, for the Green Deal Pioneer Places Fund and the Fuel Poverty Fund. It was reported that this was the second highest award in the country, and also that HBBC was leading on the Leicestershire project. It was moved by Councillor Gould, seconded by Councillor Mullaney and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) the achievement of the Private Sector Housing team in submitting an ambitious and successful bid for funding to the DECC on behalf of the district councils in Leicestershire and Rutland County Council be acknowledged;
- (ii) a supplementary income and expenditure budget for the value of the grant and the payments to partners be endorsed, and a £380,000 expenditure budget for the council's element of the spend be noted;
- (iii) Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council be endorsed as the accountable body for the whole project.

356 TENANCY STRATEGY & TENANCY POLICY

Having declared a pecuniary interest in this item, Councillors Allen, Boothby, Smith and Sprason left the meeting at 7.24pm.

Members were presented with the Tenancy Strategy & Tenancy Policy which had been updated in light of new obligations and freedoms under the Localism Act 2011. It was moved by Councillor Mullaney, seconded by Councillor Bray and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) the adoption of the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy be approved;
- (ii) the consultation which had been undertaken on the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy be noted;
- (iii) the unchanged policy with respect to flexible tenancies be noted;
- (iv) the intention not to convert housing stock into affordable rent be noted.

Councillor Allen, Smith & Sprason returned to the meeting at this juncture.

357 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS REVIEW

Members were presented with proposed changes to the Financial & Contract Procedure Rules. These had been updated to reflect changes in legislation, processes, job titles, committee structure and minor alterations recommended by Internal Audit. On the motion of Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – the changes to the Financial and Contract Procedure Rules be approved.

358 LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT

Members received a report which set out the Council's proposed responses to the measures contained in the Local Government Finance Bill, the proposed Local Council Tax Support Scheme and recommended delegations of power to allow implementation of the proposals within the required timescales.

During discussion, Members expressed concern regarding the changes initiated by Government, including those affecting parish councils and the setting of their precept and the effect of the changes on the poorest people in society. Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bill, proposed an amendment by way of an additional resolution to make representations to Government regarding these concerns including data to support the representations. The amendment was supported without debate. It was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) the Local Scheme of Council Tax Support be approved;
- (ii) the proposed Discretionary Discount Fund be approved;
- (iii) the proposals to take advantage of new powers set out in the Local Government Finance Bill to vary statutory exemptions from Council Tax in respect of vacant and unoccupied dwellings be approved;
- (iv) the financial support offered by major preceptors in respect of the proposed Discretionary Council Tax Discount Fund and the additional administrative costs that would be incurred by the Council under the proposed new arrangements be noted;
- (v) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction) in consultation with the relevant Executive Member to make all detailed arrangements required to implement the proposed local scheme of Council Tax Support, the proposed Discretionary Council Tax Discount Fund and the variations to statutory exemptions from Council Tax;
- (vi) the Council continues to make strong representations to Government regarding its very real concerns about the effects of the scheme, immediately on those on lower incomes and, in the longer term, on the funding for local parish councils, especially those smaller parishes in rural areas.

At the conclusion of this item, Councillor Boothby returned to the meeting.

359 ASBESTOS TREATMENT SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET

Members were informed of a situation which had arisen during the course of work being carried out to some local authority housing where the risk of asbestos had been identified in the loft space of a small number of British Iron and Steel Federation Non-Traditional houses. It was reported that work had been commenced as a matter of urgency on the instruction of the Chief Executive, and a supplementary budget was required to continue carrying out the work, including to those properties that had been sold under the 'Right to Buy' scheme.

Some Members were concerned about the precedent that may be set by paying for works to privately owned property, and officers confirmed that assurance had been given that it would not set a precedent, but that Members had to weigh this up against the moral responsibility for the matter.

It was moved by Councillor Moore and seconded by Councillor Allen that the item be deferred to await further information on the timescales, number of houses in question that had been sold under the Right to Buy and then re-sold again (and therefore would have had a survey), and the possibility of offering an interest-free loan to the homeowner. Following a response that some of the work had had to commence due to the urgent nature, and also explanation of the risk of neighbouring houses with shared roof space but in separate ownership and only one having the asbestos removed, Councillors Moore and Allen withdrew their motion.

It was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray and

RESOLVED – the supplementary budget of £130,000 from the Housing Revenue Account (responsive repairs) to enable all of the required works to be carried out be approved.

360 LEICESTERSHIRE REVENUE & BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP BUDGET 2013/14

Members received a report which sought approval of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's contribution to the 2013/14 budget for the Leicestershire Revenue and Benefits Partnership. Members highlighted the partnership as a good example of partnership working and suggested that an item be brought to the Scrutiny Commission on it. Some Members expressed concern about the impact on the Revenue & Benefits team when the universal credits scheme is introduced in 2014. On the motion of Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's contribution to the Leicestershire Revenues and Benefits Partnership of £57,350 for 2013/14 be approved.

361 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AMENDMENT

Members received a report which proposed a revision to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy in light of receipt of Regional Growth Funding. It was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray and unanimously

RESOLVED – the amendment to the Treasury Management strategy to allow up to £12million of Regional Growth Funding to be held with the Council's own bank for a maximum of three months be approved.

Councillors Batty and Hodgkins were absent for this item.

362 SHARED ICT PARTNERSHIP WITH MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Members were presented with a proposal to share ICT services with Melton Borough Council. Members welcomed the opportunity to create revenue, but asked for more information on the profit for the provider of our ICT services and the contribution to this Council's funds and the increase in workload for our staff and whether this was viable. In response it was explained that this meant extending the contract with Steria, but that we benefited from having introduced a new partner and from Steria increasing the size of their team and therefore the cover provided. On the motion of Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray it was unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council accepts the delegation of the ICT function from Melton Borough Council under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972;
- (ii) once delegated, the ICT service for Melton Borough Council be provided by Steria Limited;
- (iii) the formation of an Officer Board for management of the shared ICT service consisting of the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction) of this Council, the Chief Executive of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council, the Chief Executive and Corporate Transformation Manager of Blaby District Council, and the Chief Executive and Head of Central Services of Melton Borough Council be approved;
- (iv) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Direction) to agree and implement the shared ICT service arrangement and to accept delegation from Melton Borough Council.

363 MOTIONS ON NOTICE

It was noted that the motion submitted by Councillor Crooks would be deferred to the next meeting.

(The Meeting closed at 8.30 pm)

MAYOR