

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

26 OCTOBER 2023 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert - Chair
Cllr MJ Surtees and Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chair
Cllr CM Allen (for Cllr MA Cook), Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr C Harris,
Cllr J Moore, Cllr LJ Mullaney (for Cllr DS Cope), Cllr A Pendlebury and
Cllr BR Walker (for Cllr A Weightman)

Also in attendance: Councillor DT Glenville (as member of Finance & Performance Scrutiny) and Councillor KWP Lynch (as Executive member).

Officers in attendance: Chris Brown, Lesley Keal, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen and Ashley Wilson

157. **Apologies and substitutions**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cook, Cope and Weightman, with the following substitutions authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10:

Councillor C Allen for Councillor Cook
Councillor Cope for Councillor Mullaney
Councillor Weightman for Councillor Walker.

158. **Minutes**

It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2023 be confirmed and signed by the chair.

159. **Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

160. **Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28**

Consideration was given to the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) for 2023/24 to 2027/28. During discussion, the following points were noted:

- More detail on the housing revenue account would be included in the HRA budget and investment plan which would come before members
- A business rates reset by the government would impact the MTFS, but was not expected until 2026/27 at the earliest and would lead to savings and new income being needed over two years of £1.9m if transitional relief of £7.7m was awarded by government in addition to this amount
- It was anticipated that homelessness would be a recurring pressure due to the cost of living crisis, but that it would ease in later years

- It was hoped that the pressure on the planning budget would ease if planning fee increases were implemented.

Councillor Moore entered the meeting at 6.53pm.

It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Williams and

RESOLVED – the report be endorsed for consideration by Council.

161. **Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022-23**

Members received a copy of the infrastructure funding statement for 2022/23. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- Concern that the formula for calculating the contribution for healthcare didn't provide sufficient funding to undertake improvements once plans had been prepared
- More detail of formulas were provided when an appealed application was upheld and this could be shared with members
- Whilst reporting to the Scrutiny Commission was undertaken annually, members could request information on specific contributions in the meantime
- Parish councils were updated twice a year on contributions within their parish area
- The most common use of contributions to sustainable travel was for bus passes, however concern was expressed about the reduction in bus services in some areas and it was noted that bus passes were only taken up by an average of 10% of residents in the new developments
- Sustainable travel contributions could be used for supported transport, but the need would have to be clearly evidenced.

Officers were thanked for their hard work on securing and monitoring contributions.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

162. **Adoption of new developments - Scrutiny review**

Following requests during the work programming process to undertake a scrutiny review into adoption of new developments, consideration was given to the key areas for inclusion in the review. The following aspects of adoption were discussed:

- Sustainable drainage systems and balancing ponds, and the reticence of parish councils to adopt them
- Lack of maintenance by management companies despite charging residents a management fee
- Adoption of roads and maintenance of those not adopted
- Maintenance of public open space.

In relation to balancing ponds, it was noted that Higham on the Hill had taken one on and the borough council had also done the same, so parish councils could draw on that experience if they were considering taking on a balancing pond.

It was suggested that a task & finish group be set up to undertake the review and agreed that the review covers open space, adoption of roads and the role of management companies.

RESOLVED – a scoping report be brought back to the next meeting.

163. Scrutiny Commission Work Programme

In considering the work programme, it was suggested that the changes to food waste collections to move them to every two weeks instead of weekly. In response, it was noted that this would come forward as part of the normal reporting processes.

The work programme was noted.

164. Minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny

The minutes of the last Finance & Performance Scrutiny were noted.

(The Meeting closed at 7.47 pm)

CHAIR