

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

25 JULY 2024 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert - Chair
Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chair
Cllr DS Cope, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr CE Green (for Cllr C Gibbens), Cllr C Harris,
Cllr J Moore, Cllr A Pendlebury and Cllr M Simmons

Also in attendance: Councillor MB Cartwright

Officers in attendance: Simon D Jones, Rebecca Owen, Madeline Shellard,
Sharon Stacey and Ashley Wilson

80. **Apologies and substitutions**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gibbens, Surtees and Weightman with the substitution of Councillor Green for Councillor Gibbens authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

81. **Minutes**

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 9 May be confirmed as a correct record.

82. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Lambert stated that he was vice-chair of Efficiency East Midlands who had been engaged by the council in delivery of the HRA investment programme.

83. **Scrutiny Commission Work Programme**

In relation to the programmed review on bus services, it was confirmed that there had been some progress in relation to the funding awaited by Leicestershire County Council so the report could be timetabled soon. It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED – the work programme be approved.

84. **HRA investment strategy**

The HRA investment strategy 2024 to 2028 was presented to the Scrutiny Commission. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- The importance of maximising income
- The change in the way the HRA was financed which led to the 2012 HRA subsidy buyout

- The requirement to bring stock up to the required level which contributed to the need for decarbonisation work
- The strong position of the authority due to the level and depth of information available
- Decisions were yet to be made on how to finance new debt.

It was noted that the strategy would be presented to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel before being presented to Council for approval and tenants would be updated via the newsletter.

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

RESOLVED –

- (i) The housing revenue account investment priorities and the underpinning HRA financial assumptions be noted;
- (ii) The HRA investment strategy 2024 – 2028 be RECOMMENDED to Council.

85. Cultural Strategy 2024-28

Consideration was given to the Cultural Strategy 2024 – 2028. In response to a member’s question, it was reported that cultural services worked closely with the planning policy team to feed into the local plan process in relation to sport and play, and the need for open space and pitches. The success of events was praised but it was asked that more consideration be given to providing events in the rural areas. It was, however, noted that support was provided to parish councils to enable them to put on events. It was moved by Councillor Pendlebury, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED – the Cultural Strategy 2024 to 2028 be supported and RECOMMENDED to Executive.

86. Rural Strategy 2024-28

Members received the Rural Strategy for 2024 to 2028. Discussion ensued on the need for community transport given the lack of public transport in the rural areas. It was suggested that whilst Barwell, Burbage and Earl Shilton were covered by the strategy, they did not have the same issues as the rest of the parishes, such as lack of public transport, so should be separated into a strategy for the urban area to ensure that the voice of the rural parishes was not lost. It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Williams and

RESOLVED – the Rural Strategy 2024 to 2028 be RECOMMENDED to Executive.

87. Scrutiny review: digital poverty and cashless society

The Scrutiny Commission considered the style and scope of the forthcoming review into digital poverty and cashless society. It was suggested that the following points be added to the scope:

- Software and hardware obsolescence
- Internet access for education
- Preparedness for future withdrawal of services as the number of people who don't use digital services reduces.

It was suggested that the review be undertaken by the full Scrutiny Commission rather than by a task & finish group.

The chair agreed to finalise the scope and programme the review taking into account the capacity of members given the other ongoing and forthcoming reviews.

88. Minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny

The minutes of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny meetings held on 13 May and 8 July 2024 were received for information.

89. Minutes of Housing Task & Finish Group

The minutes of the Housing Task & Finish Group held on 8 May were received for information.

(The Meeting closed at 8.20 pm)

CHAIR