

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMISSION AND FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

30 JANUARY 2025 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert - Chair
Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chair

Cllr RG Allen (for Cllr MJ Surtees), Cllr DS Cope, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr DT Glenville, Cllr C Harris, Cllr J Moore, Cllr M Simmons, Cllr BE Sutton and Cllr A Weightman

Officers in attendance: Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Sharon Stacey, Julie Stay and Ashley Wilson

356. **Apologies and substitutions**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Pendlebury, Smith and Surtees with the substitution of Councillor R Allen for Councillor Surtees authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

357. **Minutes**

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 12 December be confirmed as a correct record.

358. **Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

359. **Peer review**

The Chief Executive updated members on the extremely positive feedback arising from the Local Government Association (LGA) corporate peer challenge which took place in December. It was noted that the final report was awaited and an action plan would then be drafted. Disappointment was expressed about the timing of the Devolution White Paper announcement around local government reorganisation only a week after receiving such a positive review, resulting in lack of certainty about the future of the authority and impact on employees and members.

360. **Pay policy statement**

Consideration was given to the pay policy statement for 2025/26. It was noted that the gender pay gap had increased slightly but that this was the result of a culmination of factors and was not a cause for concern, however it would be monitored. It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The continuing positive reduction in the gap between the top and the median average earner be noted;
- (ii) The slight increase in the gender pay gap be noted;
- (iii) The HBBC pay policy statement be endorsed and RECOMMENDED to Council for approval.

361. Scrutiny review: healthcare in Hinckley & Bosworth

Representatives of the health sector provided a presentation on different aspects relating to health including:

- The local primary care networks and GPs including availability of appointments and enhanced access
- Primary care infrastructure investment including working with the local planning authority to prepare for increased demand due to housing development, the local plan and section 106 agreements
- Challenges around NHS dental services
- The community diagnostic centre currently being built in Hinckley
- The future of Hinckley Hospital.

It was suggested that an update on the community health & wellbeing plan be provided by council officers to a future meeting.

362. Budget reports

- (a) Medium term financial strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28

Members were updated on the MTFs position for 2024/25 to 2027/28. Concern was expressed about the cost of local government reorganisation and also the officer time required for making the necessary arrangements which may impact service provision. Members highlighted the impact of the increase in national insurance and it was noted that details for compensating authorities were not yet known.

- (b) General fund budget 2025/26

The Scrutiny Commission noted the proposed general fund budget for 2025/26 and the pressures set out in the report.

- (c) Housing revenue account budget 2025/26

The housing revenue account (HRA) budget was presented to members.

- (d) Fees and charges 2025/26

The proposed scale of fees and charges was considered by the Scrutiny Commission.

(e) Capital programme 2024/25 to 2027/28 and capital strategy

During discussion on the capital programme, it was confirmed that the laptop replacement programme related only to those laptops issued in 2021/22. Implications on any successor authority of borrowing was raised and in response it was stated that borrowing was possible due to being underborrowed, but not for investment purposes.

(f) Treasury management strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28 and prudential indicators 2024/25 to 2027/28

Consideration was given to the treasury management strategy and prudential indicators for 2024/25 to 2027/28.

363. Scrutiny Commission Work Programme

The following amendments to the work programme were noted:

- The terms of reference for the digital poverty review would be brought to the June meeting
- The public transport review would be deferred to the June meeting, subject to Leicestershire County Council's timetable for their review
- The final report of the review of adoption of infrastructure would be brought to the September meeting.

364. Minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny

The minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny held on 16 December were received for information.

(The Meeting closed at 9.25 pm)

CHAIR