

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

13 MARCH 2025 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert - Chair
Cllr MJ Surtees and Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chair
Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr J Moore, Cllr A Pendlebury, Cllr M Simmons and Cllr A Weightman

Also in attendance: Councillor MT Mullaney and Councillor R Webber-Jones

Officers in attendance: Rachel Burgess, Amie Carroll, Amy Casey, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Paul Scragg and Sharon Stacey

399. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cope and Harris.

400. Minutes

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January be confirmed as a correct record.

401. Declarations of interest

Councillor Pendlebury declared a registrable interest in the cost of living update as owner of a property which would soon be for let within the private sector but as the content of the report did not directly relate to her disclosable pecuniary interest, she would remain in the meeting.

Councillor Crooks declared an other registrable interest in the parish & community initiative fund as a member of Newbold Verdon Parish Council which was an applicant for funding.

Councillor Surtees stated that she neighboured the site in Desford that was recommended for funding from the parish & community initiative fund.

402. Cineworld Hinckley

Having received apologies from the representative from Cineworld, this item was deferred.

403. Voluntary and community sector partnership and commissioning update

Members received an update on achievements arising from the voluntary and community sector partnership arrangements. A representative from the Pierce Perspective, a recipient of funding under the arrangements, attended to inform members of the work that had been achieved as a result of the funding.

Members suggested it would be helpful to hear how many hours of work had been put into the voluntary and community sector in comparison to the number of people who had benefitted from the work.

Councillor Webber-Jones entered the meeting at 6.45pm.

In response to a member's question, it was noted that the voluntary sector in Hinckley & Bosworth was thriving, but there were challenges such as obtaining funding, for which support was provided.

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

RESOLVED – the impact, outcomes and contribution of the voluntary and community sector be acknowledged and endorsed.

404. Children & Young People update

The Scrutiny Commission was updated on work undertaken in relation to children and young people. During discussion, reference was made to safeguarding processes, therapeutic programmes, and the youth conference. Officers were thanked for their work with young people.

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

RESOLVED – the report and work undertaken be acknowledged and endorsed.

405. Cost of Living update

Members received a report on activities undertaken by the authority in response to the cost of living crisis. Discussion ensued on changes to the foodbank referral process to avoid duplication and relationships with supermarkets.

In response to a member's question about energy efficiency measures in council properties, it was noted that savings for tenants were being monitored but it was too early to quantify them, and tenants had mentioned that their homes were warmer whilst also contributing to the decarbonisation of housing stock.

Reasons for increased demand for housing were discussed and members were reminded of the work of the task and finish group which looked into housing and homelessness which found no issues with the council's processes but recommended lobbying government in relation to various matters which were national issues. The impact of the right to buy scheme was also highlighted.

It was suggested that the scope of the forthcoming review of housing associations could be revised to look at how housing associations could help alleviate current pressures.

In relation to the reference to the recent peer challenge within the recommendations, members were informed that the final report was awaited.

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

RESOLVED –

- (i) The extensive work undertaken to support residents affected by the cost of living crisis be acknowledged and endorsed
- (ii) The increase in demand upon services due to the cost of living crisis be acknowledged.

406. Parish & Community Initiative Fund

Consideration was given to the recommended allocation of the parish and Hinckley community initiative fund and the community equipment grant along with proposed amendments to the grant scheme. It was noted that the amendments would provide greater flexibility. It was moved by Councillor Gibbens, seconded by Councillor Surtees and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The funding allocations of £82,990 as outlined in the report be endorsed;
- (ii) The proposed amendments to the community equipment grant be supported.

407. Scrutiny Commission Work Programme

In considering the work programme, the chair referred to the recent inquorate meeting of the task and finish group looking at adoption of infrastructure and asked that members respond to availability requests to maximise attendance.

The following changes to the work programme were agreed:

- The scoping report for the digital poverty review would be deferred to the September meeting due to the adoption of infrastructure review being delayed
- The final report of the adoption of infrastructure review be rescheduled for November
- The overview & scrutiny annual report be added to the September meeting
- The budget strategy be added to the November meeting.

In response to a member's question, it was suggested that an update on the crematorium project may be available later in the year. It was also agreed that confirmation would be sought from the Chief Executive on when an update on the local government reorganisation would be forthcoming.

408. Forward plan of Executive and Council decisions

The forward plan was noted.

(The Meeting closed at 7.42 pm)

CHAIR