

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION

6 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert – Chair
Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chair
Cllr DS Cope, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr C Harris and Cllr A Pendlebury

Officers in attendance: Chris Brown, Lesley Keal, Julie Kenny, Jacqueline Puffett, Rebecca Owen, Madeline Shellard, Sharon Stacey and Ashley Wilson

216. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Moore, Simmons, Surtees and Webber-Jones.

217. Minutes

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September be confirmed as a correct record.

218. Declarations of interest

Councillor Pendlebury stated that she was on the board of Hinckley Homeless Group but this did not constitute an interest in the report on the supplementary income request for homelessness demands and temporary accommodation.

219. Scrutiny Commission Work Programme

The chair reported that he had been consulted on an urgent exempt report for the meeting of the Executive on 24 September in accordance with paragraph 16 of the access to information procedure rules to enable an exemption to contract procedure rules for works to the new depot and had supported the need for urgent decision.

The additional meeting to be held on 18 December was highlighted.

It was noted that the list of future items created at the workshop in July 2023 would be revisited and consideration would be given to extending the work programme beyond 2027 to provide a basis for the successor council's scrutiny activity.

A member asked whether outcomes from motions to Council could be reported to the Scrutiny Commission. In response it was noted that whilst these were available to members via SharePoint, consideration would be given to the Scrutiny Commission's role in the process.

The work programme was noted.

220. Infrastructure funding statement

Members received the infrastructure funding statement (IFS) for the 2024/25 financial year. In response to members' questions, the following points were noted:

- No monies had been clawed back during the period
- Affordable housing delivery against targets would be covered in the relevant annual report to the following meeting
- Commuted sums were considered where a developer was unable to engage a registered provider.

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

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

221. Local Government Reorganisation proposal

The Scrutiny Commission received a presentation on the draft local government reorganisation (LGR) proposal produced by the Leicestershire districts and Rutland County Council. The proposal recommended a three-unitary model which would build on positive work currently being undertaken in relation to partnership working, prevention and economic distinctiveness. The proposal would bring financial efficiencies and sustainability.

Members thanked officers for the work that had gone into the proposal and presentation and acknowledged the challenges in bringing the authorities together to create such a detailed piece of work. They were pleased to see the Strategic Mayoral Authority mentioned.

In response to members' questions, the following points were noted:

- The term of office of councillors appointed to the new authority would be four years
- Some charges such as council tax and the green waste service may increase due to harmonisation and HBBC currently having one of the lowest charges for these
- Future funding and the impact of achieving the predicted surplus on the funding level was unknown
- Whilst some rationalisation of office space may be required, local hubs to facilitate public access to services would be necessary
- Transformation and disaggregation costs had been modelled
- The proposed councillor to elector ratio followed boundary commission guidance and was similar to other authorities that had been through LGR.

Concern was expressed about the potential for loss of officer knowledge, increases in some charges, and the lack of need for reorganisation. Members were supportive of the prevention model and that the proposal kept a closeness with communities and residents.

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

RESOLVED – the report be endorsed and comments be reported to Council and the Executive.

222. Supplementary income request - Homelessness demands and temporary accommodation

Members were updated on significant pressures facing local authorities nationally and locally in relation to homelessness and temporary accommodation which had led to a supplementary budget request to meet escalating demands. In response to members' questions, the following points were noted:

- The rates of 27% in temporary accommodation due to domestic abuse was similar nationally and may have increased due to more work having been undertaken to encourage reporting
- There had been an increase in families needing temporary accommodation
- The budget and number of cases had increased disproportionately which was due to increased charges, people staying in temporary accommodation for longer periods, and the increase in families in temporary accommodation.

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

RESOLVED –

- (i) The request for a supplementary income allocation of £900,000 for 2025/26 be supported;
- (ii) The significant pressures facing local authorities be noted;
- (iii) The work being progressed to prevent reliance on nightly-paid accommodation such as B&Bs be noted.

223. Scrutiny review: adoption of infrastructure associated with housing development - final report

The final report of the task & finish group's review of adoption of infrastructure associated with housing development was presented to the Scrutiny Commission.

Members discussed delays in the adoption process, constraints for parish councils in adopting open space and the need to work with developers at an early stage.

Officers were thanked for supporting the review and ensuring relevant external attendees engaged with the task & finish group.

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

RESOLVED – the report and its recommendations be presented to the Executive.

224. Forward plan of Executive and Council decisions

It was noted that the reports on the forward plan from the housing service would be brought to the Scrutiny Commission prior to decision.

225. Minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny

The minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny on 15 September were received for information.

(The Meeting closed at 7.53 pm)

CHAIR