



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING

Scrutiny Commission	11 August 2016
Council	6 September 2016

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

EFFICIENCY PLAN

Report of Chief Executive

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Council approval of the Efficiency Plan, due to be submitted to Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by 14 October 2016, delegating the decision on any amendments arising from Government announcements about new Homes Bonus/suggestions by the Peer Challenge team to the Leader, Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer, should that occur before the submission deadline..

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council approves the Efficiency Plan for submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.
- 2.1 That, should announcements regarding revisions to the New Homes Bonus scheme be made before the 14 October submission deadline and/or comments be made by the Peer Challenge Team following their on site visit later in September, appropriate revisions to the Plan be delegated to the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 On 10 March 2016, the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government invited all Councils in England to undertake a formal engagement with Government, in the form of an Efficiency Plan, which would secure a multi-year settlement for Revenue Support Grant (RSG). Whilst it is known that RSG is reducing (to nil) over the four year period of such an arrangement, an agreement would ensure a 'lock-in' of funding for those participating Councils; thus giving stability and security, at least on that funding stream.

- 3.2 The development of a robust Efficiency Plan will provide the opportunity for the Council to set a clear direction for that four year period, support our ability to strengthen our financial management and form the basis for improved collaborative working with local partners, whilst reforming the way local services are provided and funded.
- 3.3 The final draft of the Efficiency Plan is attached to this report. It is as complete as it can be, given that we are expecting an announcement on the future regime for New Homes Bonus, following the national consultation in January this year. As this announcement will be material to how the Council budgets for the next four years, it is material to this Plan. In consequence, should that announcement be made before the submission date of 14 October (we are told that it will be towards the end of September), adjustments will be necessary to the Plan to make it comprehensive and up to date. It is suggested that such adjustments be delegated to the Leader, Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer. More detail on Business Rates will not be available prior to submission, as the consultation on the future arrangements are at a very early stage.
- 3.4 The document covers:
- Our Outcome Objectives
 - Foundations already in place
 - Future Challenges (as currently projected)
 - Our Four-Year Plan
 - How We Will Judge Success
- 3.5 Members of the *Scrutiny Commission* have considered an earlier draft of the Efficiency Plan and, whilst giving it support for its content and clarity, requested that there be added more information on the Council's future aspirations and intentions over the four years covered by the Plan. That request has been addressed in the revised version now put before the Council.
- 3.6 This final draft has been submitted to the Peer Challenge Team, who will be 'on site' for their review on 21 to 23 September, with a request that they give their independent consideration to the Plan and, in the light of their visit, advise of any changes which might be worthwhile.
4. EXEMPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE RULES
- 4.1 This report is to be taken in open session at the Scrutiny Commission and at Council.
5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [AW]
- 5.1 Financial implications are within the body of the efficiency plan. We need to agree an efficiency plan and submit it to The DCLG to secure the income streams set out in the Final local government finance settlement for 2016/17. Failure to agree an efficiency plan would mean being assessed for funding on an annual basis in future settlements, which in turn would increase the level of uncertainty in forecasting our future income streams.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [AR]

- 6.1 As set out in the introduction to the Efficiency Plan, the Council is responding to the Statutory Guidance on the Flexible use of capital Receipts, issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in March 2016.
- 6.2 In accordance with s.15(1)(a) of the Local government Act 2003, the Council has a statutory obligation to have due regard to this guidance and the Efficiency Plan has been drawn up in accordance with this guidance.

7. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Efficiency Plan seeks to meet all the Council aims, but particularly that of 'Providing value for money and proactive services'

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The draft has been submitted to Unison for their comments, which will be incorporated into the final submission to the Council. The report has been considered by the Scrutiny Commission and an extract from the minutes is attached as an appendix.

9. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Not securing agreement to a robust Efficiency Plan will leave the Council potentially vulnerable to funding reductions from RSG in the next three years.	Adopt the Efficiency Plan and submit to Government by the due date. Seek views from the Peer Challenge Team later in September on the robustness and clarity of the Plan.	Chief Executive

10. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Efficiency Plan includes references to: service integration, estate and land opportunities, service transformation, and management/operational efficiencies. Along with taking advantage of some opportunities for capital investment, these will secure sustainability for the future of the Council's activities across the Borough and across different communities of interest.

10.2 Reference to the proposals relating to Funding for Parishes (elsewhere on this agenda) have been incorporated provisionally into the Plan and will extend the funding availability for more rural communities and their Parish Councils.

11. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data Protection implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: None

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