

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY
25 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Mr KWP Lynch - Chairman

Mr DC Bill MBE (for Miss DM Taylor), Mrs R Camamile, Mr DS Cope, Mrs H Smith, Mr R Ward and Mr HG Williams

Members in attendance: Councillor Mr MA Hall

Officers in attendance: Ilyas Bham, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Madeline Shellard, Sharon Stacey and Mark Tuff

143 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Taylor, with the substitution of Councillor Bill authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

144 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2017 be confirmed and signed by the chairman.

145 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this stage.

146 FRONT LINE SERVICE REVIEW: HOUSING

The frontline service review for housing was presented to members. Information was received in relation to housing options (including allocations), tenancy management, sheltered and supported housing and housing repairs, along with an overview in relation to the investment plan and changes made as a result of changing government policy. It was acknowledged that the customer base and type of issues dealt with by the team had changed over the years and officers had to deal with drug, alcohol and mental health issues, amongst others.

Councillor Ward entered the meeting at 6.32pm.

A member expressed concern that, despite hard work by officers and the police, perpetrators of anti social behaviour were not dealt with appropriately by the judicial system. It was felt that judges had more concern for the rights of the perpetrator than the impact of anti social behaviour on residents.

A member asked whether sub-letting of council properties was an issue, and in response it was noted that a previous government-funded exercise on tenancy fraud had shown that it was not a big problem in this area, although when allegations were received they were investigated and action taken.

Concern was expressed in relation to the maintenance of properties by tenants, particularly garden areas, and it was asked what powers existed to enforce maintenance. In response it was noted that a report on the subject had been requested for a future meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

In response to a member's question about adapted properties, it was explained that when an adapted property was being re-let, it was advertised with the adaptations in an attempt to match it to the needs of someone else on the waiting list. It was noted that for the most part it was bungalows and ground floor flats that had adaptations and these were easy to match to others in need of the same adaptations.

Members asked to be kept updated on whether the sale of high value voids was being withdrawn from the Housing & Planning Act. A more detailed report on housing repairs (the balance between services carried out by HBBC staff and by contractors) was requested to a future meeting.

147 DEBT WRITE OFFS

Members received a report outlining debts over £10,000 recommended for writing off. In response to a member's question, assurance was given that in the case of being unable to trace an absconded debtor, should information as to the whereabouts of the debtor be received in future, action would be taken. It was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Camamile and

RESOLVED – the report be RECOMMENDED to Executive for approval.

148 FINANCIAL OUTTURN JULY 2017/18

Members were presented with the quarter one financial outturn position. It was noted that the budget strategy would be brought to the next meeting.

149 BUSINESS RATES AND POOLING QUARTER 1 - 2017/18

Finance & Performance Scrutiny received an update on business rates performance from 1 April to 30 June 2017 and on pooling arrangements for 2017/18. It was noted that the business rates performance was positive but was regularly monitored as it was liable to fluctuate dramatically. In relation to pooling, it was noted that Leicestershire authorities were applying to the government to join a pilot scheme for 100% business rates retention.

150 PERFORMANCE & RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK QUARTER 1 2017/18

Members received the performance and risk management framework first quarter summary for 2017/18. It was noted that 13 of the 55 performance indicators were below target, as detailed in the report. It was reported that, despite increasing the number of services that were accessible online, Customer Services continued to be subject to an increased demand in phone calls and face to face contact which had led to a review of the service currently being undertaken.

In relation to the benchmarking aspect of the report, it was noted that these did not always compare like for like.

151 FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme for 2017/18 onwards. It was agreed that the housing repairs report requested earlier in the meeting be added to the work programme for the March meeting.

(The Meeting closed at 7.28 pm)

CHAIRMAN

