

# HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

## SCRUTINY COMMISSION

14 DECEMBER 2023 AT 6.30 PM

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

Officers in attendance: Daniel Britton, Chris Brown, Valerie Bunting, Rebecca Owen, Madeline Shellard and Sharon Stacey

### 210. **Apologies and substitutions**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cope and Harris, with the substitution of Councillor Simmons for Councillor Harris authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10. It was also noted that Councillor Moore would be arriving late.

### 211. **Minutes**

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

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 26 October be confirmed as a correct record.

### 212. **Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

### 213. **Economic Regeneration Strategy**

The Scrutiny Commission was updated on work undertaken over the previous twelve months to fulfil the aims of the Economic Regeneration Strategy. In response to members' questions, it was agreed that a full list of the 27 UK shared prosperity fund projects would be circulated to members. Officers were congratulated on their hard work. It was moved by Councillor Surtees, seconded by Councillor Gibbens and

RESOLVED – the work undertaken and outcomes achieved be noted and endorsed.

### 214. **Planning Appeals Report**

An update on planning appeals was provided.

Councillor Moore entered the meeting at 6.42pm.

During discussion, the following was discussed:

- Applying for appeal costs
- Implications of revisions to the NPPF
- The decreasing number of applications which had gone to appeal due to non-determination
- The difficulty in setting the budget for appeals as the number and costs couldn't be predicted
- A recent application for costs submitted by the council
- The importance of the Planning Policy Member Working Group to discuss matters relating to costs for appeals.

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

RESOLVED – the report be noted and the financial implications of planning appeals and the impact of planning appeals performance be acknowledged.

#### 215. **Affordable Housing Delivery**

Consideration was given to the annual position in relation to the delivery of affordable housing. The difficulty in engaging registered providers, particularly on smaller sites, was highlighted. The considerations when negotiating the type and tenure of housing were explained and Members thanked the Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer for her hard work and the progress made.

It was requested that the table on page 25 be amended in future to show the percentage of rural completions and of urban completions.

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

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

#### 216. **Scrutiny review: housing**

Members were presented with a high-level overview of housing issues and pressures facing residents and housing services at the council to inform a scrutiny review of an area of housing. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- The need to lobby government to make it easier to obtain stock
- The problems of the right to buy scheme resulting in the council losing properties without the receipts to replace them
- The need to lobby government to ease restrictions in order to prevent “bedroom tax”
- The importance of supporting families to prevent breakdown of relationships
- The number of empty homes outside of the council's control.

It was moved by Councillor Crooks and seconded by Councillor Gibbens that the scope for the review includes those listed at 3.3 in the report, with the addition of empty homes.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The scope for the scrutiny review be agreed as:
- Understand the pathways that people use to access housing and the barriers
  - Develop a strategy to increase the availability of private rented accommodation
  - Lobby government for more funding for affordable housing, in particular making it easier for councils to increase their own housing stock
  - Consideration of how empty homes can help with the housing shortage.
- (ii) The review take place by way of task & finish group, with group leaders being asked to nominate members.

**217. Scrutiny Commission Work Programme**

The work programme was received. It was noted that the scoping report on adoptions would come to the following meeting.

(The Meeting closed at 8.28 pm)

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CHAIR