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**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

Bill Cullen MBA (ISM), BA(Hons) MRTPI
Chief Executive

Date: 26 October 2020

To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor,

Please see overleaf a supplementary agenda for the meeting of the **COUNCIL** on **TUESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2020 at 6.30 pm.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Owen'.

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Manager

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

8. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

Welcome to our third virtual Council meeting this year which is a necessity due to the COVID pandemic and COVID safety restrictions.

TONIGHT'S AGENDA

You will note from the agenda that even with the challenges posed by COVID-19 we are able to continue to develop innovative projects and services. This is illustrated by the report on the countywide hoarding project which this council is leading and the investment in delegated technology to support the housing service.

There are two motions which we can discuss when we get to them on the agenda. I would like at this point to thank members of all parties who have contributed to our response on the two key Government consultations on housing numbers and the national planning reforms. These have now been submitted to Government and shared with town and parish councils. Let's hope they will see sense and realise the significant impact these proposals could have.

You will also note we have a report in yellow pages on the challenges facing our leisure centre operation and measures that are proposed to safeguard the continued operating of the centre for the public. These were recently considered and endorsed by the Scrutiny Commission.

CINEWORLD

You will have all recently heard the announcement by Cineworld that it is temporarily closing all of its cinemas in the UK and Ireland, with the potential loss of 5,000 jobs. The cinema takes pride of place in the Crescent, which is our flagship, multi-million regeneration project on the old bus station site. It was also the one standout facility that the residents of the borough told us they wanted as part of the development.

I have offered the resources of the council, working in partnership with DWP, to support all the staff at risk of losing their jobs to provide help and advice at this worrying time. I have also asked the council's Chief Executive to make contact with Cineworld to seek some clarity on when we can expect the Hinckley cinema to reopen.

A5 PARTNERSHIP

A meeting recently took place of the A5 Partnership. There we heard that the Dodwells/Longshoot improvement proposal would be put back from a planned start date in 2021 to 2023/24, at the earliest. This is disappointing to say the least and representations were made by my colleague, the Deputy Leader David Bill, over the impact this delay will have on congestion and the local economy and rat running of vehicles via Burbage and Hinckley. This could also impact on bringing forward Barwell and Earl Shilton SUEs.

On the same subject, we understand that the A5 between the M42 and M69 has been identified as a priority section of the A5 for upgrade. A commitment to development work

on potential schemes has been included as part of Route Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) - which is how the Department of Transport programmes investment on road investment for Highways, England. The potential level of investment which would be sought could be up to £0.5bn and route options are being developed for potential phased delivery in RIS3 period from 2025. The Deputy Leader as lead member for the Council on the partnership and the Chief Executive have been meeting senior representatives of Highways England to follow up on these and a number of other local issues linked to the A5.

CLIMATE CHANGE

You will be aware the Council adopted a Climate Change Strategy earlier in the summer following consultation in the spring of this year. I would like to extend my thanks to the work of the cross party member group and officers, along with my Executive lead for climate change, who have recently met to develop our Climate Change Action Plan. Even in these challenging times when our focus is rightly on response to and recovery from Covid, it's great to see some exciting initiatives being developed.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

This year we will continue to remember all of those who lost their lives in the Great Wars fighting for the freedom of this country. Sadly because of COVID restrictions this year there will not be the normal parades that take place in Hinckley or our villages, to ensure the safety of our residents and veterans. We will, however, be conducting a limited service in remembrance of those who were lost.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Members of all parties on this Council are aware of my concerns over proposals by Leicestershire County Council for local government reform and a creation of a single unitary for Leicestershire. I have said publically, and to staff at HBBC, that I will oppose these plans. The focus must continue to be on recovery and delivering the great services we provide to our residents and businesses. It was therefore a welcome surprise when I heard recently that Local Government Secretary, Robert Jenrick, has torpedoed plans for widespread reorganisation and confirmed local government reorganisation will “not be compulsory or required” and there will be “no top-down restructuring” and therefore not be imposed by Government. I will commend to you two key documents that have been published by the District Councils’ Network (DCN) that supports the case for retaining district councils. They are [“Power in Place”](#) and [“Bigger is Not Better”](#) and they can be found via these links.

FUNDING SETTLEMENT

The council must continue its fight for a good funding settlement from Government along with the support of the wider local government sector. Whilst the additional funding support that has been recently announced in response to Covid pressures is to be welcomed it does not go far enough to meet all of our pressures. In our response to the Government’s planned comprehensive spending review we, along with all districts, are arguing strongly for the retention of New Homes Bonus and business rate growth and a far more reasonable settlement to ensure that we can continue to be sustainable. It was therefore disappointing to hear recently that the Government has scrapped plans for a three year settlement this year and instead we are to expect a further one year financial settlement. We must therefore push for this to be a good settlement for the council and continue to argue the case for a longer term settlement, as without this it will mean cuts to vital services that we provide at a time of national crisis and when the Government needs us to help drive recovery and support our communities.

JOHN WARDLE - STREETSCENE OPERATIVE

I know you will all join with me in sending our best wishes for a speedy recovery to John Wardle, one of our Streetscene operatives, who was seriously injured recently in a road traffic collision whilst doing his job emptying bins in Earl Shilton. Our thoughts and prayers are with John and his family at this time.

Stuart Bray
Leader of the Council
27 October 2020