

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council - 15 December 2009  
Position Statement by the Leader of the Council

Mr Mayor, Fellow Members, Officers, invited guests, members of the public and the media

I am pleased that in my first official statement to you as Leader of this Council, I am able to highlight the very positive activities and outcomes achieved by us, not only in the last few months but over the whole year. Reports later on the agenda tonight will address the Core Strategy and the CAA; and these are proof that we continue to forge ahead over other Councils, both locally and nationally. We are still officially the best performing District Council in Leicestershire.

Whilst we will consider the update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in January 2010, we have received a positive boost in the preparation of that report by the recent announcement of over £580,000 Housing and Planning Delivery Grant for this Council. Although this figure is provisional until mid-January, it is a fantastic achievement for the Council, brought about by the commitment and determination of Tracy Darke and her team over the last twelve months. Tracy, of course, is moving to Coventry City Council in the New Year and I hope that Members will join me in wishing her well and in thanking her for the tremendous service she has provided to this Council for nearly 25 years. This is a wonderful leaving/Christmas present from Tracy to the Council and the community.

I can also advise the Council that the DCMS has committed over £300,000 towards the next phase of the Leisure Centre development. Whilst this is not a final figure - there is a further phase before the 'sign off' is completed - it does show that external Government departments have a very positive view about what we are doing at Hinckley and Bosworth ... and are prepared to back that view with hard cash. I can confirm that the Leisure Centre improvements are still on track for completion before the Christmas holidays.

The 'Barwell Pride' campaign, aimed at restoring the reputation and confidence the people of Barwell rightly have in their community, is being launched through the Neighbourhood Action Team, who have given their wholehearted support to this venture; a venture which I am sure this Council fully endorses. Barwell is a strong community, despite the nonsense written by those who do not know the place.

On the issues of 'Pride' in the wider area, can I highlight for Members the very positive publicity given recently to Caterpillar and the ability of their machines to withstand not only the rigours of the task they have to perform, but also high explosive attacks in Afghanistan! Two lives were saved by the strength of these machines and I hope that the whole Council will join me in extending our congratulations to all those involved at Caterpillar for the honour that they have brought to this area and to its businesses.

The Chief Executive and I recently attended a meeting with colleagues at the County Council for initial discussions on new extra care facilities in the area. This will be taken forward through the site allocations process during the course of next year. With an increase in the number of elderly people in the area, it is vital that all authorities plan ahead to increase the amount of care available to local residents as they get older. On that thought, I too share the concerns expressed by a number of Members about the proposals to sell off The Limes and Harvey House. I am sure that Members will have the opportunity to debate this at a future meeting.

As it is the end of the calendar year, can I remind Members of just a few of our achievements in 2009 and thank all of those, Officers and Members, who have brought these to pass.

- Continued improvements in performance
- Maintaining a significant Capital Programme as a strong foundation for the future, despite all the doom, gloom and financial pressures on public expenditure.
- External awards received - including a second 'Beacon' award, and awards for clean streets and recycling.
- The adoption of a Sustainable Climate Change and Mitigation Strategy.
- The adoption of the Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- A 'Performing Well' judgement in our CAA Organisational Assessment, extending our improvements already acknowledged in the CPA recognition of 'Excellence' a year ago today.

These have all been achieved whilst maintaining healthy reserves and balances, which will prove vital over the next few years, the lowest Council Tax in the county and the 10<sup>th</sup> lowest in the country. Whilst we must congratulate ourselves on these achievements, we must sincerely thank the officers and staff of this Council for their continued commitment to serve our communities to the highest standards.

Finally, can I pay tribute to David Bill, not only for his leadership of the Council on and off since 1995, but for his dedicated public service that he has given to the people he has represented for 35 years, I can confirm that that contribution will continue and I am pleased that he will be around for some time to come, amongst other things, to temper my natural 'passion' now as Leader of this Council. Thank you, David, for what you continue to do and for laying very 'sound' foundations for our future as a Council.

Mr Mayor, in conclusion, can I extend to all Members and officers my best wishes for Christmas and for what we must all hope is a year of further excellent service from this Council.

Stuart Bray  
Leader  
15 December 2009

## Executive Member Lead Responsibilities

<b>Councillor Bray</b>	Leader of the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication</li><li>• Strategic Leadership</li><li>• Regeneration</li><li>• Planning</li><li>• Town Centre (including car parks)</li><li>• L.G.A.</li><li>• District Council Network</li><li>• East Midlands Council</li></ul>
<b>Councillor Bill</b>	Deputy Leader of the Council (Executive member for Community Safety & Partnerships)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community Safety</li><li>• Neighbourhood wardens</li><li>• L.S.P.</li><li>• Leicestershire Together Board</li><li>• E.M.R.A.</li></ul>
<b>Councillor Wright</b>	Executive Member for Corporate Services & Equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Corporate Services</li><li>• Equalities</li><li>• Town Twinning</li></ul>
<b>Councillor Lynch</b>	Executive member for Finance, ICT & Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance</li><li>• ICT</li><li>• Asset Management</li></ul>
<b>Councillor Cope</b>	Executive Member for Environment, Health & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing</li><li>• Environmental Health</li><li>• Licensing</li><li>• Climate Change</li></ul>
<b>Councillor Moore</b>	Executive Member for Open Spaces & Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open Spaces</li><li>• Children and Young People</li><li>• Sport</li><li>• Culture &amp; Arts</li><li>• Tourism</li><li>• Creative Hinckley</li></ul>
<b>Councillor Crooks</b>	Executive member for refuse, recycling and rural affairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rural Affairs</li><li>• Refuse</li><li>• Recycling</li><li>• Street cleaning</li></ul>

**COUNCIL**  
**15 DECEMBER 2009**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

Agenda Item 7

(a) Question raised by Mr. D.M. Gould and addressed to Mr. S.L. Bray

“A number of our fellow Liberal Democrat-run Councils elsewhere in the Country have recently introduced 'Responsible Behaviour Panels' as a great tool in the fight against anti-social behaviour. Under this mutually beneficial scheme, offenders have to appear in front of their victim and members of the community to explain their actions. The victim, panel and offender agree how the offender will make up for the damage that has been caused. The panels have had a major effect in cutting re-offending rates for anti-social behaviour. Does the Acting Leader think these panels are a good idea, and would you consider introducing them in Hinckley & Bosworth?”

Response from Mr. S.L. Bray

“May I first welcome Councillor Gould’s question. I am pleased to consider all positive suggestions that will contribute to tackling anti-social behaviour rather than empty rhetoric that sometimes is voiced.

I can confirm I do agree with the idea of introducing panels and other mechanisms that can be effective tools in fighting against anti-social behaviour. Within Leicestershire and the Borough, there is a system in place called Restorative Justice.

The Leicestershire Constabulary was a pilot of the Government’s Restorative Justice Agenda that has now become a National Guideline for all Police Forces. Briefly, the Police can use restorative justice rather than prosecute or criminalise people (especially young people) for low level crime and disorder. Restorative Justice involves seeking a resolution with victims such as an apology, repair of damage, paying for costs or removing graffiti with the agreement of the victim. This system is currently being effectively used in anti-social cases in the Borough, especially at the early stages of complaint.

The idea behind it is the victim decides how the offender should ‘make good’ which can be in a number of ways and includes written and verbal apologies and compensation.

This system is working very well and accounts for approximately 4% of the crime cleared up in the Borough. Last month, the Police completed their 500<sup>th</sup> restorative justice disposal in the Borough since this came into being.

In conclusion, I would confirm the Council, along with the Community Safety Partnership, are committed to reducing anti-social behaviour in the Borough and the devastating impact that it can have on victims, their families and indeed, our communities. Local Ward Members often receive complaints about anti-social and nuisance behaviour from their residents

and Councillors can play an important role in helping to prevent such offending, and also in reassuring people that the Council and its partners are doing everything in their powers to reduce such offending, especially in relation to those who persist in such behaviour.”

(b) Question raised by Mr. J.G. Bannister and addressed to Mr. S.L. Bray

“Was the acting leader aware that at the November meeting of the Hinckley and Bosworth Community Forum the main item on the agenda was anti-social behaviour?”

“Response from Mr. S.L. Bray

“I presume that Councillor Bannister is referring to the County Council led Community Forums. The Hinckley Community Forum took place at Hinckley Rugby Club on the evening of Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November. As part of the Community Safety Partnership’s public consultation towards a refresh of the Community Safety Crime and Disorder Plan 2008/2011 a joint presentation was given by the Council’s Community Safety Manager and the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Policing Unit Commander. The objective of the presentation was to outline current Community Safety Partnership priorities, performance, emerging challenges and successes and also to seek views on the Partnership’s priorities for the refreshed plan due to be published in April 2010. Following the presentation a further presentation was given by the Leicestershire Youth Offending Service Impact team on their work in providing a tiered approach to anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people in public places. This is a part of any ongoing series of public consultation by the Community Safety Partnership over the next two months.

The Forums are open to any resident or person with an interest in a particular Forum area including ward members. The next meeting will be the Bosworth Area Forum that will take place on 10<sup>th</sup> December. Forums are administrated and advertised by the County Council and details of forthcoming Forum meetings and Forum areas can be obtained from Sabrina Malik on 0116 305595. Forums are also advertised in the Borough Bulletin and both the County Council and Borough Council’s web sites

For information of members The Hinckley Forum is currently chaired by Cllr David Bill in his capacity of County Councillor. Cllr Don Wright also attended the above meeting”.

(c) Question raised by Mr. B.E. Sutton and addressed to Mr. S.L. Bray

“The Local Development Plan, I believe, is supposed to be about addressing the employment and housing needs of the local community.

70%+ of this Borough is rural, the majority managed by the farming community, very well, I may add.

We have had umpteen hours and meetings discussing the needs of the travelling community, who do not need to live in the Borough, just that they want to.

The farming community needs to live and work in the Borough. We are constantly told that the World needs to double food production by 2030, to which all areas need to contribute.

Why have we had no discussion about the building requirements for the production of food and the housing needs of those who are to produce the food to satisfy the needs of the World”?

Response from Mr. D.C. Bill

“I would like to thank Councillor Sutton for his question and agree with him that too little time has been spent, during recent discussions on the Local Development Framework, on the many positive features.

One of the aspects of the Borough Council's Local Development Framework is to address the needs of local communities through, for example, meeting the demand for future employment and housing need. The Borough does contain a sizeable rural area and this is recognised in the vision incorporated into the Core Strategy. It is considered that the raft of policies contained in the Core Strategy seek equally to address both urban and rural issues identified within the Borough.

As indicated in the question, it is acknowledged that there is an active farming community within the Borough and that this community undertakes its task in a positive manner. Clearly, the Borough Council has a duty to protect the environment and this must be balanced with the importance of the agricultural economy in delivering food production. This is acknowledged in national, regional and local policy. Further, if an individual can demonstrate that future agricultural development is appropriate in both functional and financial terms, amongst other things, there is no reason why a planning application cannot be approved through the Council's statutory planning functions.

The Core Strategy is a high level document which sets out policies to support a range of employment opportunities for the rural areas. These high level policies will be supplemented by further detailed policies contained in the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Document. (This document was subject to consultation earlier this year and officers will be redrafting the document next year).

All political parties are represented on the Local Development Framework Working Party and members, through their party representatives, are able to raise questions or issues of concern that they may have. Similarly, I welcome comments from individual members who are able to submit representations as part of the statutory public consultation period on the Development Plan Documents if they so wish.”

Agenda Item 11(f) Report No. C41

Attached is a copy of a letter received in respect of this.



Our ref: MJW/SJP

9<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Cathy Horton  
Planning Department  
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council  
Council Offices  
Argents Mead  
Hinckley  
Leicestershire  
LE10 1BZ

**By post & e-mail**

Dear Cathy,

**RE: RENEGOTIATING FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS REQUIRED FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS – REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL 15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2009**

I refer to the above.

Whilst the report does not invite comments, having considered your report to Members I am writing on behalf of the Company to acknowledge the timely publication of the Council's suggested approach to these matters.

In addition I would like to make the following point. I believe that the approach suggested in the report could be improved. I do not consider that 'Step 3' in the suggested sequential approach to negotiating planning obligations, namely restricting the possibility of reducing the level of contributions to brownfield sites only, is appropriate in the circumstances or is supported by national or local planning policy.

You will appreciate that it may be simplistic to assume that brownfield sites will always have higher site development costs than greenfield sites, or that development proposals on greenfield sites will always generate sufficient residual land values to support a full level of planning obligations.

You will also note that the national policy set out in Circular 05/2005 quoted at paragraph 3.8 of your report does not draw a distinction between brownfield and greenfield sites.

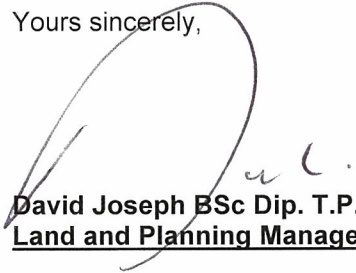
On a more positive note the Council have recognised that that in order to ensure that its housing growth requirements as set out in the emerging Core Strategy development on greenfield sites are required throughout the plan period. It would therefore be unfortunate to delay appropriate development on greenfield sites consistent with the spatial approach set out in the Core Strategy due to a rigid insistance that the full level of planning obligations are delivered, particularly in the current market and having regard to the Council's stated wish to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land.

I would therefore request that you reconsider the sequential approach to negotiating planning obligations in order that the suggested 'Step 3' can be applied in all scenarios. This would be consistent with both national policy and the Council's approach in its emerging Core Strategy.

[bloorhomes.com](http://bloorhomes.com)

I would also be grateful if these remarks could be reported to Members at the meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Joseph', is written over the typed name and title.

**David Joseph BSc Dip. T.P. MRTPI**  
**Land and Planning Manager**

cc. Sarah Humphries  
Sally Smith  
Tim Whyte