

Public Document Pack



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

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

Date: 01 October 2024

To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor,

Please see overleaf a supplementary agenda for the meeting of the **COUNCIL** on **TUESDAY, 1 OCTOBER 2024** at **6.30 pm**.

Yours sincerely

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

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Manager

COUNCIL - 1 OCTOBER 2024

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

6. QUESTIONS

To deal with questions under Council Procedure Rule number 14.

(a) From Councillor R Allen

"There has been repeated mention of a promise to provide an NHS 'walk-in centre' for Hinckley.

I would like to learn more about this proposal for the benefit of borough residents, as my own enquiries have produced little information.

I would very much appreciate if the Executive member could confirm when this promise was made and who made it, plus provide me with all and any supporting correspondence and documentation please".

Response from Councillor Bray, Leader of the Council:

"Reference to the provision of a walk-in centre was mentioned in Conservative election literature as far back as 2015 that was distributed in Barwell, Burbage and Hinckley so I suggest Cllr Allen checks his archive. In addition to comments about a walk-in centre, his colleagues also talked about improving GP access, which again many residents believe is a broken promise.

Everyone will also remember the visit of the disgraced former Health Secretary Matt Hancock in December 2018 which included the announcement to relocate 'the out-of-hours primary care service from Hinckley & Bosworth Community Hospital into the new developed urgent care hub in Hinckley Health Centre providing out-of-hours urgent care for local patients'. The former Conservative Council Leader updated the Council on this in the following January. Cllr Allen was a member of Mr Hall's Executive at the time so I'm surprised he doesn't remember this".

(b) From Councillor R Allen

"Can the Leader provide residents of the borough with an update on the crematorium project please?".

Response from Councillor Lynch, Executive member for finance:

"I'm surprised to receive this question as the Scrutiny Commission was fully appraised of the current position at its meeting on 9 May 2024.

Officers have engaged consultants to identify the best options for the council to progress this project. Officers are currently appraising these options and will engage with members when due diligence has been applied to the options presented.

The administration inherited this project from the previous Conservative

administration and is determined to ensure it succeeds”.

8. **LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT**

“Welcome to this October meeting of Council.

Tonight’s agenda includes a report on the annual achievements of the Council against our corporate plan priorities and objectives. I would like to congratulate our officers from across all council services for their contribution to this.

Also on the agenda is a key report on procurement of the HGV fleet, which is vital to ensure we continue to offer our residents the best and most reliable waste and recycling services, including road sweeping and street cleansing. We will also be considering a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on council size as part of the full review of electoral boundaries which is being undertaken by the LGBCE. The council size submission is the first phase of the review which will be followed by a review of ward boundaries.

In addition to these report items we will also be considering a motion on benefit payments, in particular the two-child limit to benefit payments.

I have set out a few other key updates.

Devolution

You may have picked up that last week the government confirmed a range of devolution deals within England. It has signed of mayoral combine authority deals for Greater Lincolnshire and Hull & East Yorkshire, with mayors being elected in May 2025. They will then be given control over transport, housing, skills and investment to shape the future of their areas.

Combined county authority deals were also agreed for Devon and Torbay and Lancashire, with the plan for them to be established in early 2025 and handed the responsibility for adult education. The government at the same time announced it will not proceed with the mayoral deals with Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council, but intends to continue discussions over devolution in Norfolk and Suffolk.

In Leicestershire, the district leaders have written to the leaders of Leicestershire County Council, Rutland County Council and the City Mayor seeking the opportunity of joint talks about the opportunities and risks associated with devolution. We feel strongly that any developing devolution deal will need input from district councils, given our remit for planning, housing, economic development and our contribution to other agendas, like community safety and the health and wellbeing of our communities.

We have also written to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for State to express our desire to be constituent members of any combined authority in Leicestershire and the East Midlands and our willingness to explore devolution with our neighbouring county and city authorities. It is important that this matter is addressed in the forthcoming publication of the government’s Devolution

Framework Review.

The government has clearly expressed its desire to have every area of the country with some form of devolution deal with the opportunity for new powers. This is linked to its mission for economic growth. It is important, therefore, that we are at the table locally and nationally in these discussions, to help carve out the best deal for our local communities. I will keep members updated on how things progress.

Cineworld

Following the announcement in July by Cineworld that it would be closing six of its UK cinemas including Hinckley and Loughborough, we have been working at pace to secure the future of a cinema in Hinckley. This has involved extensive work by officers and the council's advisors. This has extended to attracting interest from other national and independent operators as well as ongoing dialogue with Cineworld. Two court hearings have now taken place to deal with Cineworld's restructuring plans to secure the future of its operation in the UK and to avoid it going into administration. The last court hearing took place on Thursday last week and a judgement was given only yesterday – Monday, 30 September.

I am pleased to report that the council has come to a renewed commercial arrangement with Cineworld that safeguards the future of the cinema in the town.

The Hinckley Cineworld cinema takes pride of place in The Crescent, the multi-million pound town centre mixed retail and leisure redevelopment scheme which opened in December 2015. The cinema is a key facility that the residents of the borough asked to see returned to the town as part of the redevelopment.

This is excellent news for the town, for the taxpayer, for Cineworld employees and for local businesses. Not only does it safeguard the future of this great facility in Hinckley town centre, it also ensures the taxpayer continues to receive a rental income from Cineworld which helps to fund our public services.

High streets up and down the country are facing challenging times, but Hinckley is bucking that trend with retail occupancy rates and footfall above the midlands average along with a great range of independent and national businesses. We want it to stay that way, so we've taken necessary action to ensure we do that.

I would like to thank and acknowledge the great work of our officers on this matter in a very short space of time, including Malcolm Evans, Matt Burns, Ashley Wilson and Saminder Kaur, supported by Bill Cullen and our advisors at Trowers & Hamlins.

Rural strategy 2024 to 2028

I'm delighted to confirm the launch of the council's rural strategy. Supporting community facilities and helping to improve the rural environment are among the eight new priorities Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has committed to working on delivering for communities living and working in its rural areas.

Other priorities identified in the borough council's new rural strategy 2024 to 2028 include creating homes, managing the economy, boosting tourism, increasing access to wellbeing service all with the aim of strengthening the welfare and prosperity of the community.

The strategy is aligned with and complements the various other strategies of the borough council, including the free tree scheme for 2024.

Launch of free tree scheme

Together with our sponsors, Hinckley & Rugby Building Society and the National Forest, we are offering 27,000 trees for planting in the borough of Hinckley & Bosworth. Trees and hedging will be available to order for residents, businesses and community groups without charge.

Any trees or hedges which are not ordered or collected by the closing date will be planted on our green spaces across the borough. The closing date will be announced when the scheme goes live on Monday, 7 October 2024.

Cultural strategy 2024 to 2028

We have also launched our new cultural strategy for 2024 to 2028. This strategy aims to enhance and enrich the life of our residents and visitors to the borough via the delivery of a diverse range of high quality wellbeing services through partnership engagement with our communities. There are five key themes that provide the focus for the work we will do with partners:

1. Increase and celebrate the arts and creative offer within the borough
2. Increase economic spend via a thriving events programme
3. Value and promote tourism, our heritage and museums
4. Develop sports opportunities for all
5. Increase physical activity levels and improve health and wellbeing.

There are huge benefits that underpin these themes. Participation in cultural activities is shown to have positive social impacts, such as helping establish social connectedness, a sense of belonging and breaking down social barriers. It can reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, can support people into employment and can contribute to the economic prosperity of our proud borough.

This strategy will also assist in supporting the emerging local plan for Hinckley & Bosworth borough and help the delivery of the council's corporate plan.

Leisure centre solar panels

In line with our climate change objectives to lower carbon emissions and ensure our own buildings are energy efficient, I'm pleased to announce that more than 700 solar panels will be installed on the roof of Hinckley Leisure Centre in early 2025.

The borough council, which has led the project with leisure centre operators Places Leisure, was granted planning consent in September. Installation works are

set to begin early next year, with an estimated completion date of March 2025. The leisure centre will remain open as usual throughout the works.

The installation of the solar panels will see an estimated CO² reduction of over 52,000 kg in the first year. This feeds into the borough council's desire to decarbonise the facility and supports the council's climate and biodiversity strategy.

Supporting Macmillan Cancer charity

I am delighted to report that we raised over £300 at last Friday's Macmillan 'world's biggest coffee morning'. I would like to thank staff and members who supported this event. If you were unable to attend, it's not too late to donate:

<https://cm24.macmillan.org.uk/fundraising/CM24024666>"

11. CORPORATE PLAN ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENTS 2023-24 (Pages 1 - 16)

To seek approval of the annual review of achievements against the council's corporate plan.

Updated document attached.

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS TO THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023-2024





PEOPLE:

CORPORATE PLAN AIMS:

- Enable and inspire older people to make the most of later life
- Maximise people's potential through employment and skills support
- Help people to stay healthy, be active and feel well
- Recognise diversity and celebrate what unites us
- Ensure that vulnerable residents are supported and the capacity of the local voluntary sector is sustained and developed
- Take measures to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour and protect people from harm
- Give children and young people the best start in life and offer them the opportunity to thrive in their communities

ACTION:

Our Employment & Skills Partnership will develop an action plan to support and empower people to make the best possible use of their skills and of employment opportunities

The Hinckley and Bosworth Employment and Skills Taskforce continues to influence and drive the employment and skills agenda in the borough. A key part of the taskforce is networking and joining key partners up to facilitate projects. Working in partnerships has been key to our success, with the key local taskforce partners including local schools and academies, local businesses – large and small – as well as Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LEEP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC), MIRA Technology Institute (MTI), Rural Community Council voluntary sector representative and other key organisations and partners. DB

Supported 41 people to access employment and skills through our partnership with BEAM and 12 into housing.

We have trained and employ 13 apprentices working in services across the council, recruiting three apprentices this year. There are now three apprentices employed in housing repairs and two each in ICT, Environmental Health and planning. Meanwhile finance, HR, revenues & benefits and estates all employ one apprentice each.

Supported six officers to achieve the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) level three and one officer to gain an ILM level five. Also supported fifteen other professional qualifications for a range of employees and services including four officers gaining the Chartered Institute of Housing Level four and two officers being awarded the Chartered Institute of Waste officer competence scheme.

Supported officers to access relevant training to deliver housing retrofits through Green Living Leicestershire and in-house.

Worked with the Multiply programme to enable local people to develop their skills and improve their confidence to access employment.

Provided training opportunities to council tenants who are registered to be more involved in scrutinising, influencing and being involved with their housing service. Tenants have completed training in tenant scrutiny, meetings and report writing.

ACTION:

Work with our local schools to enable young people to have confidence in their future and raise their aspirations while promoting local careers opportunities

Atkins Building is supporting the Children's Hospital School by providing accommodation, supporting its activities and connecting the school with local businesses and facilities. The Atkins Building is also co ordinating a school lunch programme with the onsite Hansom Café and the Hospital School. The school provides education for pupils in Years 7-10 who are finding it difficult to access education in their own school due to mental and/or physical health issues. The Hospital school runs an early intervention programme with the aim of pupils returning to mainstream school as seamlessly as possible whilst minimising any long-term impact on their education or confidence.

Through our branded 'Working with us' setup officers working closely with our schools in Hinckley and Bosworth have engaged nearly 500 students to discuss careers available at the council with young people and find out what young people are interested in.

Supported the delivery of 13 careers fairs in nine local schools, engaging 564 young people.

Continued a programme to enable local students to gain work experience with the borough council

ACTION:

We will intervene early offering effective help and advice to people at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping

We successfully supported 321 homelessness customers into different housing tenures.

We provided housing advice to 1,160 customers

We continued the delivery of SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) to prevent rough sleeping during adverse weather conditions

We assisted five target priority rough sleepers through the Rough Sleeper Initiative.

ACTION:

Working with health partners, we will develop and deliver initiatives to improve health through our Health and Wellbeing Strategy

We support the 'Making Every Contact Count' initiative which aims to make the most of routine interactions with customers to create opportunities to support people to make positive improvements to their health or wellbeing. This includes being members of the Keep Safe Place scheme and advocating breastfeeding within the Hub building.

Working with local Health colleagues, Active Together and Public Health we have mobilised our new system of reacting to residents who would like more personalised support to 'Move More'. Hinckley & Bosworth Physical Activity Services works on a triage approach of self-referral. Many (but not all) of our referrals are from people with long term health conditions.

During 2023-2024 the work of the Physical Activity team enabled physical activity programmes for our targeted populations. Using external funding we delivered a varied offer including Active Menopause, Dr Bike, but of greater significance the expansion of our Older Adult Physical Activity programmes which currently stands at 19 weekly sessions across the borough, addressing falls prevention, mobility, wellbeing and social isolation.

Each of the five key local priorities captured in the H&B Community Health & Well Being Plan are progressing and being implemented by the Intergrated Neighbourhood Team. Highlight reports are then presented at the H&B Health & Well Being Partnership. This is a system health sector led approach to improving services targeting, Mental Wellbeing, Carers, Cost of Living, Housing and Learning Difficulties/SEND.

We are leading on mental health co-ordination work on behalf of the Integrated Care Board to help improve local service delivery for residents across the borough

Continued the delivery of the Safe Spaces project, to support people affected by hoarding behaviours

Launched the Housing and Respiratory illness project, to help to prevent illnesses associated with housing conditions

Launched the Three Conversations (three Cs) project with health partners, which provides intense intervention to those at risk of losing their tenancy and who have mental health issues.

In partnership with the Lightbulb service, the Private Sector Housing team funded a variety of disabled adaptations and other improvements, ranging from stairlifts and wetrooms to full blown extensions to 63 properties in the borough to help residents remain safe and well in their own homes. The team are working on a further 20 referrals for disabled adaptations at present, with 15 other referrals still at enquiry stage.

Introduced more robust procedures and processes to address and prevent damp and mould issues within our council homes. A total of 406 interventions took place consisting of the installation of 96 Envirovent de-humidifier extractor fans, 79 loft insulation top ups, 134 mould treatments, 52 rake out and re-point brickwork jobs & the installation of vents & airbricks to 45 locations.

Facilitated a wide range of activities including trips, quizzes, entertainment and crafts through grants and staff support to sheltered housing scheme tenants and neighbouring communities to reduce social isolation and improve mental health.

Held four drop-in events for council tenants to speak with officers about managing condensation, and provide tips to reduce and prevent damp and mould conditions in properties.

We installed 293 private lifelines to support independence with an additional 18 linked fall detectors and six linked smoke detectors.

ACTION:

We will work in schools to inspire a sense of the role of citizenship and safety in young people

Community safety team, supported by partners, engaged with 3064 students and delivered a range of other workshops on topics such as safer driving, ASB, healthy relationships, drugs and alcohol, exploitation, healthy holidays and working with school councils on youth voice. Feedback from teachers and young people is positive and shows increased knowledge.

ACTION:

We will continue to work with our partners to promote and grow our thriving voluntary and community sector

The annual Making a Difference awards were held in November 2023. 56 fabulous volunteers received medals recognising their contribution.

Continue to support Voluntary organisations and volunteers via two dedicated funding pots; Making a Difference and Community Volunteer Fund. £86,244 was approved for Voluntary and Community Sector groups in Hinckley and Bosworth. 81 projects were delivered involving 719 local volunteers, with the projects benefitting over 10,000 local residents.

Community Organisations and Volunteers continue to receive support via the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partnership to find volunteers or volunteering opportunities. 273 community groups based in Hinckley and Bosworth signed up as members to the VCS network as of March 2024.

We continue to hold forums for our voluntary sector to network, share good practice and hear from key services. There were three forums held during 23-2024.

We continue to work closely with voluntary and community sector organisations such as Hinckley Tennis Club, who have supported our Ukrainian community with family tennis sessions. Our work with Elohim Church continues with a Welfare Support Officer being based in the church to support those accessing their emergency food provision.

Podcast produced with voluntary and community sector members to publicise and highlight the excellent work of the voluntary sector.

Ongoing partnership with Friends of Hollycroft Park to deliver annual events programme of 10 summer events in the park, monthly volunteer gardening sessions and community cafe sessions and retain our Green Flag Award.

We've supported a number of Ukrainians who have arrived via the Homes for Ukraine and the family visa schemes. Our Ukraine response coordinator has supported Ukrainians to create their own community in the borough but also to integrate into existing communities. We continue to extend our support to over 225 Ukrainian individuals living in our district. Our comprehensive assistance includes housing, employment, benefits, education, and other aspects crucial to their settlement in the UK. We've provided general support and advice to 200 people, help and advice on employment opportunities to 175 people and 140 people have asked about educational pursuits. We've kept in regular contact with over 100 sponsors and hosts. We've also created social events to expand our support including regular tennis sessions in partnership with Hinckley tennis club and celebratory events for Ukrainian Independence day and Christmas.

ACTION:

Along with our partners, we'll provide support to people facing financial hardship and food poverty through increased living costs

Customer services regularly refer customers for the Housing Support Fund and refer to Citizens Advice to ensure customers are supported with debt and financial hardship issues. We work closely with the Trussell Trust foodbank and issued 2145 food vouchers during the 2023/24 financial year.

The Benefits team have supported 226 households with a Discretionary Housing Payment in 2023/24, awarding £164k to help with rent costs. £2.8m of Council Tax Support has been awarded to working age residents, and £2.5m to pensioners to help cover their Council Tax liability. A further £105k has been awarded from the discretionary discount fund which supports the most vulnerable with their council tax costs. In addition to our own welfare support team, our Revenues team will signpost customers for support to either benefits that we have responsibility for, or third parties as appropriate.

Application process was created for warm welcome venues to apply for grants of £1200 to help with the associated costs of providing warm welcome sessions, 24 warm welcome provision grants were approved, totalling £28,800.

A directory was created on the borough council's cost of living website for all warm welcome venues across the borough, 51 venues were listed from across the borough with the dates and times of sessions and the offers available. During the winter season over 100 warm welcome sessions were provided every week with 8931 visits.

The welfare support service helped 1192 residents who were experiencing financial hardship, carrying out 1660 remedial actions on their behalf.

Successful bid for Cadent Funding of £220,893 has enabled the team to expand the welfare support service, offering more cooking on a budget sessions and wider cost of living work until Dec 2025.

Continued community development work into new and existing areas of the borough, including initiatives designed to reduce isolation, help residents with cost-of-living impacts and offer local people opportunities to get involved in community activities.

The safeguarding team have dealt effectively with 338 safeguarding referrals to safeguard and reduce risk of harm. This is the highest number of referrals dealt with annually by the authority and reflects both the robust work to increase awareness of the safeguarding and the effect of the cost-of-living crisis on our residents.

The Revenues & Benefits team have also administered adhoc schemes that have been introduced to support our communities over the last year including flooding relief funds and alternative funding for energy bills.

We implemented a new food waste role to help residents and businesses cut down on food waste.

Delivered a programme of Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's which measure a property's energy efficiency) for council properties continuing, providing energy saving advice to tenants and identifying improvements that need to be made to the fabric of properties to achieve a minimum band C EPC rating by 2035.

Continued to apply for grant funding to support energy efficiency improvements to council housing

ACTION:

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and protect people from harm through our work with partners including police and health to deliver the aims of the Community Safety Strategy

The Council has invested in its state-of-the-art CCTV system. CCTV coverage has increased from 22 in 2016 to 45 in 2024. CCTV coverage includes Newbold Verdon, Barwell, Earl Shilton and Desford, as well as across Hinckley and several of its parks.

Year on year reduction in overall crime (-5.7%)

Successfully met the new Serious Violence duty by January 2024 and achieving year on year reductions in serious violence.

Domestic abuse outreach service has supported 173 survivors of domestic abuse through one to one and group work. Service feedback shows positive outcomes for survivors.

Well attended annual Domestic Abuse Networking Event with partners from across the borough, promoting the White Ribbon Campaign and Behind Closed Doors survivor Artwork project. Feedback from partners and the public prove we've raised awareness of these initiatives.

Worked with more than 1,400 young people, building engagement and relationships with young people and improving well-being. Theory of Change models evidence more young people taking part in local positive activities and an increased awareness of Anti-Social Behaviour and its impact on the local community

Supported and delivered over 25 crime and safety campaigns that aim to reduce seasonal or emerging threats crimes, promote victim services, raise awareness of crime prevention and help protect vulnerable people from becoming victims of exploitation.

Strong partnership structures continue to ensure robust responses, Joint Action Group (JAG) and youth JAG dealing with on average around 14 high risk cases a quarter.

Renewed Public Space Protection order to prevent individuals or groups of people committing anti-social behaviour in our public spaces.

We investigated 816 cases of anti -social behaviour.

Continued our proactive approach to licensing, including supporting the police with Test Purchasing operations

Established an anti-social behaviour working group in Housing, to ensure compliance with the 2024 Consumer Standards

Environmental Health (Environmental Protection) investigated 740 noise complaints resulting in the service of five legal notices to stop the noise; all other complaints resolved informally.



PLACES:

CORPORATE PLAN AIMS:

- Keep our borough clean, green and safe
- Keep our town centres vibrant and viable
- Protect and improve our parks and open spaces for everyone across the borough
- Improve the quality of existing homes and enable the delivery of affordable housing
- Inspire standards of urban design that create attractive places to live
- Support and celebrate our cultural, tourism and heritage facilities and events for the benefit of residents and businesses alike
- Reduce our impact on the environment by working with partners towards delivering our Climate Change Strategy

ACTION:

We will reduce our impact on the environment by reducing waste and encouraging recycling

Customer services supported the waste and recycling team by answering 17,258 calls regarding the service.

Successful recycling event held at Snap Dragon for young persons with interactive games and quizzes to test children's knowledge and understanding of how to recycle

Preparation for Governments waste collection changes including food waste collections from 2026 and collection of additional materials in line with "Simpler Recycling".

Continued to Support BID customers with an affordable commercial recycling collection service supplying bags to assist businesses with limited space to store bins.

Provided a comprehensive household collection service which already collects the main materials specified by forthcoming Simpler Recycling requirements due to commence from 31 March 2026.

Provided a garden waste collection service to 33,786 residents (77% of eligible residents) of the borough with circa 10,000 tonnes of garden waste being sustainably composted and used on a local farm thus treating and using the waste locally and sustainably.

2.2 million Recycling and garden waste collections completed per annum with overall cost of waste phh being 4th lowest amongst East Midlands Councils (Source LGA inform 2022/23).

Continued to deliver and climate change and biodiversity action plans to enable the council to become net zero as soon as possible.

Transitioned to HVO fuel for all Refuse Collection Vehicles cutting emissions by up to 90%.

Introduced a scheme to reduce waste by recycling items left in untenanted council properties

ACTION:

Re-imagine the town centre through a new masterplan to identify new opportunities that will secure the ongoing regeneration of Hinckley

A successful market with 25 traders on a Friday and Saturday making the town centre a vibrant place to be. Promotional videos commissioned as part of the UKSPF – with eight traders featured, to promote the market and services offered through social media channels.

The Hinckley Town Centre visioning document is a high-level document that identifies opportunities for investment and improvement to deliver physical, social and environmental aspirations for the town centre through a separate masterplan. The document will align with the emerging Local Plan and promote regeneration within the town centre as well as supporting the HBBC Economic Regeneration strategy.

We've delivered a range of heritage-led regeneration projects in Hinckley Town Centre as part of Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zone programme. We worked with partners and property owners to collectively invest c.£1.65m on improvements to historic buildings and the public realm in the town centre. We've also produced guidance on property maintenance, installed heritage interpretation measures, and provided community and cultural events celebrating Hinckley's heritage.

ACTION:

Promote new affordable housing for rent and acquire and develop more council houses through our development programme

We acquired 12 new build homes in the financial year 2023/24.

We gained approval for the Peggs Close Regeneration project to begin.

ACTION:

We will promote and deliver an annual events calendar across the Borough to showcase our culture and heritage

Over the course of 2023/24 there were a total of 37 town centre events bringing in an additional 38,962 visitors which was an increase on footfall of 33.75%. The events included Proms in the Park, Christmas Light Switch On, Feast Hinckley and Snapdragon, all extremely popular events in Hinckley.

The Hinckley High Street Heritage Action Zone has through its Cultural Programme delivered a varied programme of events including a play 'Being Dora -A Hinckley Workhouse Romance' and a medieval festival held in the Mead

ACTION:

We will use our enforcement powers to protect the environment

Environmental Health (Environmental Protection) investigated 1145 complaints relating to legislation designed to protect the environment and the environmental health of the borough's residents.

Private Sector Housing have investigated hazards in 206 privately owned, rented or socially rented properties, taking appropriate enforcement action against those responsible wherever necessary.

Planning Enforcement investigated 270 complaints with regards to breaches of planning legislation across the borough.

Inspected 10 premises across the borough that hold an environmental permit, designed to control releases of pollutants to the environment.

ACTION:

Adopt a new Local Plan setting out how the borough will be developed in the future

We have adopted a new Local Development Scheme in February 2024, setting out a timetable for adoption of a new Local Plan.

We have resolved to accept a proportion of unmet housing need from Leicester City Council, working in partnership with all Leicestershire Local Planning Authorities to delivery housing across the market area.

The Planning Policy Team have progressed a new Local Plan to the next stage of public consultation. The Regulation 18 draft Local Plan seeks to identify strategic allocations to meet housing and employment needs across the borough to 2041.

We've undertaken a review of our existing Good Design Guide to ensure that it remains up to date. The guide sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice.

ACTION:

Deliver the 'Tiny Forest' initiative, bringing the environmental and health benefits of a traditional forest to small-spaced urban areas

Planted a new hedge on the boundary of Burbage common road (approx. 170 meters), Planted new hedges around floor retention basins at Gallus drive and Faray Drive (approx. 200 meters) and laid 30 meters of hedge at Burbage common.

Successful delivery of the free tree scheme for the second year distributing 27,000 free trees across the Borough (fully sponsored by two partners).

We established five housing sites to be used to enhance biodiversity, sites have been planted with wildflower turf/meadow and areas of grass left unmown to increase biodiversity.

Beating up & maintenance of plantations on Wykin Park, Brosdale drive, Roston Drive, Clifton way, Burbage common, Langdale park.

ACTION:

Increase the number of Electric Charging Vehicle points to help meet the future demand of electric powered vehicles

The Council now operates 50 Ev charge points (25 twin sockets) at six sites, five of which are publicly accessible.

Contributed to LCC's development of a countywide EV Charging Infrastructure strategy, and Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) funding for EV chargepoints.

Building regulations, applicable to most new build housing developments, have been updated to include a requirement for EV charging points to individual dwellings.

ACTION:

Continue to support the delivery of neighbourhood plans for the borough giving local residents a greater say in development and growth in their area

The Planning Policy Team continues to support Neighbourhood Plans in the borough. This includes seven made neighbourhood plans, including two progressing reviews of made plans, together with four further neighbourhood plans progressing.

ACTION:

Our existing parks, open spaces and playgrounds will continue to meet high quality standards

New play area installed in Burbage common.

Refurbishment of Granville play area with safety surface repairs and refreshing existing play equipment.

Refurbishment of the moat at Argents Mead completed.

Re-lining of cycle tracks – Clarendon park.

Improvements carried out to brook course and footpaths at Jellicoe Way open Space.





PROSPERITY:

CORPORATE PLAN AIMS:

- Boost economic growth and regeneration by encouraging investment that will provide new jobs and places to live and work all over the borough
- Support the regeneration of our town centres and villages
- Support our rural communities
- Work with partners to raise aspirations and boost opportunities for training, employment and housing
- Support tourism partners in promoting local attractions and growing local visitor economy
- Ensure businesses are supported to safeguard and maintain local employment opportunities
- Provide direct investment in economic opportunities where opportunities arise and subject to the business case

ACTION:

We will encourage developers to employ local people and provide opportunities for their training and development

Participated in a national Employment and Skills Task Group with the LGA to develop a work and skills offer to the Government.

Developed a 'Education and Skills for a Strong Local Workforce' focus in the emerging HBBC Local Plan. This ensures any major developments proposed for the borough area must submit a Local Employment & Training Strategy (LETS) through S106 agreements to encourage training and upskilling of their employees and engage local schools in careers site visits. LETS are in place on the IM Properties Hinckley Park development and the new ALDI National Distribution Centre for both the construction and operational phases.

ACTION:

We will boost tourism through our Tourism Strategy

A new four-year Tourism Strategy was adopted in early 2024. This sets out a clear direction, evidence base and supporting action plan allowing the sector to grow.

Created and broadcast a podcast dedicated to promoting the new tourism strategy.

ACTION:

Deliver Twycross National Science and Conservation Centre

Following the successful bid for £19.9m of Levelling Up funds for the Twycross National Science and Conservation Centre, the council is supporting the zoo in progressing the project. This has included permission being granted by the Council's Planning Committee for an extension to the zoo to deliver a National Science and Conservation Centre.

ACTION:

We will support our rural areas to enhance their community facilities through our Rural Strategy and a range of funding initiatives

The annual Rural Conference was held which saw over 100 participants attend.

We have helped fund 21 community projects, at a total of £90,383 through the Parish And Community Initiative Fund.

Our Rural England Prosperity Fund aim is to help to improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities. The £400,000 capital-only funding 2023 to 2025 supports the following four key themes: rural tourism sector businesses/organisations, wider rural small and micro enterprises, enhance our heritage and Improve community facilities.

Several community facilities have received funding to enhance their buildings. For example, new solar panels fitted to Sheepy Magna village hall roof were funded by both the PCIF grant and the rural prosperity grant fund

ACTION:

We will continue to bring businesses and education providers together to develop the skills needed to boost our local economy

Our annual TeenTech event which we jointly fund with MIRA Technology Institute (MTI) took place in February 2024. The event welcomed over 190 school pupils alongside business leaders as part of an event designed to inspire young people to think about careers in science, engineering and technology.

The annual Speed Networking took place at MTI in March 2024 where 70 students interviewed more than 30 ambassadors from automotive and engineering businesses at a speed networking event designed to inspire them with ideas for future careers.

ACTION:

We will invest directly in MIRA Technology Park and drive economic growth across the borough through the Economic Regeneration Strategy

Support MIRA Technology Park through a programme of projects to aid the recovery of the MIRA Enterprise Zone from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic using historical business rates investment.

Partnership funding with LLEP of £2.5m and with MIRA putting in £2.5m to transform an existing building at MIRA Technology Park into a Low Carbon Innovation centre. Invested £8million into hydrogen energy hubs and other key infrastructure to unlock further inward investments.

ACTION:

We will provide advice and support to local businesses to ensure their long-term viability

Vacancy rates in Hinckley town remain below the National average (12.4%) currently running at 10.52% for March 2024.

Atkins Building has launched a new business service Atkins Building Co Working for local businesses and employees to be able to rent a desk flexibly when needed. The Co working aims to provide a viable alternative to the traditional office ideal for start-ups and freelancers and for employees a location where they can meet colleagues etc for in person collaborative working. The co Working space also aims to combat loneliness and isolation and provide opportunities for social interaction and networking.

Through our UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) allocation we have worked with districts across Leicestershire to commission a business support and advice service. The Leicestershire Business Advice Service project includes business advisors to provide one-to-one support, specialist sectors advice and start-up support.

Launched a monthly Economic Regeneration News e-newsletter to signpost businesses to the latest business support, events, news and grant funding information.

Our business rates team have applied Retail Hospitality and Leisure relief to all businesses that are eligible whilst promoting any other discounts and reliefs to customers may be eligible for.

Continued to undertake food inspections to ensure the health and safety of all premises serving and selling food.



SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Corporate Plan supporting activities:

Provide quality services, good value for money and make the best use of our assets

We published our Productivity Plan earlier in the summer (2024) identifying many of our services delivered at a cost well below the average for district councils across the country (Source LG Inform Value for Money Profiles)

Facilitated NHS co-location into Hinckley Hub which has had a significant impact on service delivery, cost efficiency, collaboration and partnership working and community engagement. HBBC's share of the building's operating costs alone has reduced from 67% to 48%, a saving of £310,000 per year.

Our website has been assessed and placed joint-first of UK councils every month in the last 12 months for WEB Site Accessibility.

We have increased cyber security through deploying new technologies, SpecOps Password manager and Security HQ Managed Detect and Response Service. We have increased staff cyber awareness through Learning and development (NCSC Cyber awareness course on LearningPool) and through regular staff bulletins highlighting cyber themes, such as physical security, email security and other topics. We have tested staff awareness with simulated phishing campaigns achieving encouraging results.

We have increased stability and availability of ICT systems regularly achieving over 99% uptime since November 2023.

We have successfully maintained our Public Sector Network accreditation for ICT (2023-24)

Reduced our fleet carbon emissions by 644 tonnes through the use of HVO (bio diesel) and first five electric vehicles now deployed on our fleet.

To meet the challenges and opportunities of the national digitisation of telephone networks we rolled out a programme of upgrading our community alarms to digital lifelines helping to support older and vulnerable residents across the borough

Ensured that 100% of properties within our stock requiring a Fire Risk Assessment have one in place.

Statutory Compliance Group established to monitor compliance across our housing stock meeting our legal requirements and ensuring that tenants are safe.

From April 2023 to end of March 2024, we sent 92 email newsletters to borough residents who have subscribed to receive them. These were successfully delivered to 759,273 people. There were 423,940 unique opens (with 695,688 total opens). This is an average open rate of 51.42% which is above the average rate of 40.55% for government emails.

