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Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

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

Date: 30 September 2025

To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor,

Please see overleaf a supplementary agenda for the meeting of the **COUNCIL** on **TUESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2025 at 6.30 pm.**

Yours sincerely

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

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Manager

COUNCIL - 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

6. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

Welcome to the first Council following the summer break.

On the agenda tonight I am proud to bring you our annual summary of achievements for the period 2024 to 2025, a year in which we had our corporate peer challenge and secured an outstanding result. This is a true credit to our officers and members for the work they have been rightly recognised for in terms of community engagement and support, our work to grow our local economy to provide jobs for our residents and our engagement and support to businesses. When we get to this item, I hope you will all join me in celebrating the incredible achievements and work undertaken by the council over the past year.

We also have our annual outturn report to consider. Members will be aware we are entering the budget process and await the government's financial settlement following the autumn budget on 28 November. The government published its new funding formula earlier this summer and early signs are that we will not benefit from this, placing further strain on our budgets and services going forward.

As we continue to progress with our local plan to address the additional significant increase in housing targets that the government has set us, the report on the agenda includes the new regulation 18 draft local plan that we propose to consult on this autumn.

Community cohesion and misinformation

I'm proud to live in a borough where diversity is embraced and inclusion is part of everyday life. Our communities are made stronger by the people who live in them, people of different backgrounds, experiences, and stories, who contribute to the richness of our shared spaces. This spirit of welcome and unity is something we should all celebrate and protect.

Here in our borough, I want to be clear, misinformation suggesting that local hotels are housing asylum seekers is false. These claims create unnecessary fear and division at a time when our community needs clarity and trust. Also, claims that the council has a target for housing asylum seekers are incorrect. Responsibility for housing asylum seekers rests with Serco, a government appointed contractor. We also recognise that housing pressures are severe. Homelessness is rising, local housing registers are full, and too many families are living in temporary accommodation. Frustration with a broken housing system must not be redirected into hostility towards vulnerable people, nor fuelled by rumours online. Misinformation does nothing to solve homelessness or housing shortages, it only deepens mistrust.

Our national flags and local symbols should be sources of pride and belonging for everyone. When misused to stir division, they lose the meaning they ought to carry. Let's continue to stand together as a community that values truth, fairness and inclusion and that welcomes everyone with dignity and respect.

I'm also pleased to share some fantastic updates that showcase the energy and

spirit of our borough and reflect a community that continues to grow, adapt and support one another. Thank you to everyone who has contributed, participated and helped make these initiatives a success.

Richard III Sculpture Trail success

On 22 August we celebrated the formal opening launch of the 1485 Trail which marks the significant events and locations connected to the 1485 Battle of Bosworth. The project includes an eight-mile tourist trail across the villages which had some connection with the battle. The opening event secured national and local media coverage, attracting interest from over one million people. We expect the trail to be a major tourism attraction that will add real benefit and value to our local tourism economy, estimated to add 5% GVA to the local economies – valued at £14m per year. The project has gained international attention, with press coverage valued at over £100,000 and more than 1 million people made aware of this celebration of our local heritage.

Our summer and autumn events

This summer we saw another bumper events programme including our annual August food festival in Hinckley, followed by our increasingly popular Snap Dragon family festival in Argents Mead, with participation up by 26% and an extra 30,000 people visiting our town centre.

The annual BID car show held on Sunday, 21 September was blessed with great weather and attracted over a thousand cars and thousands of visitors. We have continued to host Music in the Mead during the summer, and September saw a range of heritage and medieval weekends and activities across the borough. Earlier this month we held another successful Burbage Common open day. It was a fun-filled day with craft and charity stalls, a dog show, cheerleading, Taekwondo demonstrations and a lot more. It was great to see so many people and I would like to express my thanks to everyone who came along and to all those involved in making the event a great success.

As we move into autumn, look out for Hinckley BID's Halloween treasure hunt from Saturday, 18 October to 31 October; Spooktacular Saturday on 25 October and our Christmas lights switch on and Tin Hat Fair programmed for Friday and Saturday 21 and 22 November. Our incredible Lights in the Mead display will run from Friday, 21 November to Monday, 5 January 2026.

Meeting of the Executive

At our Executive meeting last week, we considered a number of very positive reports including:

- Warm Welcome project achievements 2024025

We know the cost of living continues to be a real challenge for many people in our borough. Rising bills, food prices and housing pressures are putting strain on households, and we're seeing the effects every day.

That's why the Warm Welcome project remains such an important part of our local response. Launched during the winter of 2022/23, it began as a network of warm spaces and has since evolved into inclusive, friendly venues offering a hot drink, a safe environment and access to support. Funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the project supports a dedicated officer and provides grants to voluntary and community groups who run these spaces.

Over the past year, we've seen real progress – stronger partnerships with local agencies, better reach into previously hard-to-engage areas, and new venues joining the programme, including the Hinckley area foodbank.

Key figures include:

- 62 venues offering over 125 sessions per week, with more than 16,000 visits recorded
- 42 grants awarded to support provision.

In May, we held our second Warm Welcome networking and celebration event at Newbold Verdon Methodist Church, attended by over 50 volunteers, venue leads and support agencies. The project was also highly commended by the Association of Safety and Compliance Professionals in the category of best initiative to combat fuel poverty.

This winter, we're adding a new initiative – the coat exchange scheme. In response to cost of living pressures and the environmental impact of the textile industry, this scheme offers a practical way to help residents access warm clothing. Operating across community venues in October and November, it promotes reuse and keeps good quality coats in circulation and out of landfill.

We will also be launching another round of grant funding to help venues prepare for the colder months ahead.

- **Heritage Strategy 2025-29**

The Executive endorsed this new strategy and accompanying action plan. The borough has a unique and distinctive heritage and these documents will guide conservation and heritage activities in the borough over the next five years.

- **Council house service rent policy**

The Executive agreed to consult tenants on this policy which aims to ensure that rents and service charges comply with statutory regulations and remain fair and affordable.

Leisure centre

Participation at Hinckley Leisure Centre has exceeded pre-pandemic levels, with 867,000 visits recorded last year. This reflects our commitment to improving health and wellbeing through proactive, preventative initiatives.

Making a difference awards

Preparation for our annual awards which honour volunteers in our communities who 'make a difference' is underway. Categories include:

- Creating a sense of community pride – individual: an individual who is inspirational in supporting and engaging their local communities, leading to enriched lives for residents
- Creating a sense of community pride – group: a group which is inspirational in supporting and engaging its local communities, leading to enriched lives for residents
- Young volunteer(s): A young person or group (under 18) who volunteers and contributes their time, energy and skills to benefit others within our community
- Protecting our community's environment: An individual or group which volunteers to improve where we live, making it a better place for us all by enhancing wellbeing, our safety, and responsibilities in relation to our planet
- Contributing to our local heritage, tourism or culture: An individual or group which enables others to appreciate and benefit from our local heritage, tourism and cultural offer, which attracts visitors and makes this a borough for us all to enjoy.

Please encourage residents to nominate those special individuals and groups who make a difference to our communities. Nominations need to be received by Friday, 17 October 2025. More information can be found at www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/makingadifference.

Local government reorganisation (LGR)

As you may have seen, the borough and district councils of Leicestershire and Rutland County Council will be submitting a proposal called North, City, South to government in November. We announced earlier this month that we simply cannot support the expansion of the Leicester City boundary which the City Mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby, desperately wants. We have done the research and looked at ways that a bigger city boundary could work. Together, we have concluded that it is simply not viable in any regard. There is just no case for it.

I was hoping with the recent resignation from Deputy Prime Minister Angela Raynor and sacking of Jim McMahon, the local government Minister, that the government and its new ministers would see sense and shelve plans for LGR. Unfortunately it doesn't appear to be changing.

We will be publishing our detailed proposal in partnership with all seven Leicestershire districts and Rutland County Council in October. The report will go to November's Scrutiny Commission and a special meeting of Council followed by Executive in November to discuss and agree the proposals.

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