

Public Document Pack

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

Date: 06 March 2024



**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

To: Members of the Scrutiny Commission

Cllr C Lambert (Chair)
Cllr MJ Surtees (Vice-Chair)
Cllr P Williams (Vice-Chair)
Cllr DS Cope
Cllr MJ Crooks
Cllr C Gibbens

Cllr C Harris
Cllr J Moore
Cllr A Pendlebury
Cllr M Simmons
Cllr A Weightman

Copy to all other Members of the Council

(other recipients for information)

Dear member,

There will be a meeting of the **SCRUTINY COMMISSION** in the De Montfort Suite, Hinckley Hub on **THURSDAY, 14 MARCH 2024** at **6.30 pm** and your attendance is required.

The agenda for the meeting is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely

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

Rebecca Owen
Democratic Services Manager

Hinckley Hub • Rugby Road • Hinckley • Leicestershire • LE10 0FR

Telephone 01455 238141 • MDX No 716429 • Fax 01455 251172 • www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk

Fire Evacuation Procedures

- On hearing the fire alarm, leave the building **at once** quickly and calmly by the nearest escape route (indicated by green signs).
- *There are two escape routes from the Council Chamber – at the side and rear. Leave via the door closest to you.*
- Proceed to **Willowbank Road car park**, accessed from Rugby Road then Willowbank Road.
- **Do not** use the lifts.
- **Do not** stop to collect belongings.

Recording of meetings

At HBBC we are open and transparent about how we make decisions. We allow recording, filming and photography at all public meetings including Council, the Executive and Planning Committee as long as doing so does not disturb or disrupt the proceedings. There may occasionally be some reports that are discussed in private session where legislation requires this to happen, but this is infrequent.

We also allow the use of social media during meetings, which helps to bring the issues discussed to a wider audience.

Members of the public, members of the press and councillors are hereby informed that, in attending the meeting, you may be captured on film. If you have a particular problem with this, please contact us so we can discuss how we may accommodate you at the meeting.

Use of mobile phones

To minimise disturbance to others attending the meeting, please switch off your phone or other mobile device or turn it onto silent or vibrate mode.

Thank you

SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 14 MARCH 2024

A G E N D A

1. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

2. **MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2024.

3. **ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

To be advised of any additional items of business which the Chair decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive verbally from members any disclosures which they are required to make in accordance with the Council's code of conduct or in pursuance of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. **This is in addition to the need for such disclosure to be also given when the relevant matter is reached on the agenda.**

5. **QUESTIONS**

To hear any questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.

6. **SCRUTINY COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 5 - 10)**

Work programme attached.

7. **VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP UPDATE AND COMMISSIONING OUTCOMES 2022/23 (Pages 11 - 46)**

To provide an update on key achievements arising from the borough's voluntary & community sector (VCS) partnership arrangements and to report on outcomes of the VCS commissioning programme for April 2022 to March 2023.

8. **COST OF LIVING UPDATE (Pages 47 - 58)**

To provide an update on the work undertaken by the council in response to the cost of living crisis.

9. **SAFE SPACES PROJECT (Verbal Report)**

To provide a verbal update on the project.

10. **ADOPTION OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS - SCRUTINY REVIEW (Pages 59 - 62)**

To seek approval of the scope and approach to the review.

11. **SCRUTINY REVIEW: UTILITY COMPANIES (Pages 63 - 66)**

To update members on the plans for actioning the motion to Council on 30 January.

12. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DECIDES HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH AS MATTERS OF URGENCY

As announced under item 3.

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT BUDGET MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION AND FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY

1 FEBRUARY 2024 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert - Chair
Cllr MJ Surtees and Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chairs
Cllr DS Cope, Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr C Harris, Cllr J Moore, Cllr P Stead-Davis,
Cllr BE Sutton and Cllr A Weightman

Also in attendance: Councillor KWP Lynch

Officers in attendance: Ilyas Bham, Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen,
Sharon Stacey, Julie Stay and Ashley Wilson

258. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Crooks,
Glenville and Pendlebury.

259. Minutes

It was moved by Councillor Gibbens, seconded by Councillor Weightman and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December be
confirmed as a correct record.

260. Declarations of interest

Councillor Lambert declared a non-pecuniary interest in the budget reports as
vice-chair of Efficiency East Midlands.

261. Pay policy statement 2024/25

Consideration was given to the pay policy statement for 2024/25, including the
gender pay gap, which had reduced from the previous year.

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

262. Budget reports

a) General fund budget 2024/25

In response to members' questions on the general fund report, the following was
noted:

- There had been a lot of business rates growth since 2015 which was not
included as 'core funding' by government and could be lost as a result of a
business rates reset which was expected in 2026/27

- The increase in business rates could be aligned to the council's economic strategy, in particular due to developments such as Hinckley Park and Mira technology park
- In relation to homelessness
 - the decrease in properties available meant longer spent in temporary accommodation
 - Whilst there were temporary hostels for families, demand exceeded supply
 - There were currently no hostels for single people
- The level of the pay settlement was not yet known but was likely to add further costs of £1m which had been included in the budget
- There may be a need for savings or new income to be identified as part of a medium term financial strategy increase later in the year.

In discussing the report, members raised the following points:

- Benefits of development in terms of employment and economy should be clear when considering new development
- The Housing review could consider the abovementioned points relating to homelessness.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and comments be forwarded to Council.

b) Housing revenue account budget 2024-25

In presenting the report and responding to questions from members on the housing revenue account report, the following points were noted:

- The importance of being able to support current and future tenants with a strong housing revenue account
- The unknown costs and challenges of revision of the decent homes standard, social housing regulation, safety standards and decarbonisation
- The increasingly complex needs of tenants
- The limited scope for acquisition of properties outside of using right to buy receipts and commuted sums
- The impact of ageing housing stock on the housing revenue account, particularly when implementing decarbonisation measures
- The percentage increase in rents proposed was to deliver the council's housing revenue account investment strategy aimed at keeping homes decent and more energy efficient, meeting the housing regulatory requirements and delivering more affordable housing.

Members made the following comments:

- A comparison of increase in private and council property rental costs could be in the remit of the scrutiny review group
- The HRA investment strategy would be brought to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and comments be forwarded to Council.

c) Fees & charges 2024/25

In considering the fees & charges report, it was suggested that the actual cost of running the garden waste service be added as an appendix to the report to show the value to which the council was subsidising the cost to the resident. It was agreed that this would be appropriate to be included in the general fund budget report.

A member requested that the fees & charges book includes a column to show the proposed percentage increase.

RESOLVED – the report be noted and it be RECOMMENDED that the abovementioned comments be actioned in the report to Council.

d) Capital programme 2023-24 to 2026-27 and capital strategy

Members received the capital programme 2023-24 to 2026-27 and capital strategy. Borrowing for economic growth and regeneration was discussed.

In relation to the Hinckley Area Initiative Fund, it was requested that the special expenses area budget be presented to a meeting of the Hinckley Area Committee in late March.

RESOLVED –

- (i) The report be noted and comments be forwarded to Council;
- (ii) It be RECOMMENDED that a meeting of the Hinckley Area Committee be arranged for late March to consider the budget for the special expenses area.

e) Treasury management strategy 2023-24 and prudential indicators 2023-24 to 2026-27

The Scrutiny Commission considered the treasury management strategy and prudential indicators. The definition of being underborrowed was explained, with reference to the increasing underlying pressures indicated by the capital financing requirement (CFR).

RESOLVED – the report be noted.

263. **Scrutiny Commission Work Programme**

The work programme was received and it was requested that the motion to Council on 30 January in relation to utility companies and their readiness for the increase in housing and industrial development be brought to the Scrutiny Commission.

A member suggested bringing forward the report on bus services and public transport. It was noted that the Department for Transport was expected to announce additional funding for transport after halting work on HS2 and a

national commitment to reinvest the funds into more sub regional improvements. It was noted that Leicestershire County Council would be considering the issue over the next year and therefore agreed that the item would be discussed with county council colleagues before confirming the position in relation to the work programme.

It was moved by Councillor Cope, seconded by Councillor Moore and

RESOLVED – the motion to Council on 30 January in relation to utility companies be brought to the Scrutiny Commission.

264. Minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny

The minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny on 18 December 2023 were received for information.

(The Meeting closed at 8.18 pm)

CHAIR



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023-2027

MARCH 2024

Date	Issue (report author)	Reason	Outcomes	Supports corporate aims
14 March 2024	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
	Safe spaces project update (Rachel Burgess)	Follow up from previous meetings	Monitoring of partnership project	1
	Council motion on utility companies (Becky Owen)	Scoping report following request of Scrutiny Commission to action Council's motion	Ensure readiness for increase in development	All
	Cost of living update (Rachel Burgess)	Request of Scrutiny Commission	Awareness of work in response to cost of living crisis	1
	Adoption of new developments (Lesley Keal / Becky Owen)	Scoping report for scrutiny review	Scoping of review	2
9 May 2024	Cashless society / digital poverty (Scrutiny review)	Request of members: matter of importance to residents	Understand impact on businesses and residents but also benefits	1, 3
	HRA investment strategy (Ashley Wilson / Sharon Stacey)	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	Input into strategy	All
	Parish & Community Initiative Fund allocations (Paul Scragg)	Normal reporting pathway	Recommendations to SLT	2
4 July 2024	Lack of GPs / dentists and Hinckley Hospital update (Scrutiny review)	Request of members: matter of importance to residents	Awareness of situation to be able to support and advise	1
29 August 2024	Economic regeneration strategy (Steve Meynell)	Annual report	Briefing on outcomes	2, 3
	Environmental Improvement programme (Daniel Britton)	Annual report	Consult with members	2, 3
24 October 2024	Bus services / public transport	Request of members: impact on	Understand and influence policy	1, 2

Date	Issue (report author)	Reason	Outcomes	Supports corporate aims
	(Scrutiny review)	communities		
	Affordable housing delivery (Valerie Bunting)	Annual report	Awareness of delivery	1, 2
	Infrastructure funding statement (Kirstie Rea)	Annual report	Awareness of S106 contributions and allocations	2
12 December 2024	Planning appeals update (Chris Brown)	Annual report	Monitoring of performance on appeals	2
February 2025 (budget meeting)	Budget reports (Ashley Wilson)	Normal reporting pathway	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	All
	Pay policy statement (Julie Stay)	Normal reporting pathway	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	All
March / April 2025	Housing associations review (Scrutiny review)	Request of members: matter of importance to residents	Scoping of review	1, 2
	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
	Parish & Community Initiative Fund allocations (Paul Scragg)	Normal reporting pathway	Recommendations to SLT	2
May / June 2025				
July / August 2025	Economic regeneration strategy (Steve Meynell)	Annual report	Briefing on outcomes	2, 3
	Environmental Improvement programme (Daniel Britton)	Annual report	Consult with members	2, 3
September / October 2025	Affordable housing delivery (Valerie Bunting)	Annual report	Awareness of delivery	1, 2

Date	Issue (report author)	Reason	Outcomes	Supports corporate aims
	Infrastructure funding statement (Kirstie Rea)	Annual report	Awareness of S106 contributions and allocations	2
November / December 2025	Planning appeals update (Chris Brown)	Annual report	Monitoring of performance on appeals	2
February 2026 (budget meeting)	Budget reports (Ashley Wilson)	Normal reporting pathway	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	All
	Pay policy statement (Julie Stay)	Normal reporting pathway	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	All
March / April 2026	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
	Parish & Community Initiative Fund allocations (Paul Scragg)	Normal reporting pathway	Recommendations to SLT	2
May / June 2026				
July / August 2026	Economic regeneration strategy (Steve Meynell)	Annual report	Briefing on outcomes	2, 3
	Environmental Improvement programme (Daniel Britton)	Annual report	Consult with members	2, 3
September / October 2026	Affordable housing delivery (Valerie Bunting)	Annual report	Awareness of delivery	1, 2
	Infrastructure funding statement (Kirstie Rea)	Annual report	Awareness of S106 contributions and allocations	2
November / December 2026	Planning appeals update (Chris Brown)	Annual report	Monitoring of performance on appeals	2

Date	Issue (report author)	Reason	Outcomes	Supports corporate aims
February 2027 (budget meeting)	Budget reports (Ashley Wilson)	Normal reporting pathway	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	All
	Pay policy statement (Julie Stay)	Normal reporting pathway	Scrutiny prior to Council decision	All
March / April 2027	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
	Parish & Community Initiative Fund allocations (Paul Scragg)	Normal reporting pathway	Recommendations to SLT	2

To be programmed
Regeneration strategy 2021-25 review
Heritage strategy annual report

Key to corporate aims

- 1 – People
- 2 – Places
- 3 – Prosperity

This page is intentionally left blank



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 14 March 2024

Wards affected: All wards.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) PARTNERSHIP UPDATE AND COMMISSIONING OUTCOMES 2022/23

Report of Director, Community Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update Scrutiny on the key achievements arising from the Borough's Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Partnership arrangements and supporting activities.
- 1.2 To report on outcomes of the VCS commissioning programme for April 2022 – March 2023.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the positive impact, outcomes and contribution of the voluntary and community sector and its many volunteers, enabled via the VCS partnership arrangements and the ongoing direct commissioning of VCS frontline service provision.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 The Partnership is a collaboration between the local authority and the VCS, and has been in place since 2013, with overall aim of helping to sustain and grow the vital work delivered by the VCS and its many volunteers. The partnership delivers the following provision:
 - Delivery of the VCS forum, which meets bi-annually, enabling learning and development, networking and collaboration and acts as a key link with the community.

- Manages the VCS Commissioning Board, which provides a robust and fair mechanism through which the council can commission services from the VCS.
 - Maintenance of a comprehensive database of VCS contacts which enables members to share information with each other and also provides a key mechanism to share information from the local authority and other partners and also provides an opportunity for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to engage and consult.
 - The development of an online and physical volunteering hub, a central point of contact within the borough where organisations can promote their volunteering opportunities and the community can find more information about volunteering.
- 3.2 The Borough Council annually ring fences funding to directly support the work of our VCS organisations. For the year 2022–23 £70,000 was ringfenced. There was a further £70,900 available in 2022-23 due to agreed carry forwards from the pandemic period. The money is distributed via a panel called the VCS Commissioning board. The current board is made up of VCS partners and has two elected member representatives, Councillor Michael Mullaney and Councillor Martin Cartwright.

4 VCS Commissioning 2022-23

- 4.1 VCS commissioning money is split into two separate funds: Making a Difference and Community Volunteering Fund.
- 4.2 The Making a Difference Fund, offers community grants of between £500 to £3,000 to kickstart new projects within the VCS network (volunteer & community sector) or to boost the impact of VCS groups across Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. The Community Volunteering Fund offers community grants of up to £500 to support grassroots volunteering and community activity across the borough. Although anyone can apply, projects that supported communities impacted by the war in Ukraine and those that supported the reduction on the impact of climate change were actively encouraged. Appendix 1 details projects commissioned in 2022-23.
- 4.3 £109, 677 of Making a Difference and Community Volunteering grants were approved for VCS groups in Hinckley and Bosworth between April 2022 and March 2023. This equated to 82 projects, events or activities successfully delivered through the grants and over 20,000 local residents benefitting from the activities of voluntary and community sector groups funded by the grants.
- 4.4 In 2022-23 a special funding round was offered for VCS or not for profit organisations offering a warm space provision in the borough of Hinckley & Bosworth during the period Oct 2022 – March 2023. Funding of up to £1200 could be utilised to support energy costs, refreshments, food provision, and associated activities (not salary costs). Appendix 2 details projects funded and outcomes.

- 4.5 To mark the Coronation of King Charles III, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, in partnership with the RCC, launched a new fund, grants of up to £500, to help established community groups across Hinckley and Bosworth to celebrate and commemorate this historic occasion. This funding round was launched towards the end of 2022-23 and ran into the 2023-24 financial year. Up until the end of 2022-23 16 community groups had been supported with a Coronation grant.

5. Broader VCS Partnership Outcomes

- 5.1 In 2023, the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) remit was transferred to the Community Services and Safeguarding team. Early in the transition a new delivery plan was jointly developed with the Rural Community Council (RCC) to comprehensively drive delivery and continually assess the impact of the partnership and its contributions.
- 5.2 The partnership holds two VCS forums a year, each focusing on a different topic. This year a focussed session on the cost of living was held in September 2023 which was well attended and provided an opportunity for the sector to come together, share good practice and hear key updates from different partners. The next VCS forum in February 2024 is on Mental Health Awareness & Support in the VCS Sector.
- 5.3 The physical volunteering hub, a contact within the borough where organisations can promote their volunteering opportunities and where the community can find more information about volunteering has continued with a drop in at Atkins every Tuesday. This year the hub has started visiting different parts of the district with locations covered to date at Burbage Millennium Hall, Burbage Common car park, Markfield Sport and Community Centre, Market Bosworth Battlefield car park and Barwell George Ward Centre.
- 5.4 Work has been ongoing to continually promote the VCS partnership. The number of community groups based in Hinckley and Bosworth signed up as members to the VCS network as of March 2023 was 248, more recent data shows this is increasing, and current membership is 296.
- 5.5 Another successful Making a Difference Awards event was held at Hinckley Rugby Club in November 2023, to recognise and celebrate volunteers in the borough. Members of the community were invited to nominate individuals or groups who they felt should be recognised and publicly thanked for their help and support to their community. The event was extremely well attended.

6. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

- 6.1 The report is to be taken in open session.

7. Financial implications [CS]

- 7.1 There was a commissioning budget of £110,000 in 2022/23. This includes a £40,000 carry forward from 2021/22. As per appendix 1, £109,677 was awarded in making a difference grants.
- 7.2 The RCC held unspent commissioning monies of £30,900 as at March 2022. This funding was used to support warm space and coronation grants.
- 7.3 For 2023/24, there is a £70,000 commissioning budget.

8. Legal implications [MR]

- 8.1 None

9. Corporate Plan implications

- 9.1 The contents of the report relate to and support the People, Place and Prosperity corporate priorities, and will specifically support the delivery of the following ambition: 'Support an effective and viable voluntary and community sector.'

10. Consultation

- 10.1 This report has taken account of the ongoing consultation undertaken by the Rural Communities Council through the established VCS Development Forum, Commissioning Board, and database.

11. Risk implications

- 11.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 11.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 11.3 No risks identified.

12. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 12.1 The utilisation of up to date evidence sources and data, informed via the VCS Partnership, and VCS database, has helped to inform the ongoing development of our VCS arrangements. These mechanisms also ensure resources are aligned with Borough's priorities and gives VCS organisations from all areas of the Borough, including rural areas, access to the VCS partnership provision and commissioning funds.

12.2 No action necessary

13. Climate implications

13.1 In direct response to the authority's Climate Change Strategy, VCS Commissioning Funds for 2022/23 included volunteering/community activities, specifically in relation to climate change initiatives.

14. Corporate implications

14.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: Appendix 1 – VCS Commissioning Report 2022-23
Appendix 2 – Warm Space Commissioning Report 2022-23

Contact officer: Rachel Burgess Ext 5400, Amie Carroll Ext 5746
Executive member: Councillor M Mullaney

This page is intentionally left blank



MAKING A DIFFERENCE COMMUNITY GRANTS

SUMMARY REPORT 2022 – 2023



**Hinckley Town Tennis Club
Ukrainian Tennis Sessions**



**Without Walls, Stanton under Bardon
Older Person's Christmas Lunch**



**Accept Project - Community Wellbeing Garden
Berevment Support Sessions**

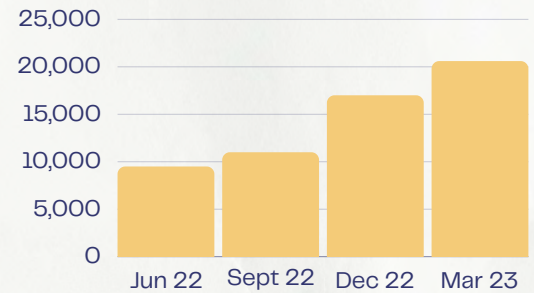
Making a Difference

This report presents the findings from the Community Volunteering Fund and Making a Difference grant programme between April 2022 to March 2023. It highlights how these small grants have big impacts on local Volunteer and Community Sector (VCS) groups across Hinckley and Bosworth, either through volunteering or benefitting residents of the Borough

COMMUNITY GROUPS SIGNED ONTO VCS DATABASE

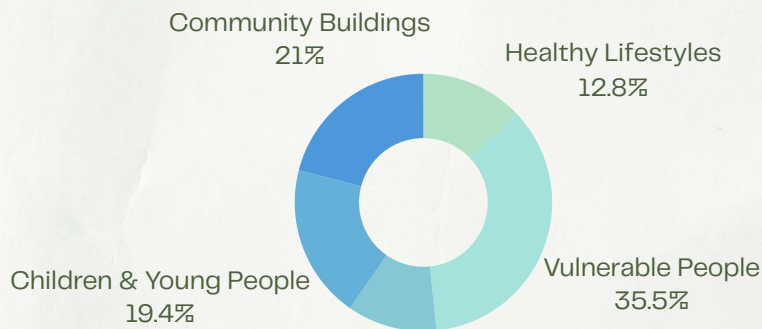
Number of community groups based in Hinckley and Bosworth signed up as members to the VCS network as of March 2023

248



NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

Cumulative numbers of local residents who have benefited from the activities of voluntary and community sector groups funded by Making a Difference



TYPES OF VCS ACTIVITY SUPPORTED BY FUNDING FROM HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

PROJECTS DELIVERED

Number of projects, events or activities successfully delivered through grants from Making a Difference

82

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Number of volunteers helping on projects and events funded by Making a Difference community grant schemes



TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED

Total amount of grants approved for VCS groups in Hinckley and Bosworth between April 2022 and March 2023

£109,677

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Blackways Meadows Allotments Co-operative Ltd We are a community benefit society and provide allotment plots to the local community so that they can grow fresh, healthy vegetables themselves. A grant was used to purchase and install an eco-toilet on the community allotment plot	£1,500	The new toilet facilities have enhanced the allotment for members and visitors to the site, as well as benefitting the local environment. It also forms part of the development of a social activity area for the local community to use within the community plots.	34	85	8
Peckleton Village Hall Committee A grant was received to purchase and install a new sound and visual projection system at Peckleton Village Hall	£3,000	The installation of this equipment has enabled many people to enjoy the facilities at the hall as well as making the hall more appealing to hirers and allowing the committee to consider running more events such as a community cinema	20	500	5
Hinckley Running Club Juniors A grant paid for a training course to train young people who volunteer under Duke of Edinburgh scheme to become young leaders and running coaches for the club.	£2,000	The children that participated benefitted from learning new skills, becoming more active, gaining confidence whilst making friends. Parents also saw their children grow and take up athletics as a new hobby.	65	12	3
Earl Shilton Town Cricket Club A grant funded a project aimed at getting more children to become more active and to take up playing cricket. It included running specific sessions for children and young people who are inactive and causing anti-social behaviour.	£1,500	The group provided coaching sessions to local children, including going into schools. As a result, increases were seen in the Junior Section catering between ages of 6 and 12. The sessions have also encouraged local children to get involved in cricket and become more active.	60	112	20

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Falcon Support Services A grant was received to purchase a laptop and a computer to support staff and residents attending the weekly drop in support service at Hinckley Salvation Army	£560.01	The laptop has been instrumental in helping service users at the Hinckley drop in centre to attend zoom meetings with agencies such as benefit providers etc. We also help people to create CV's, job searches, apply for work, access emails and to create email addresses so they can apply for benefits and even general google searches like the locations of places.	30	100	10
4th Barwell Brownies To purchase two eight-person tents to allow Brownies to participate in regular camping trips throughout Leicestershire.	£840	The tents have been used multiple times since the funding was received, including attendance at the Leicestershire Girlguiding Brownie camp during August 2022. Many future events have now been planned.	100	16	3
Elohim Christian Church To provide welcome Hampers to Ukrainian families arriving in the borough which will contain information supplied from HBBC.	£500	The grant enabled the group to provide welcome hampers for Ukrainian families arriving in the Borough, containing sign posting information supplied by HBBC plus Ukrainian staples for them to feel like they have a little bit of home when they arrive.	45	50	8
Botcheston Village Hall Management Committee To replace all outdoor chairs and tables at Botcheston Village Hall as well as the purchase of a new outdoor marquee to benefit users of the hall	£2,893	The replacement of all of the outdoor furniture has enabled the group to deliver more events and to promote local community cohesion in a safe environment.	25	100	15

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Earl Shilton Social Institute Earl Shilton Social Institute is a large charitable community building hired by many community groups for various activities. A grant was received to replace and upgrade 5 snooker table lights to energy efficient LED strip lights	£2,875	The grant from Making a Difference gave the group the opportunity to replace the old fluorescent tubes that were high energy burning with ones that are 10 times more energy efficient. It is estimated that £970 each year will be saved in electricity costs.	30	100	10
Without Walls Christian fellowship Without Walls Christian Fellowship run a project called Thrive that delivers tea parties for socially isolated and lonely people living in Stanton under Bardon. A grant was applied for to support volunteers who help those who don't have their own transport to attend and have a freshly cooked meal.	£1,000	The project is a practical response to a national issue, reaching elderly people who are lonely, vulnerable and isolated as we seek to improve their overall welfare. Knowing that loneliness is a significant problem in our society, the group can continue to provide this 'social prescribing' activity and connect with people in need.	40	1000	12
Congerstone Kickstart CIC A grant was received to install a new access gate and security fencing and thus completing the installation of a new community building in Congerstone	£3,000	The Making a Difference grant was used to complete the works to allow full community access of the building. The community building was completed in early 2023 and opened in March 2023.	160	150	5
6th Hinckley (St Francis) scout group With about 60 young people wanting to go camping or on expeditions, a grant was applied for to replace our stock of camping tents so that groups can attend future camping trips and expeditions	£2,408	The grant enabled the group to go camping in dry, warm non-leaking tents which was especially beneficial to our younger members, many of whom had not camped or been away from home before. It also enabled some of our leaders to qualify as camp leaders & to expand the activity to even more youngsters.	100	60	14

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
West Leicestershire Community First Responders Community first responders respond to 999 calls alongside the Ambulance service. Funding was granted to purchase three new mobile defibrillators to replace the old ones we had in service.	£3,000	Thanks to the grant from Making a Difference, having the latest equipment has enabled the First Responders to achieve the best possible outcome for someone in cardiac arrest.	1500	2500	8
1st Hinckley (Holy Trinity) Scout Group A grant was awarded to provide training of leaders to deliver Explorer Scout activities, namely the Mountain Leadership Training course and Duke of Edinburgh Award Training	£1,500	The funding enabled two leaders to complete Mountain Leadership Training and Duke of Edinburgh Award Training to enable the District to provide a more flexible programme around the Expedition sections of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards and the higher Scouting Awards such as the King's Scout Award.	200	75	3
Feed The Hungry UK Feed The Hungry is an humanitarian aid charity with a site at Hinckley to provide food provision to the Hinckley and Bosworth area. A grant was received to provide emergency food parcels to those in crisis in Hinckley and surrounding areas.	£3,000	The grant extended the group's ability to provide emergency food parcels to those in crisis in Hinckley and surrounding areas. This project specifically targets those who are unable to attend local foodbank centres due to access issues, e.g. lack of transport, ill health.	350	260	2
George Ward Table Tennis Club Funding allowed the group provide training of volunteers into coaches and the delivery of specific sessions including women and girls to attract new members to the club	£3,000	Thanks to the grant we received, the club was able to re-launch in September 2022, with two new coaches, other members interested in training as coaches' level 1 and three new volunteers in the process of getting trained. Following advice from Table Tennis England, the club also managed to launch a women & girls only session.	150	70	14

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Newbold Verdon Baptist Church - The Hub A grant from Making a Difference allowed the purchase of kitchen equipment including a dishwasher and new crockery for the Hub at Newbold Verdon Baptist Church	£2,500	The Hub meets every Wednesday and is registered as a "Warm Space" and ran as a Coffee Morning. Activities include a Knitting Group, simple crafts; jigsaws etc. The new equipment has made a huge difference to the volunteers who cook the meals and do the washing up. It is quick, hygienic and means so much to the group	300	80	10
Work-Link Project The purchase of 100 slow cookers to gift to residents of Hinckley and Bosworth who are pensioners, and those on benefits.	£2,980	Slow cookers were gifted to residents of Hinckley and Bosworth who were on mean's tested benefits. The idea came about with the cost of living crisis and soaring energy prices meaning that those on low incomes were having to choose between heating and eating.	35	300	2
St Catherines' Environmental Group Funding was used to complete the third and final stage of Burbage memorial garden that included planting and new seating areas	£2,200	With the help of students from Hasting High School, an area was cleared of weeds and then over 140 roses were planted as well as spring bulbs and a seating area as a social amenity. Having a mix of older and younger people working together for one aim was a joy to watch. The community spirit got everyone talking and people passing by where full of praise for the project.	32	2,500	72
Time Out Carers Time Out Carers is a non profit group run by a committee of unpaid carers offering support and activities and respite time out to other unpaid carers. The grant was used to purchase a laptop, printer, software and hotspot connection to support outreach sessions led by the group.	£2,307.38	The technology has helped the group maintain an online presence to support members and to undertake further fundraising efforts. It also provides members with the opportunity to stay in contact with the group if they're unable to leave their cared for.	125	68	7

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Action Homeless (Leicester) Ltd A grant allowed the group to provide warm welcome packs to people affected by homelessness moving into temporary accommodation. Packs included toiletries, towels, bedding and basic household items including a kettle and a lamp.	£1,763	A significant number of people benefitted from the warm welcome packs, all of whom have been grateful to receive them. The packs made people feel more settled and have prevented them from worrying about how to access the items that are included. One recipient commented 'it made my first few weeks here so much easier as I had everything I needed to start to make this place feel like home'	40	10	5
Thornton Community Centre Trustees Thornton Community Centre and Sports Hall is run by a small group of Trustees and local volunteers. A grant was received to refurbish the public toilets at the Centre that has been in place for 50 years	£3,000	The work was completed in March 2023 by a local team of builders. It included new LED lighting and eco-friendly hand dryers. As Trustees, we are now no longer ashamed to show members of the public into the shabby, poorly built, smelly toilets that we have put up with for many years. They are a credit to the Centre and we are gaining more bookings as a result.	50	400	3
Green Towers Hinckley Club For Young People Grant towards staff training for the climbing wall and to buy new equipment for the climbing wall.	£2,750	The money provided by Making a Difference was used to refurbish and re-route the climbing wall, doubling the routes from 2 to 4. This has now also enabled us to have easier routes for beginners and harder routes for some of our more experienced climbers.	600	1,200	12
St Francis Community Centre St Francis is a Community centre in Hinckley, offering space to various local groups in the surrounding area. A grant was received to pay for seating outside of the Community Centre as a social amenity.	£1,028	Having comfortable seating outdoors provides the group with another safe space for members to enjoy some social interaction. The outdoor seating has also allowed for the use of the outdoor space on warmer days, this is particularly important on Thursdays when we run our Friendship café.	10	40	4



Hinckley Town Tennis

Free tennis sessions for Ukrainian refugees
Grant Awarded: £500
March 2023 - Onwards



Hinckley Town Tennis club are proud of their record of delivering tennis coaching free of charge to a number of disability groups in Leicestershire. They also allow the general public to play on their courts without having to become club members. The club is run entirely by volunteers.

With the outbreak of the Ukrainian war and a number of Ukrainians being relocated to the Hinckley area, the club were active in offering their facilities on Leicester Road to people in extreme circumstances.

A grant from Making a Difference was instrumental in helping the club to organise and run 90 minute tennis sessions and social events that were free of charge to over 20 Ukrainian refugees and their children. The events were held on the first Saturday of each month. The grant also allowed the purchase of 6 adult tennis rackets, a mini-tennis net as well as some indoor games for when it is raining. As a result, some Ukrainian attendees became club members as well as visits from the Ukrainian tennis association, who were keen to learn how to set up Ukraine based tennis clubs in other local communities.

The tennis sessions have continued throughout 2023, offering not only fun and friendship for attenders but also a chance to socialize and to improve their English language skills. Attenders have made full use of the equipment purchased with the funding, made easier with the purchase of the mini-tennis net to cater for the different age groups.



The main success was to extend the hand of friendship to people who are suffering more than we can imagine.

To bring a smile to their faces, especially the children, was quite a moving experience.

At the end of the sessions there is no doubt that the attendees have enjoyed their time at the club



John McGowan,
Club Secretary



VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Feed The Hungry UK Feed The Hungry provides food parcels for those in crisis with many referrals from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and other service professionals. The grant was used to pay for 300 hygiene packs to go alongside the food parcels that the charity offers to those unable to access foodbanks.	£3,000	The grant has made a significant difference to those who have received them, with individuals are often battling illness, facing financial difficulties, complex mental health issues or unemployment. An example includes a Ukrainian family who have fled and settled in the Hinckley area. The group was able to provide this family with food, toiletries and clothes.	50	720	2
DCC of Orton on the Hill, St Edith's Church As the District Church Council of Orton on the Hill, the group organize community events based out of St Edith's church. A grant was received to upgrade the existing heating and lighting to more efficient infrared and LED units and install new ones where there were previously none.	£3,000	The community has been using the church to gather for social events for many years. With the new heating and lighting in place, the group are able to use the building year-round. The winter months are particularly lonely for some of our older more vulnerable residents so this is a massive benefit to them.	80	180	2
Twycross Village Hall Funding was received to convert the old storage room at Twycross Village Hall into a permanent children's play room and to purchase toys and equipment	£1218	Previously the hall had absolutely nothing for children and the new grant allowed a new play room to be offered to families who use the hall under initiatives such as warm hubs. We have seen older children teach younger children to play pool and table tennis together and making new friends.	20	200+	20
Hinckley Town Tennis Club Equipment and indoor venue costs for the disability group.	£524	The grant has enabled the club to provide an indoor facility for disabled children to enjoy tennis lessons. The new Boccia set has enabled us to offer this sport to disabled users in addition to regular tennis. The pickleball equipment has also enabled us to introduce this game to our older players, helping to keep active.	45	40	6

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Sutton Cheney Village Garden Group A group of volunteers in Sutton Cheney working to create a wild flower area received a grant to purchase gardening tools, a variety of plants, seeds, bulbs and a small shed for the site.	£2,760	The grant has allowed the group to create a space for contemplation, friendship and a natural space to enhance local biodiversity. Regular work parties have created mown paths and areas of planted wildflowers.	50	150	15
Hinckley District Scouts Hinckley District Scouts is made up of 12 scout groups and 5 explorer sections that deliver Scouting to over 650 young people every week in and around the Hinckley area. A grant was received to fund training and support to deliver a network of Mental Health First Aiders within the Scout District.	£3,000	The grant was used to deliver Mental Health First Aid courses to as many of our adult volunteers as we could to allow us to create a network of fully trained and qualified MHFA.	100	1,000	10
Work-Link Work-Link are a local charity who provides hands on work experience to those that are furthest from the labour market. A grant was received to gift 75 electric blankets to residents of Hinckley & Bosworth who met the eligibility criteria of being on low incomes.	£2,850	The project was a huge success, with all the blankets being gifted within days showing the great need for the project, allowing people to keep warm by heating their body rather than a room. Feedback showed that people were struggling with soaring energy prices but didn't anticipate by how much.	51	80	2
Hinckley & District MS Society Hinckley & District MS Society support anyone affected by Multiple Sclerosis in the Hinckley area. A grant was received to fund a qualified instructor to run weekly exercise classes specific to those living with MS as well as towards transport costs for residents to attend.	£2,959	The exercise class currently has an average of 20 residents attending weekly. The total face-to-face engagement in 2023 (from January to October) has been around 960 which is almost 300% higher than the same period in 2022.	122	85	6

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Nailstone Community Group Nailstone Community Group is a small community group delivering local projects to improve the village. A grant was applied for to plant 6500 bulbs in 5 locations across Nailstone to enhance biodiversity and improve visual impact	£2,028	The project was designed to improve and enhance the green spaces within Nailstone by planting 4800 spring flowering bulbs to provide colour and biodiversity for the benefit of residents and commuters passing through Nailstone.	300	22	2
Work Link Project A grant was received to purchase an additional 100 slow cookers for residents on mean tested benefits	£2,980	Slow cookers were gifted to residents of Hinckley and Bosworth who were pensioners, and/or on benefits at a cost of £1. The idea came about as the cost of living coupled with soaring energy prices meant that those on low incomes were having to choose between heating and eating.	35	300	2
St John's Parochial Church Council St John's Church has been serving the community of Hinckley since the late 1930s, including a 'stay and play' groups for under 5s, a Friday night youth group and the collection and distribution of food for Hinckley Food Bank. A grant was applied for to cover the running costs of the Oasis centre and its activities.	£2,250	The Making a Difference grant has funded some of the activity and running costs of Oasis Community café, allowing it to continue as a welcoming, accessible and supportive place which enables local people to engage in community life, make connections and receive informal support and signposting for other relevant services.	160	860	20
Stoke Golding Methodist Church With membership declining in recent years, Stoke Golding Methodist Church applied for funding to open a Community Café in the church hall where the local community can gather during the week	£3,000	The Cameo Café officially opened in May 2023 with new heating, lighting, windows, kitchen and modern café furniture. The cafe is already turning over a small profit, with an average of 40 visitors a day.	12	332	3

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Burbage Crusaders Bowling Club Burbage Crusaders are a small bowling club that cater for elderly and disabled members. A grant was received to purchase a bowling wheelchair for use by anyone wishing to use the Parish Bowling Green.	£1,028	Currently the wheelchair benefits our disabled members but is available to any member who wants to use it, for example at larger events such as the Bowls Big Weekend on 28th May 2023. The availability of the wheelchair will encourage more bowlers to continue bowling.	60	5	3
ACCEPT The ACCEPT project supports referred clients to different types of bereavement support, ranging from losing partners to loss due to suicide. A grant was received to pay for sessional staff to deliver ongoing bereavement support at the group's Community Wellbeing Garden in Barwell.	£1,500	NHS Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) Staff & Local Area Co-ordinators have liaised with ACCEPT on a regular basis and made referrals to the project. Many clients had experienced isolation, alongside long term mental health issues, resulting in a loss of confidence in attending new venues and meeting new people, which creates much anxiety for them.	20	19	2
Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland provide ongoing services for older people to improve their health and wellbeing. A grant was received to upgrade the lighting at Earl Shilton Senior Citizens Centre to LED lighting.	£3,000	With thanks to the Making a Difference grant, the centre and its attendees have benefitted from the new installation of 50 LED energy-saving lightbulbs. An important outcome for this project is the reduction in the centre's Carbon print. Roughly, one LED bulb will minimize greenhouse gas emissions by almost half a ton.	3000	600	16
Sport in Desford Sport in Desford 's (SID) objects are the promotion of sport and recreation to the local community of Desford and beyond. A grant from Making a Difference was received to set up of mental health sessions for affected participants.	£1,000	The "State of Mind" Mental Health project is being delivered at Sport in Desford in a weekly 2 hour sessions. People with mental health issues come together to engage in a variety of physical activities alongside exploring relevant therapies, such as mindfulness.	48	12	1

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Sutton Cheney in Bloom Residents in Sutton Cheney formed a village bloom group who applied for funding to make Sutton Cheney more attractive for the local community. Funding was applied for add oak barrels and hanging baskets in the village, as well as plants and compost.	£350	Although the project is ongoing, the village community are thrilled with the new planters and keen to help with their future maintenance, including watering and replacing the plants.	20	250	6
Druziv of Ukraine Leics & Warks A grant was applied for to provide art supplies and to start a series of art and craft therapy Sessions for Ukrainian refugees who have moved into the area and are living with sponsors	£500	The event was hugely successful with participants who were able to socialise with other Ukrainian refugees, sponsors and supporters and express themselves through art. There are approximately 30 to 40 people who attend each week as well as new arrivals to the area. HBBC and DWP also attend periodically.	50	40	2
Barlestone Wombles Barlestone Wombles are a local group of volunteer litterpickers to tidy the villages of Barlestone and Osbaston. Funding was applied for to host a community litter pick event.	£200	The event focused on "grot spots" for litter that included broken glass around the youth shelter and children's playground. The project gave great visibility that volunteers are working in the community and that anyone is welcome to join the group.	2000	30	10
Music and Movement A grant was applied for to cover public liability insurance which is a huge expense to the group as a small music therapy group in Market Bosworth.	£111	The Grant has allowed us to continue our sessions at the parish hall in Market Bosworth.	9	15	1
Ambion Court Sheltered Accommodation A grant was applied for to the Community Volunteering Fund to launch a watercolour art class for residents and families at the sheltered accomodation at Ambion Court.	£425	The residents and their families benefitted hugely by getting out of their flats and socializing with other people. It was a great way to improve mental health as well as learning a new skill.	80	10	1

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
ASB- Autism Space to Belong Autism Space to Belong is a group aimed at supporting children and their families with autism across Hinckley and Bosworth. A grant was received to cover the costs of hosting sessions in Burbage.	£500	Following its launch, feedback has been mainly from parents who are being supported just as much as the children. Parents can chat to other parents, who are very often in the same position, looking for help, support and guidance.	100	35	1
Elohim Christian Church A grant was received to fund a warm welcome initiative starting in October 2022 until March 2023 that will provide a place where people can come for a warm, a hot drink and some company so that they don't have to put heating on at home.	£500	Funding allowed the group to offer a warm welcome scheme at Elohim Community Church, to support those in need locally to feel like they have a place to go. This included families who need a little extra as well as isolated people living in the area.	40	85	6
Burbage surgery PPG Funding was received to host a coffee morning aimed at those in the community who are lonely, isolated and in need of help and support with their mental and social well being.	£500	The coffee morning has over 40 people turning up on a regular basis. The people who attend are lonely, isolated and in need of help and support with their mental and social wellbeing and are being supported by the café.	2	35	6
Bee Unique Youth Project A grant was received to allow the group to host more events at their youth club in Markfield	£500	The grant allowed the youth club to continue to provide a wide programme of different activities during 2022, with positive feedback made by girls about how they are enjoying it.	5	18	1
Barwell & Hollycroft Surgery Telephone Befrienders The group offers a telephone befriending service to individuals who have been identified by health care professionals. Funding was used to pay for a Christmas Lunch for the clients who use the service	£180	The Christmas celebration helped our clients to re-engage with society in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. It also enabled the befrienders to develop their friendship with their befriendees.	280	45	16

MS Society Hinckley

Exercise, coffee & chat for those living with multiple sclerosis

Grant Awarded: £2,959

January 2023 onwards

The MS Hinckley group has offered support to those with Multiple Sclerosis in the Hinckley & Bosworth area for 55 years. Following the COVID pandemic, the group wanted to respond to the increasing isolation of group members and the impact on their mental health.

As a result, the group applied to Making a Difference to launch weekly exercise classes for those living with MS, offering disability-appropriate exercises run by specialist healthcare professionals. The grant covered the costs of a professional instructor from the Leicester Tigers Foundation, as well as helping with transport costs to ensure more people to attend the sessions.

Since October 2023, the exercises classes have attracted 20 regular attendees which is seen as a phenomenal result due to the number of people having regular medical appointments or illness. The group continues to welcome new members as well as keeping in touch with existing ones.

The project also includes the launch of a coffee morning which initially was to follow after the exercise class, however it soon became apparent that this social half-hour was almost as positive an impact on the attendees as the actual exercise session itself. It now operates as a stand alone session where residents living with MS can check in with each other and offer support to or receive support from others with lived experience.



“Our aim was to improve both the mental well-being and also the physical health of people in our district who are living with MS.

The pandemic has had a more prominent impact on these members of our local community than most and many have become increasingly isolated and physically declined at a greater rate than most.”



Fiona Catton
Group Leader of MS
Society, Hinckley



VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Desford Striders RC The funding allowed the group to deliver a Couch to 5km programme which is a 8 week course to attract people into running.	£500	The funding allowed the group to purchase high vis vests and torches to make the sessions as safe as possible. The funding also paid for a celebration at the end of the programme to those who completed the course.	50	8	4
Markfield Community Library The community library is run by volunteers as an important community asset in Markfield. The grant allowed the group to purchase a new Hoover.	£380	A new Hoover allowed the group to keep the library clean and tidy as an important public amenity space in Markfield. As the library receives no financial support, the group were managing on a very old donated Hoover which was too heavy for elderly volunteers to use. They are very grateful for the new one.	450	500	20
Hinckley & District Museum A grant was received to undertake essential repairs and maintenance work to Hinckley Museum which is a Grade II listed 17th century cottage.	£500	The grant allowed the group to ensure that the building remains safe for visitors and volunteers as a community space. The work also replaced a faulty spotlight in the museum as well as a light to the storage area to improve the safety of volunteers accessing it.	150	700	35
Time Out Carers Group A grant was applied for to fund mindfulness sessions to provide respite, relaxation and a warm, social space for local unpaid carers	£500	Feedback from the carers show that all users have benefited from the mindfulness sessions	18	68	7
Hinckley Town Tennis Club A grant was received to fund monthly free tennis sessions for Ukrainian refugees	£500	The funding paid for 6 adult tennis rackets, a mini-tennis net as well as some indoor games for when it is raining. The group provided free tennis coaching and free use of the courts. The sessions have attracted over 20 attendees.	24	39	10

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Nailstone Little Fishes A grant was received to launch a warm welcoming safe place for preschool children, parents, carers and childminders to meet, chat and socially interact. the preschool will be held at All Saints Church in Nailstone and will be promoted via social media.	£500	The idea came about from conversations with parents living in Nailstone where no provision was currently being offered. As the church offered a warm, safe and welcoming environment, the new preschool offered the chance for young families to interact, thus reducing loneliness and promoting social isolation and chance for families to support each other, something that often happens in rural communities.	50	25	5
Green Towers Badminton/Short Tennis Funding was received to run 2 badminton groups at Green Towers, including the purchase of equipment needed to enable more people to play at these clubs, plus advertising to reach more players.	£500	Funding was received to run two badminton groups at Green Towers and included the purchase of equipment needed to enable more people to play at these clubs.	50	6	50
Ratby Community Library Ratby community library is run by trustees and volunteers and has no other regular external funding. A grant was received to allow the volunteers to purchase a new vacuum cleaner plus professionally cleaning the existing carpet.	£500	The library supports a number of different community groups, including community cafe, Wiggly Readers for pre-school children, an art club, monthly quiz and sitting yoga session. With a foot fall of approximately 1,000 people per week, the group are grateful for the new Hoover as the old one is heavy and cumbersome.	50	1000	24
Coffee in the Pub A grant paid for the launch a new community coffee morning in the George and Dragon pub in Stoke Golding to provide a warm, welcoming and safe place for people to meet, chat and socially interact.	£300	The grant enabled the group to purchase all of the things required to run a community cafe. The project has addressed loneliness and isolation that is often so prevalent in rural communities. The project was further promoted by the Rural Coffee Connect project. Drinks were initially offered free of charge, but now locals are being charged a small fee to cover costs.	125	40	4

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Sheepy Playing Field A grant enabled the group to plant a large wildflower meadow at the recreation area in the village.	£485	The planting event went very well with a total of 624 plugs planted by around 10 people from the local community. This included 'bee friendly' British native wildflowers. It is hoped that the wildflowers will encourage more wildlife and enjoyment for all. The local primary school also appointed "Junior Ambassadors" alongside the volunteers who will help to maintain and promote the project to the local community over the long term.	14	70	20
Without Walls A grant was applied for to hold a free pirate-themed fun day for families in Stanton under Bardon with games, prizes, free barbeque and a large pirate ship for children to play on.	£500	The event was a massive success with over 300 people attending.	1	300	6
Ambion Connection A grant was recieved to launch a community warm space at Ambion Court sheltered housing in Market Bosworth. The main aim was to provide a warm safe place for people to connect and to interact. The sessions would be offered a free enabling as many as possible to attend.	£400	Residents agreed that this was a great idea to provide an event that is warm, safe and welcoming for people to meet and connect. The programme of events was promoted on social media, newsletters and at residents meetings. Different speakers were present at different meetings and to promote the chance to make new connections to address isolation and loneliness.	60	32	8

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Sheepy Bonfire Society NHW To purchase and install a Brazier beacon as a lasting memorial for the Queen's Jubilee	£959	The event was a huge success with high numbers of people from Sheepy Magna and surrounding villages. The village now has a lasting memorial of this historic day, with volunteers in the village willing to use it for future events.	60	500	12
Botcheston Village Hall Funding was applied for to host a community gala as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations.	£500	The event consisted of a number of organised events throughout the day including live music, activities and entertainment. It was promoted to residents of Botcheston, Newtown Unthank and Kirby Grange.	58	250	8
3rd Hinckley St Francis Rainbows A grant enabled the group to purchase craft supplies, stationary, outdoor tables and chairs so that they could host a Jubilee celebration as well as other future outdoor events	£600	The girls were able to celebrate this historical occasion with many positive comments were made by girls about receiving the commemorative badge. They also thoroughly enjoyed their party.	35	45	3
Peckleton Village Hall Committee To deliver a street party to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee in Peckleton.	£1,400	Seeing the community coming together and enjoying the village event was a great success that we wouldn't have been possible without the grant being provided.	120	300	9
Botcheston Womens Institute To plant a memorial tree with stone plaque in Botcheston to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee	£300	People living in Botcheston were able to celebrate this historical occasion by planting a tree as a lasting memorial to Queen Elizabeth II	5	100	4
7th Hinckley URC Brownies A celebration event to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee	£150	Each girl designed a Jubilee inspired commemorative tea towel which were then printed and given to the girls to keep. The grant also paid for a Jubilee party as well as metal Jubilee badge for each girl. Around 24 girls were involved from different areas across Hinckley	3	15	2

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
The Beacon Church The grant funded a partnership project between Richmond Primary School in Hinckley and the Beacon Church for families to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee	£1285.43	The event was a huge success. Not only did students from Richmond Primary School attend, but also parents, carers and the wider community were invited too. The event helped with community spirit and enhancing relationships between the school and the local community.	8	200	6
Hinckley District Scout Council To host a Teddy Bears' picnic afternoon at Fox Coverts, near Kirby Mallory, for 190 Beavers to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.	£1,550	The grant paid for the cost of hiring the campsite, the cost of materials for craft activities, the cost of a children's entertainer, the cost of catering for all children attending and the cost of a commemorative blanket badge to take home and keep.	5	190	18
Carlton Volunteer Group The grant was received to organise a street party for all Carlton villagers to enjoy celebrating the Queens Platinum Jubilee together as a community	£500	The grant was used for table and street decorations, providing activities for the children, providing music for all ages and issuing invitations to residents.	4	180	3
All Saints Church Church, Sheepy Magna Funding allowed a garden community party with a brass band to be delivered to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee.	£500	As part of the community celebrations for the Queens Platinum Jubilee, All Saints hosted a traditional garden party on the Rectory lawn with a brass band, family garden games and children's activities. It was offered as a free event open and accessible to all who wished to gather with family and friends in celebration.	106	3	18
George Ward Centre Family activity day to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee	£1,450	The grant was used to pay for a family fun day, with kids activities, party decorations and hand flags to wave. All attendees were given a free jubilee medal to take home to mark this once in a lifetime occasion.	30	450	9

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Witherley Memorial Playing Field Trust The charity owns and maintains the recreation area in Witherley and a grant was sought to install a Platinum Jubilee Memorial Bench in Witherley Playing Fields.	£1,000	The Bench serves as a long term memorial to the Queen, appreciated by the local community as it provides a social amenity for users of the park. The Bench is also a good example of the local community working together to improve local amenities in Witherley.	12	200	5
King Richards Hill Picnic on the Green Funding was applied for to host a community picnic for the community to enjoy with local entertainment and games on Bosworth Green.	£400	The event was a huge success, with the community coming together to celebrate the Jubilee. It helped to make new friendships and persuaded the group to lead on more community based events in the future	5	75	5
Kirkby Mallory School Room Committee A grant was received for a community "Picnic in the Park" event to celebrate the Queens Jubilee.	£300	The event brought local residents together after a long period of isolation due to COVID. It included children's activities, local music and prizes to take home. A large marquee was also donated by Mallory Park.	6	55	14
Hinckley Bowling Club A grant was applied for to allow the group to hold a community party to celebrate the Queens Jubilee. It is an event open to everyone and was seen as a joint project between the Bowling club and local residents.	£500	The event went really well, food was supplied on a bring and share basis and there was a bowling "have a go" at as well as party games. The event had the spirit of a traditional street party with lots of mixing and sharing as well as meeting new people. It was a very special way to celebrate this big event.	6	20	8
Hope Community Church Funding was applied for to host a Jubilee Tea Party where the Church and outside area will be decorated and open for the local community in this area to attend a tea party.	£500	The event was a great success, with elderly people from our coffee morning in attendance as well as members of the W.I, our local scout group and families that use our preschool.	9	45	3

VCS Commissioning outcomes 2022/2023

Evaluation Report

Project Overview and Objectives	Funding allocated	Key outputs/outcomes	Project Hours	Number of beneficiaries	Project Volunteers
Barwell Time Out Carers Group A grant was received for a social event for the unpaid carers and their cared for to come together and celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.	£320	The event was held at Earl Shilton Community House on Peggs Close and was open to all members of the group as well as their cared for. It gave real opportunity to share in the momentous occasion without additional pressures and expenses to them.	10	50	3
3rd St Francis Guides A grant was applied for taking a groups of guides to the Hinckley tea rooms to get dressed up and celebrate with an old fashioned afternoon tea for the Queens Jubilee	£480	The grant supported a local small business as well as allowing the girls remembering this special occasion with taking part in a local special dedicated event.	15	20	4
St Martin's Church Stapleton District Church Council The District Church Council applied for funding to organise a beacon lighting event to mark the Queen's Platinum jubilee as part of the nationwide beacon lighting initiative.	£200	The event brought together the village community of Stapleton together to mark this historic event. The beacon lighting was held at the recently reopened Nags Head pub to help support a local business.	15	50	5
Meadow Road Community Centre Funding was applied for to host an old fashioned Tea Party with entertainment at the Community Centre to celebrate the Queens Jubilee.	£250	The grant was used to pay for a celebration event, with music, food and party decorations and hand flags to wave. All attendees were given a Jubilee coin to take home to mark this special occasion.	1664	312	5



Work Link Project

Slow cookers offered to residents on low incomes
Grant Awarded: £2850
December 2022



Worklink is a small, independent reuse charity working within the Hinckley & Bosworth community for over 36 years. In addition to their usual furniture & appliance reuse work the charity was looking for ways and projects aimed at helping the most vulnerable residents of Hinckley & Bosworth.

The charity was aware of residents genuinely struggling with the cost-of-living crisis which wasn't improving. It felt that in 2022/23 individuals and families shouldn't have to be making a decision as to if they can afford to cook a meal or stay warm.

It became increasingly obvious to Work Link Project from customer feedback at their shop that the cost-of-living crisis meant that some people were making the decision to either eat or put the heating on. The project was advertised widely on social media and each slow cooker that was gifted was also issued with a recipe sheet where instructions on how to roast a chicken, or to make a healthy casserole.

All of the 220 slow cookers were also collected within days as they are a cheaper alternative to using a cooker or oven. On average, a slow cooker draws about the same amount of energy as a standard electric light bulb.

Demand far exceeded the stock level that the grant provided, with people queuing outside the shop to receive one. "The grant funding we received really did make a difference to peoples lives" says Mandy Chapman, project manager.



We are very thankful or this project. Me and my husband are on benefits and are struggling to get by. As winter approaches, we don't know how we are able to have warm and nutritious meals. Thanks to our new slow cooker, my disabled husband and I can keep warm without us spending a fortune.



Service User,
Work-Link Project





Warm Space Grants
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Summary Report
May 2023

Background

The Rural Community Council (RCC) supported Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in the administration and distribution of the Warm Hub Grants scheme between October 2022 and April 2023. The grant scheme was designed to support VCS or not for profit organisations with the associated costs in providing a Warm Space provision in the Borough of Hinckley & Bosworth for the benefit of local residents.

The grant criteria required that any Warm Space provision had to be:

- offered for a minimum of 12 hours a month, for a minimum of 4 months during the grant period.
- open to the general public and not refused on grounds of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, occupation, religious, political or other beliefs.
- over and above their organisations usual offer i.e. is an added value/additional offer to the community.

Grants distributed.

A total of twenty grant applications were received, with eighteen being successful based on being eligible and matching the agreed scoring protocol. All the successful grant applicants listed below, received a single payment of £1,200 in advance of project delivery and within one month of receipt of the required paperwork. Total grants awarded £20,400.

*Barwell Methodist Church - <i>The Cosy Café</i>	Chapel Street, Barwell, LE9 8DE
Burbage Community Library	Church Street, Burbage, LE10 2DA
St John's Church	351 Coventry Road, Hinckley, LE10 0NF
Our Library @ Newbold Verdon	Main Street, Newbold Verdon, LE9 9NP
Elohim Christian Church, Barlestone	Newbold Road, Barlestone, CV13 0DZ
St. Mary's Church Barwell	Church Lane Barwell, LE9 8DG

All Saints Church, Sheepy Magna	Church Lane, Sheepy Magna, CV9 3QS
The George Ward Community Centre	The George Ward Centre, Barwell, LE9 8DG
The Earl Shilton Social Institute	12-14 Station Road Earl Shilton, LE97GA
Twycross Village Hall	Burton Road, Twycross, CV9 3SA
Newbold Verdon Methodist Church	Main Street, Newbold Verdon, Leics. LE9 9NN
Ratby Library and Community Group	Main St Ratby Leicestershire LE6 0LN
St Margaret's Church Stoke Golding	High street, Stoke Golding, CV13 6HE
The Burbage Methodist Church	Windsor Street, Burbage, LE10 2EF
Westfield Community Development Association	Westfield Community Centre, Hinckley, LE10 0LN
St Catherine's Parish Church Burbage	St Catherines Parish Church, Burbage, LE10 2DE
We Care UK	Trinity House, Wharf Farm, Hinckley, LE10 0NF
Markfield Trinity Methodist Church - Churches Together in Markfield	<u>Markfield Methodist Church</u> , 42 Main St, Markfield, LE67 9UU <u>Markfield Congregational Church</u> , 104 Main St, Markfield, LE67 9UU

Please note that the **Barwell Methodist Church - The Cosy Café returned £1,000 their awarded grant payment, minus their initial set up expenses £200 following non attendance at any of their advertised events.*

Monitoring report on activity delivered.

As part of the grant conditions, each grant funded project was required to complete and return a short monitoring report form detailing the activity delivered. A total of fourteen report monitoring forms were received with three not returned.

Warm Spaces provided.

From the reports received, a total of 780 Warm Space sessions were delivered between October and March. These projects provided either a dedicated room or an area of a hall as a Warm Space with free refreshments and access to either games, magazines, jigsaws, crafts, Wi-Fi, or TV. The provision ranged from 2 to 3 hours a day once or twice a week, with one providing 5 day offering. These were all in addition to their usual programme of activities.

Four of the projects provided further support through having information on display including leaflets and flyers about other organisations who could provide help. Some had engaged with outside agencies such as Social Prescribers, Recovery Workers, Police and Local area co-ordinators who visited the Warm Space to chat to those attending and give information and advice.

Key outputs/outcomes of the Warm Space provision

A total of 1,740 residents participated in the Warm Space sessions supported by 94 volunteers.

A number of projects experienced a slow start in the first few weeks of launching their Warm Space provision, with one undertaking some outreach to try and promote the opportunity. Most did start to see a steady increase in visitors with some then becoming regular weekly attendees.

The majority of the Warm Spaces were operated by volunteers with some projects experiencing new volunteers coming forward.

People attending the Warm Space sessions appreciated the warm, safe, friendly welcoming environment and were able to meet new people or old friends, helping with social isolation and loneliness, particularly for those experiencing bereavement.

Some projects reported that the Warm Space provision had helped raise awareness of what their facility could offer, whether a Library, village hall, community centre or club and in some cases, those who had engaged were now regular visitors and engaged in other activities at the venue.

Feedback from those who benefitted from the Warm Space project.

Burbage Community library

Enjoyed coming for the warm space as much for the warmth of the company as for the warmth of the building.

Hannah, who had suffered a sports injury also said that she much appreciated the company along with the warm space.

Pat brought along a set of dominoes and set up a rather lively domino school.

Elohim Christian Church, Barlestone

It has been lovely to have a place to come that's warm and cosy, great company especially in the dark winter months, a place to meet with people and have a hot drink,

It's been great I have really learnt how to crochet whilst making new friends.

We love Tuesday morning stay and play, it's a place where I can meet with friends and my children can play in a safe, warm environment, all the staff are so friendly, willing to listen and help where they can, always offering support and a listening ear. Great coffee and cake

Newbold Verdon Methodist Church

People commented on the welcome and also the relaxed atmosphere in the sessions. Lots of people have said they have enjoyed just relaxing and being with other people as part of their week. Couples came along as well as people who live on their own. Mums have been able to get together somewhere safe for the children to play together and have said how nice it is to do this. One regular comment is that people say they hope we will be able to continue running the space into the future.

St Catherine's Parish Church, Burbage

"A place to come and have a chat and meal".

"It's Good to be among friends".

"Since losing my husband this has been a lifeline".

'Great place for families to be together and have fun'.

St. Mary's Church Barwell

One person said how much they had enjoyed the afternoons.

Twycross Village Hall

"The warm Hubs have been great to help me, as I lost my wife just before Christmas".

Projects planning to continue providing a Warm Space

The majority of projects funded have indicated that they will continue with a Warm Space provision in some form, with some of these either being integrated within their current programme of activities or changed to sessions such as coffee mornings or games club.

Future support that would be helpful

When asked what support would be helpful in providing a Warm Space in the future, projects highlighted the need for funding towards their energy costs and the provision of refreshments, with one project mentioning help with transporting people to venues.

Some projects also wanted to know who they could partner with to better support those attending the Warm Space provision such as Social Prescribers, Local Area Coordinator's & local businesses.

Better advertising and promotion of the Warm Spaces, both by the projects and collectively, was also recognised to ensure that people knew more about Warm Spaces and where they could access them locally.



The Earl Shilton Social Institute



Twycross Village Hall



Twycross Village Hall



Burbage – St Catherine's Church Warm Spaces Project



Burbage – St Catherine's Church Warm Spaces Project



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 14 March 2024

Wards affected: All wards

COST OF LIVING UPDATE

Report of Director, Community Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update Scrutiny on the work undertaken by the authority in response to the cost of living crisis.
- 1.2 To update on key achievements and workstreams in relation to those experiencing financial hardship.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the extensive work undertaken by the authority to support residents of the borough affected by the cost of living crisis.
- 2.2 To note the increase in demand upon services due to the cost of living crisis.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 In light of the growing financial strain faced by Hinckley and Bosworth's residents, the authority took the proactive step of declaring a Cost of Living Emergency in August 2022.
- 3.2 Work to tackle the impacts of the cost of living takes place across the authority with the work coordinated and led by the Community Services, Safeguarding and Housing Teams.
- 3.3 The Hinckley and Bosworth Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2026 recognises five key priorities for the local community, with rising living costs identified as a primary concern. Actions to address the current cost of living are being collaboratively delivered with key stakeholders. It has also

been highlighted that there is a high number of cross cutting themes and workstreams with that of another two of the priorities identified in the Health and Wellbeing Plan, namely Housing and Mental Health.

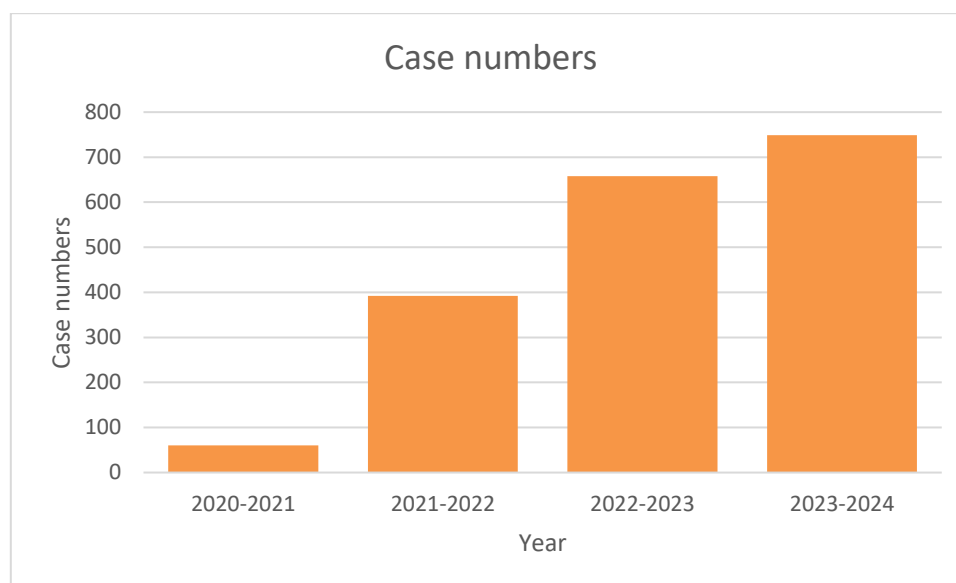
- 3.4 Many of Hinckley and Bosworth borough's residents are currently struggling with rising living costs. The council believes it is important that people know what support is available that could benefit them and that they are supported to maximise their income. In response to this the council have a Welfare Support Team to help those who are struggling financially with their priority bills such as rent, council tax, energy, water and food. The service prioritises those people who have no one else to help and who are the most vulnerable. The authority established the Welfare Support Service initially in response to arising concerns following Covid-19. The service was initially financed via funding carried forward from Government in relation to additional burdens caused by the pandemic. The service was developed further in response to the cost of living crisis and funding from UKSPF has recently enabled the authority to put in place two full time officers to manage and respond to the growing number of referrals to this service until the end March 2025.
- 3.5 A dedicated [cost of living page](#) has been created on the council's webpage so that residents can readily find and access support available to them. Articles have also been produced for the borough bulletin and posters put in local areas so that individuals who may not have access to the web are aware of the services available. Wider communications via our partner networks and at local events has further enabled as many people across the borough as possible knowing about the services available to them.

4. Welfare Support Service

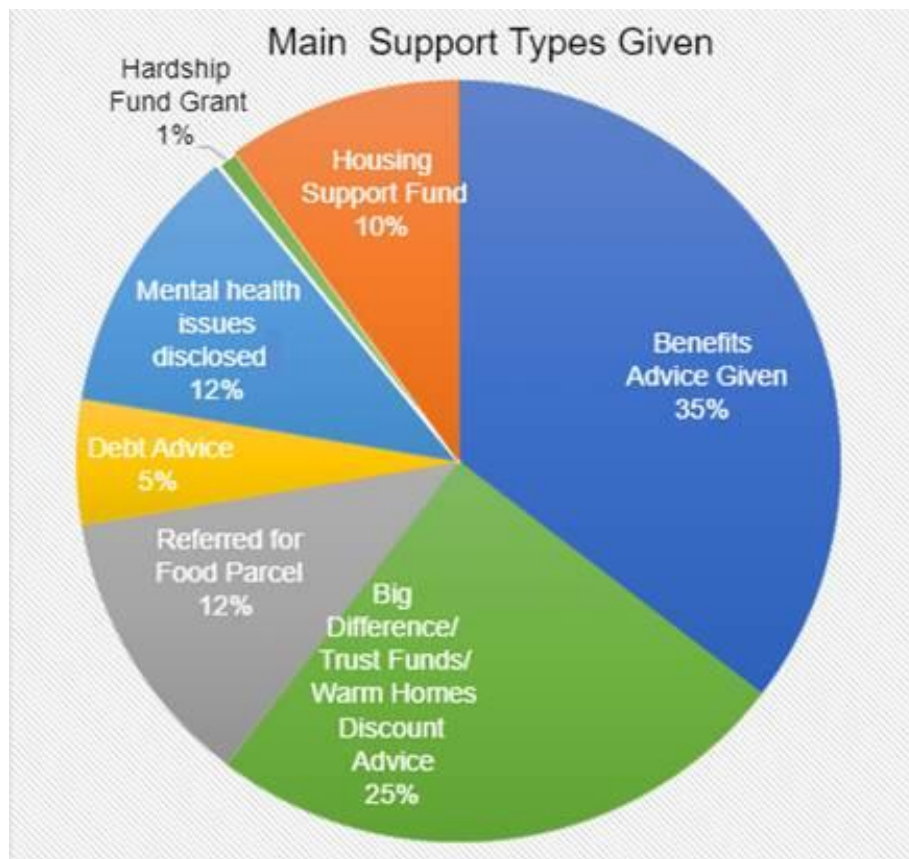
- 4.1 The council's Welfare Support Service is a key point of contact for residents in financial hardship in Hinckley and Bosworth. The service provides debt, benefit, and money advice on the phone or if necessary, in residents homes. The service is free, impartial, and confidential. The service aims to work holistically with residents to ensure that people get the help they need. If further needs are identified, such as mental health or isolation, then we will work with other partners to carry out signposting and onward referrals. Residents wishing to engage with the Welfare Support Service can self-refer or can be referred by another agency or team within the borough council.
- 4.2 In order to assist more residents, a drop-in advice service has been established at the hub every Wednesday from 10am to 2pm. Residents can turn up without an appointment and get instant advice on benefits, the household support fund, and how to maximise household income. The drop-in service has been running since August 2023 and has been well attended.
- 4.3 In November 2023, two Money Advice and Wellbeing Events were delivered, bringing a variety of support services together for residents to attend and access support and advice. These followed a similar format to the previous cost of living events held in late 2022 and early 2023. The November 2023 events were held in Barwell and Barlestone, providing residents with an accessible

platform to access guidance and assistance on a range of issues such as household budgeting, benefits, housing, managing energy bills and fuel bills, managing debt and food support.

- 4.4 Since its launch in 2020, the Welfare Support service has experienced sustained growth in referrals, highlighted in the bar chart below. This demonstrates the crucial role the service plays in supporting our community and highlights the potential for further expansion. Early data reflects the initial establishment phase.



- 4.5 This financial year to date, the Welfare Support service has already worked with 749 individuals, tackling their challenges through over 1000 different interventions. From securing benefits to accessing food parcels and the Household Support Fund, the team has gone the extra mile to support residents in need. The below graph illustrates the main types of support given so far in 2023/24.



4.6 Feedback on the impact of the service has been extremely positive and below is a small sample of testimonials from service users and partners:

- Client was referred to welfare support in Autumn time last year as they were financially struggling with the rising costs with inflation. Client rang to say they felt extremely supported and grateful to the officer that dealt with them as they never realised how much support they could get. They were also scared about applying for DHP as they said they had no idea what they were doing so the support they had was amazing. They would highly recommend the care, support and friendly approach the team have and how they made them feel comfortable to talk about their struggles with inflation.
- Client rang to say a big thank you for getting help with her electric, gas and food.
- "I feel very fortunate to have such supportive connections."
- "Thanks again for your ongoing help and support it really is beyond appreciated."

5. Cadent Funding

5.1 Cadent Gas Limited are the UK's largest gas distribution network (GDN), operating 4 networks in the Eastern, North London, Northwest & West Midlands regions of England. As a regulated business, Ofgem issue Cadent with a series of objectives, conditions and allowances to support customers living in vulnerable situations across their networks. Cadent's most recent set of objectives and conditions have taken the form of a "use it or lose it"

allowance called the Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA). Cadent often elects to work with expert partners to identify customers and provide important safeguarding services to them (such as income maximisation, energy efficiency and carbon monoxide safety advice).

- 5.2 The authority was successful in a bid to the Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance fund for £228,446.07. With the funding awarded from Cadent the Council will expand the Welfare Support Service in priority areas working from the proposed Centres for Warmth detailed in 5.3 and doing outreach work in the communities that need our help the most, such as those with higher deprivation and those that are geographically isolated.
- 5.3 With the funding the Council's Community Houses in Earl Shilton, Barwell, Wykin and Burbage will become 'Centres for Warmth'. They will offer Carbon Monoxide awareness, Priority Services Register awareness, deliver cooking on a budget sessions and offer the extended welfare support services for individuals who are struggling with the current cost of living.

6. Food Poverty

- 6.1 Food poverty is a growing concern in Hinckley and Bosworth, and the current emergency food provision system is struggling to cope with the demand. The current system of providing emergency food parcels is not sustainable and is not addressing the root causes of food poverty. Foodbanks are being used more and more, and there is a lack of clear pathways to support residents beyond emergency provision. To date, this financial year, the welfare support team has issued over 146 food parcels, either directly or via the Household Support Fund (HSF). We are working very closely with emergency food providers to create a more cohesive approach to food poverty and are looking to establish a local Food Partnership. It is envisaged that The Food Partnership will work collaboratively to look at a more holistic approach to emergency food provision which looks to lift people out of food poverty and into more sustainable offers such as community kitchens and social supermarkets.
- 6.2 Feed the Hungry previously offered a delivery service for emergency food parcels to individuals who were unable to physically access one of the many emergency food providers on a given day. Unfortunately, due to a decline in volunteer availability, Feed the Hungry was compelled to discontinue this valuable service. In response to this gap in service provision, the local authority and Feed the Hungry have initiated a plan to place food parcels in key community buildings throughout the district. Given that the majority of residents can readily access their GP surgeries, we believe that partnering with these practices presents a strategic and accessible approach to distributing food assistance. There are currently 6 GP surgeries signed up to this initiative and holding food parcels on site. This scheme is constantly developing with the hope that we will have full GP coverage in the district going forward.

7 Warm Welcomes/Warm Spaces

- 7.1 In Hinckley and Bosworth and nationally concerns around the increasing costs of living and heating during winter 2022 to 2023 saw the emergence of local interventions to establish warm spaces. Typically, these were established and run by communities and voluntary and community organisations to offer a warm space, often with additional resources, for example hot drinks, internet access and support services.
- 7.2 This Winter we have locally rebranded warm spaces as Warm Welcome due to feedback from warm space operators that the name created a stigma that may put individuals off of accessing the spaces.
- 7.3 Each venue's offer is different but will always be warm and offer the opportunity for residents to meet other people and have a free hot drink, some offer a snack, warm meal and craft activities.
- 7.4 A friendly URL link has been created to send out information about warm welcome on the council's web page www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/warmwelcome and a directory added with the offers available and links to the venue's Facebook Pages. There are more than 48 locations established, providing over 100 Warm Welcome sessions every week.
- 7.5 Guidance notes and an application process have been created for Warm Welcomes to apply for grants of £1200 to help with associated costs of providing a warm welcome provision during the current Winter period. This is being administered by the Community Service and Safeguarding Team and currently we have approved 15 Warm Welcome provision grants across the borough amounting to £18,000.
- 7.6 A dedicated Warm Welcome Officer, funded via UKSPF funds, has progressed this area of work and is working closely with Warm Welcome's across the borough to offer support around promotion, access to warm packs, access to holistic services and any other support they may need. Some examples so far are that a generic Warm Welcome poster has been produced that all Warm Welcome's can use to promote their offer and via Warm Welcome's we have distributed over 30 warm packs to those most in need since November.

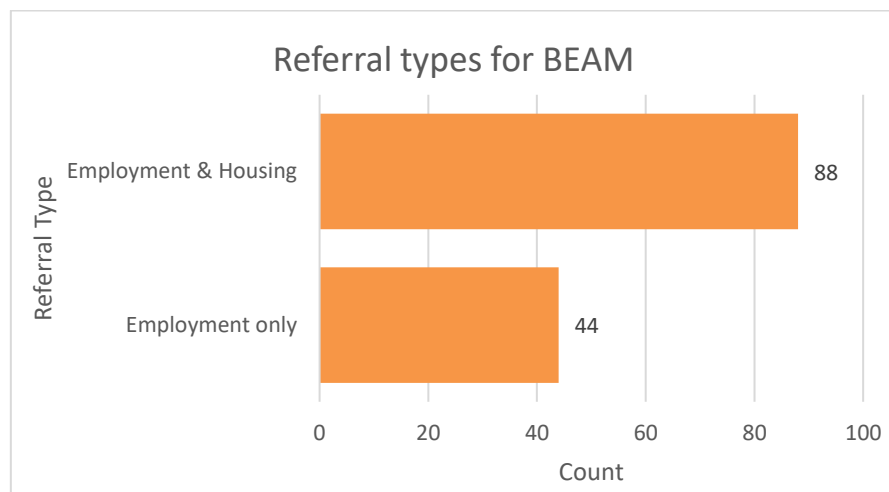
8 Welfare and Financial Hardship Partnerships

- 8.1 Citizen's Advice (CA) are a key partner in the Borough providing critical services and advise to residents. Without the presence of Citizen's Advice demand for council services would likely increase and some residents' issues, particularly around debt, would become worse with more costly interventions needed. CA continue to see significant increases in the demand for their services, between 20/21 and 22/23 there was an overall 31% increase in clients and a 44% increase in issues dealt with. In 2022/23 CA had 3258 clients in Hinckley and Bosworth.

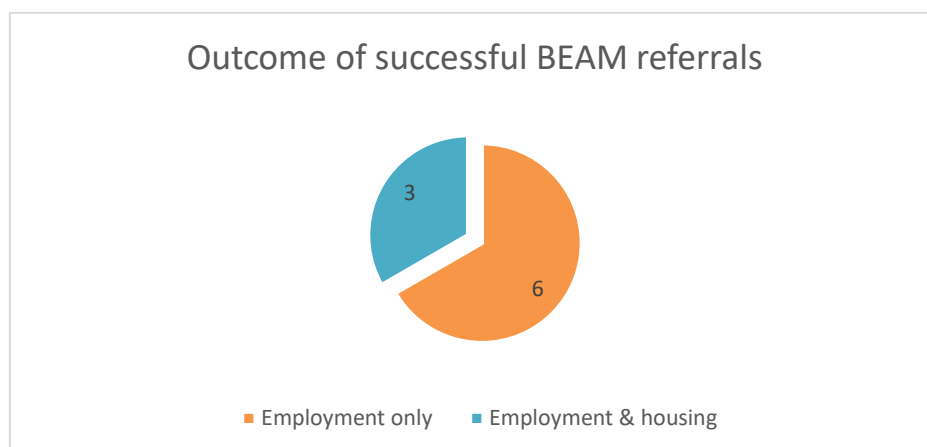
- 8.2 To ensure we are working collaboratively across all services when supporting people in financial hardship we have re established the Welfare and Financial Hardship Group with partners to ensure we are sharing key updates, sharing information, identifying and mitigating gaps in service provision and working consistently across the borough. The group includes partners from DWP, Revenues and Benefits, Welfare Support, Housing, Citizens Advice and Clockwise.

9 BEAM

- 9.1 Recognising the broader impacts of the cost of living crisis, the local authority has partnered up with BEAM. BEAM is a social enterprise that crowdfunds new career opportunities for people struggling with housing or unemployment. They provide them with a support network and the relevant tools and skills to find housing and employments via the kindness of strangers. BEAM has received a total of 132 referrals for Hinckley and Bosworth residents. The graph below illustrates the types of referrals.



- 9.2 There have been a total of 9 successful referrals for BEAM resulting in residents being supported to find not only employment but sustainable housing too.



10 Housing

- 10.1 The cost of living crisis continues to affect people's access and sustainability to housing across the UK, and Hinckley and Bosworth is no exception. Crisis research published in March 2022 suggested that families on the breadline are facing an average £372 deficit between their Local Housing Allowance and the cost of the cheapest rents in their local areas. The cost of living crisis combined with existing issues such as rising rents, low wages and a lack of affordable housing has created increased pressure for people and families who were already struggling. Consequently, many local authorities continue to see an increased and sustained homelessness pressure, and the subsequent demand for temporary accommodation.
- 10.2 Locally, this is further evidenced by the sustained increase in homelessness presentations and the dramatic rise in the number of families requiring temporary accommodation to relieve their homelessness which is detailed in the tables below.

Table 1- Number of homelessness approaches per year including monthly average in brackets

	April 20- March 21	April 21- March 22	April 22- March 23	April 23- to date
Number of approaches for assistance	605 (50)	1,003 (83)	1,168 (97)	882 (94)

Table 2- Number of households in temporary accommodation

Year	Number of families in B&B	Number of singles in B&B	Total cases in B&B	Numbers in hostel
2020/2021	24 (12.12%)	174 (87.88%)	198 (Covid)	49
2021/2022	26 (13.20%)	171 (86.80%)	197 (Covid)	64
2022/2023	64 (30.77%)	144 (69.23%)	208	54
2023- to date	104 (42.28%)	142 (57.72%)	246	66

- 10.3 Housing need is further evidenced by the numbers on the Council's housing register for affordable housing. There are currently 1042 live applications on the council housing register. However, this is not a full picture of need within the borough as many people don't apply to the council for housing as they know they are unlikely to receive an offer of accommodation. The fact that there is an increase in homelessness is an indication of unmet need, and the recorded figures don't reflect hidden homelessness i.e., people who are living in insecure accommodation, often sofa surfing.

10.4 Discretionary Housing payments

Discretionary Housing Payments are advanced by the Revenues and Benefits partnership to help a claimant with rent or housing costs if existing benefits do not cover them. Since April 1, 2023, 204 awards have so far been made, and sustained demand is further anticipated.

10.5 Council Tenants

The council has 3200 homes which are widely dispersed across the borough. The Tenancy Management team provides the landlord function for the housing service. Supporting tenants to sustain their tenancies with the council is a key priority for the team and so far this financial year 92 referrals have been made to the Welfare support team for advice and assistance.

11. Financial implications [CS]

11.1 The following table details the external funding secured per year towards these workstreams:

Workstream	Funding Body	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	TOTAL
Welfare support	UKSPF	£40,000	£80,000	£80,000	£0	£200,000
Centres for Warmth	Cadent	£0	£57,110	£114,220	£57,116	£228,446
Warm Spaces	UKSPF	£35,000	£60,000	£90,000	£0	£185,000
BEAM	UKSPF	£30,000	£30,000	£30,000	£0	£90,000
TOTAL		£105,000	£227,110	£314,220	£57,116	£703,446

11.2 In 2023/24, an estimated £149,209 of DHP's will be made. Of this, £78,739 will be met from external funding leaving £70,470 to be met from the general fund.

12. Legal implications [MR]

12.1 None

13. Corporate Plan implications

13.1 This report relates to priority ambitions of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2022-25, namely:

- People
- Place
- Prosperity

14. Consultation

- 14.1 Relevant council teams have been consulted in the preparation of this report, alongside relevant information and intelligence from key partners such as emergency food providers, voluntary organisations and service user data.

15. Risk implications

- 15.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 15.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 15.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Current Welfare Support Service is reliant on temporary external funding	Continue to look to identify and access external funding opportunities and opportunities to sustain the welfare support service	AC/RB

16. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 16.1 Council services, including welfare support services are promoted and delivered across the borough. Expanded work with Cadent funding will look to further enhance accessibility of the welfare support service and reach into all communities via outreach work.
- 16.2 Statistics are captured for services within this report to ensure that any gaps in access can be identified and rectified.

17. Climate implications

- 17.1 Work will be delivered to limit carbon impact where possible, for example virtual methods of engagement and paperless systems.

18. Corporate implications

- 18.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community safety implications
 - Environmental implications

- ICT implications
 - Asset management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data protection implications
 - Voluntary sector
-

Background papers: None

Contact officers: Rachel Burgess Ext 5400, Amie Carroll Ext 5746, Madeleine Shellard Ext 5746

Executive member: Councillor M Mullaney

This page is intentionally left blank



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 14 March 2024

Wards affected: All wards

Scrutiny review: adoption of new developments

Report of the Director (Corporate & Street Scene Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To agree the scope for the review into adoption of new developments and propose the review is undertaken by a task & finish group.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It be agreed that the review covers:
- (i) Adoption of sustainable drainage systems and balancing ponds
 - (ii) Management companies
 - (iii) Adoption of roads
 - (iv) Maintenance of public open space.
- 2.2 A task & finish group be set up with the balance proposed in paragraph 3.7.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 At its meeting on 26 October 2023, the Scrutiny Commission received a report on adoption of new developments which agreed the focus for a future review of the subject.
- 3.2 The areas agreed for the review were:
- Adoption of sustainable drainage systems and balancing ponds
 - Management companies
 - Adoption of roads
 - Maintenance of public open space.

3.3 Sustainable drainage systems and balancing ponds

Members identified the problems of these and the reticence of parish councils to adopt balancing ponds. The review will look into the options in relation to drainage systems and balancing ponds and the adoption of them.

3.4 Management companies

Members highlighted that management companies charged residents a significant management fee yet maintenance was sometimes not up to an acceptable standard. The role of management companies will be explored and a representative of a management company will be invited to speak on the subject.

3.5 Adoption of roads

Members raised concerns about unadopted roads and the increasing number of roads within new developments that are not adopted by the highways authority. Whilst many roads are required to be built to adoptable standards, this does not always result in adoption. The review will seek to understand the issues around adoption of roads and maintenance of those not adopted, ideally with the input of Leicestershire County Council as highways authority as the borough council does not have any involvement in the adoption process.

3.6 Maintenance of public open space

At the meeting on 26 October, members received a summary of on-site open spaces and their status. There was concern that those sites not transferred to the borough or relevant parish council were not always suitably maintained.

3.7 It was suggested at the meeting in October that the review be undertaken by a task & finish group. This report therefore proposes that a task & finish group be set up with a membership of three members from the Liberal Democrat Group, two members from the Conservative group and one member from the Labour group. In the first instance, expressions of interest should be sought from members of the Scrutiny Commission and only if there is insufficient interest should they be sought from the wider membership.

3.8 It is anticipated that the review will commence in autumn 2024 following the conclusion of the housing review.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

4.1 Report to be taken in open session.

5. Financial implications (IB)

- 5.1 Although there are no implications arising from directly from the report, the impact on the Council budget and insurance risks will have to be considered as part of any future adoption decisions.

6. Legal implications (ST)

- 6.1 None.

7. Corporate Plan implications

- 7.1 This report supports the vision of creating clean, sustainable and attractive places to live, visit and work in.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 None.

9. Risk implications

- 9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 No risks have been identified as a direct result of this report.

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 This report does not have an impact on any particular community or group, however the review that is proposed intends to improve understanding of the issues and to create improvements for those living in or near to new developments.
- 10.2 This report does not propose any changes to services or policies, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 This report does not directly impact climate change, however those matters discussed in the review, such as drainage and open space, impact climate and biodiversity.

12. Corporate implications

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: Minutes of the Scrutiny Commission, 26 October 2023.

Contact officer: Becky Owen / Lesley Keal

Executive member: Councillor W Crooks



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 14 March 2024

Wards affected: All wards

Council motion in relation to utility companies' preparedness for future growth

Report of the Director (Corporate & Street Scene Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To propose the scope of the review into preparedness of the utility companies for future growth.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Representatives of Cadent Gas, National Grid and Severn Trent Water be invited to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 At its meeting on 30 January 2024, Council approved the following motion:

"The main service suppliers for water / sewage, electricity and gas be called upon to provide assurance that they have the resources and infrastructure in place to provide for existing households and business premises and future housing, warehousing and business developments."

During debate, it was suggested that the Scrutiny Commission may be the appropriate body to take responsibility for the matter.

- 3.2 At its meeting on 1 February, the Scrutiny Commission agreed to add the matter to the work programme for future review.
- 3.3 Initial contact has been made with Cadent Gas, National Grid and Severn Trent Water to ascertain the correct representative from each to invite to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Commission. It is hoped that a representative of

each of the three organisations can be invited to a single meeting of the Scrutiny Commission.

- 3.4 Representatives will be asked to present their plans for future preparedness and to answer any questions of the Scrutiny Commission. It is not anticipated that a further meeting will be required, but is not ruled out at this stage depending on the outcome of those discussions.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

- 4.1 To be taken in public session.

5. Financial implications (IB)

- 5.1 None.

6. Legal implications (ST)

- 6.1 None.

7. Corporate Plan implications

- 7.1 People: this report has implications for health in terms of discharge of sewage.
- 7.2 Places: this report supports the key commitments as it has implications for the authority's ability to increase access to electric vehicle charging points across the borough.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 None.

9. Risk implications

- 9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 No significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment.

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 The outcomes from this report and subsequent review will have implications for all communities in urban and rural areas as all residents access at least one of the services under discussion.
- 10.2 There is no proposed change in service, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 This report does not have a direct impact on climate change but will help to ensure that the infrastructure to mitigate climate change is in place.

12. Corporate implications

- 12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community safety implications
 - Environmental implications
 - ICT implications
 - Asset management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data protection implications
 - Voluntary sector

Background papers: Minutes of Council, 30 January 2024
Minutes of the Scrutiny Commission, 1 February 2024.

Contact officer: Becky Owen, ext 5879
Executive member: N/A

This page is intentionally left blank