

# Public Document Pack



Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

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

**Date: 21 August 2024**

**To: Members of the Scrutiny Commission**

Cllr C Lambert (Chair)	Cllr C Harris
Cllr MJ Surtees (Vice-Chair)	Cllr J Moore
Cllr P Williams (Vice-Chair)	Cllr A Pendlebury
Cllr DS Cope	Cllr M Simmons
Cllr MJ Crooks	Cllr A Weightman
Cllr C Gibbens	

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, 29 AUGUST 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

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- *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.

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

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Thank you

## SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 29 AUGUST 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 25 July 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 REVIEW: UTILITY COMPANIES**

Following the motion to Council in relation to future preparedness of utility companies and subsequent agreement of the Scrutiny Commission to pursue the resolution of Council, representatives of Severn Trent Water will be in attendance to update members on their work.

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

Work programme attached.

8. **SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT POLICY (Pages 11 - 22)**

To introduce the sustainable procurement policy which supports the climate change strategy.

9. **MINUTES OF THE HOUSING TASK & FINISH GROUP (Pages 23 - 26)**

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 August are attached.

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

As announced under item 3.

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## HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### SCRUTINY COMMISSION

25 JULY 2024 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr C Lambert - Chair  
Cllr P Williams – Vice-Chair  
Cllr DS Cope, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr CE Green (for Cllr C Gibbens), Cllr C Harris,  
Cllr J Moore, Cllr A Pendlebury and Cllr M Simmons

Also in attendance: Councillor MB Cartwright

Officers in attendance: Simon D Jones, Rebecca Owen, Madeline Shellard,  
Sharon Stacey and Ashley Wilson

#### 80. **Apologies and substitutions**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gibbens, Surtees and Weightman with the substitution of Councillor Green for Councillor Gibbens authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

#### 81. **Minutes**

It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Pendlebury and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 9 May be confirmed as a correct record.

#### 82. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Lambert stated that he was vice-chair of Efficiency East Midlands who had been engaged by the council in delivery of the HRA investment programme.

#### 83. **Scrutiny Commission Work Programme**

In relation to the programmed review on bus services, it was confirmed that there had been some progress in relation to the funding awaited by Leicestershire County Council so the report could be timetabled soon. It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED – the work programme be approved.

#### 84. **HRA investment strategy**

The HRA investment strategy 2024 to 2028 was presented to the Scrutiny Commission. During discussion, the following points were raised:

- The importance of maximising income
- The change in the way the HRA was financed which led to the 2012 HRA subsidy buyout

- The requirement to bring stock up to the required level which contributed to the need for decarbonisation work
- The strong position of the authority due to the level and depth of information available
- Decisions were yet to be made on how to finance new debt.

It was noted that the strategy would be presented to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel before being presented to Council for approval and tenants would be updated via the newsletter.

It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The housing revenue account investment priorities and the underpinning HRA financial assumptions be noted;
- (ii) The HRA investment strategy 2024 – 2028 be RECOMMENDED to Council.

**85. Cultural Strategy 2024-28**

Consideration was given to the Cultural Strategy 2024 – 2028. In response to a member’s question, it was reported that cultural services worked closely with the planning policy team to feed into the local plan process in relation to sport and play, and the need for open space and pitches. The success of events was praised but it was asked that more consideration be given to providing events in the rural areas. It was, however, noted that support was provided to parish councils to enable them to put on events. It was moved by Councillor Pendlebury, seconded by Councillor Harris and

RESOLVED – the Cultural Strategy 2024 to 2028 be supported and RECOMMENDED to Executive.

**86. Rural Strategy 2024-28**

Members received the Rural Strategy for 2024 to 2028. Discussion ensued on the need for community transport given the lack of public transport in the rural areas. It was suggested that whilst Barwell, Burbage and Earl Shilton were covered by the strategy, they did not have the same issues as the rest of the parishes, such as lack of public transport, so should be separated into a strategy for the urban area to ensure that the voice of the rural parishes was not lost. It was moved by Councillor Crooks, seconded by Councillor Williams and

RESOLVED – the Rural Strategy 2024 to 2028 be RECOMMENDED to Executive.

**87. Scrutiny review: digital poverty and cashless society**

The Scrutiny Commission considered the style and scope of the forthcoming review into digital poverty and cashless society. It was suggested that the following points be added to the scope:

- Software and hardware obsolescence
- Internet access for education
- Preparedness for future withdrawal of services as the number of people who don't use digital services reduces.

It was suggested that the review be undertaken by the full Scrutiny Commission rather than by a task & finish group.

The chair agreed to finalise the scope and programme the review taking into account the capacity of members given the other ongoing and forthcoming reviews.

88. **Minutes of Finance & Performance Scrutiny**

The minutes of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny meetings held on 13 May and 8 July 2024 were received for information.

89. **Minutes of Housing Task & Finish Group**

The minutes of the Housing Task & Finish Group held on 8 May were received for information.

(The Meeting closed at 8.20 pm)

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CHAIR

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Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

*A Borough to be proud of*

# Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023-2027

**AUGUST 2024**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue (report author)</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Supports corporate aims</b>
29 August 2024	Sustainable procurement policy	Consultation prior to decision	Recommendation to Executive	2, 3
	Housing task & finish group feedback (Scrutiny review)	Update on work of group		1, 2
	Utilities – future preparedness (Scrutiny review)	Action motion to Council. Attendance of Severn Trent	Assurance that the main utilities can cope with future development	1, 2
24 October 2024	Bus services / public transport (Scrutiny review)	Request of members: impact on communities	Understand and influence policy	1, 2
	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
	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
	Housing review: final report (Scrutiny review)	To consider the report of the task & finish group	Recommendations to Executive	1, 2
	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
	Economic regeneration strategy (Chris Brown)	Annual report	Briefing on outcomes	2, 3
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	Request of members: matter of	Scoping of review	1, 2

Date	Issue (report author)	Reason	Outcomes	Supports corporate aims
	(Scrutiny review)	importance to residents		
	Young people's voice (Amy Casey)			1
	Parish & Community Initiative Fund allocations (Paul Scragg)	Normal reporting pathway	Recommendations to SLT	2
May / June 2025				
July / August 2025	Economic regeneration strategy ()	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
	Infrastructure funding statement (Kirstie Rea)	Annual report	Awareness of S106 contributions and allocations	2
	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
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				
	Parish & Community Initiative	Normal reporting pathway	Recommendations to SLT	2

<b>Date</b>	<b>Issue (report author)</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Supports corporate aims</b>
	Fund allocations (Paul Scragg)			
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
	Voluntary & Community sector partnership update and commissioning outcomes (Rachel Burgess)	Annual update	Awareness of VCS activity	1
November / December 2026	Planning appeals update (Chris Brown)	Annual report	Monitoring of performance on appeals	2
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				
	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

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## Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission	29 August 2024
Executive	11 September 2024

Wards affected: All

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### Sustainable Procurement Policy

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Report of Head of Finance

#### 1. Purpose of report

1.1 To seek approval of members to adopt a sustainable procurement policy to support our climate change strategy and how to promote ethical standards and reduce exploitation in our procurement activities in accordance with the constitution.

#### 2. Recommendation

2.1 Scrutiny Commission endorses the policy and recommends it to Executive for approval.

#### 3. Background

3.1 Increasing numbers of councils are now incorporating environmental and ethical standards into their procurement processes, giving them more influence over the procurement process.

3.2 Sustainable procurement is about incorporating environmental, social, and economic concerns into all procurement activities. The Government established Sustainable Procurement Task Force has defined sustainable procurement as:

*a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.*

- 1.3. In January 2024 the Council approved changes to the constitution that allows for procurement to taken to account the specific requirement to consider how our purchasing power can contribute toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In addition the changes also included a commitment that procurement will also take into account ethical standards in a manner that minimises the risk of social exploitation and rewards good employment practices.
- 1.4 This also support the climate change emergency declared in July 2019 and the biodiversity emergency declared in July 2023.
- 1.5 The attached policy will aim to widen the definition of the overriding requirement to achieve VFM by including room for the consideration to be wider than just acquisition costs, but include ownership / running costs, disposal costs and sustainability costs (both Environmental and Social). It gives guidance on evaluation of these areas.
- 1.6 It also promotes how purchasing can help the Council in using its purchasing power in “Supporting the Local Economy” and “Ensuring high ethical standards”. These clearly link to the priorities of the Corporate Plan.

#### **4 Implications**

- 4.1 The Council will be able to demonstrate a positive approach to climate change strategy and how to promote ethical standards in it purchasing. Training will be required in these areas, and our approach will have to be included in the way we work with our Welland Procumbent Service. This will take some time to embed in the way we purchase items into our normal processes.

#### **5. Financial implications [AW]**

- 5.1 None directly from this report.

#### **6. Legal implications**

- 6.1 For contracts likely to have a significant sustainability impact, consideration must be given to The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. This act places a responsibility on all public sector bodies to consider, before the procurement process starts, the economic, environmental and social benefits of their approaches to procuring goods or services. For the purposes of this policy, any procurement activity to which the (PCR) Public Contracting Regulations (2015) apply are in scope; however, the application of the Act should be proportionate to the scale and likely impact of the goods and / or services being procured.

#### **7. Corporate Plan implications**

- 7.1 A sustainable procurement policy supports the key aspects of the corporate plan of People, Places and Prosperity:



## **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.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all the 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 have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

No significant risks are associated with this report.

## **10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications**

10.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

## **11. Climate implications**

11.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. However how we procure directly affect the council's abilities to invest in climate change priorities.

## **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

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Background papers: None

Contact officer: Ashley Wilson

Executive member: Cllr K Lynch

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Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

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# **Sustainable Procurement Policy**

## **2024/25**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The over-riding procurement policy requirement is that all public procurement must be based on value for money, defined as “the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay over the period of use of the goods or services bought”. This should be achieved through competition unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary.
- 1.2. Sustainable procurement is about incorporating environmental, social, and economic concerns into all procurement activities. The Government established Sustainable Procurement Task Force has defined sustainable procurement as:

*...a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.*
- 1.3. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) will undertake to continue to address the climate change emergency declared in July 2019 and the biodiversity emergency declared in July 2023.
- 1.4. In support of the climate change and biodiversity emergency, this policy acts like a guide designed to assist officers in making more sustainable procurement decisions. It aims to provide practical information on how, via our contracts, we can reduce impact on the environment; ensure high ethical standards are followed; and bring benefits to the local economy and community.
- 1.5. This policy is not intended to be used as a procurement manual and should be read in conjunction with the Contract Procedure Rules and the Procurement Strategy.

## 2. What is sustainable procurement

- 2.1. Sustainable procurement means improving the efficiency of our commercial spend to deliver social and environmental benefits both within our local community and nationally. To the extent that we can use our purchasing power, either unilaterally or by combining with other public sector organisations to influence the supply market. Sustainability can and should be brought into the whole procurement cycle from writing the specification to tender evaluation to post-contract management. It is a key part of the procurement process and should be considered from the very beginning when you are defining your need right through to exiting the contract when it expires.
- 2.2. Our sustainable procurement policy should support the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy 2024 to 2028 The strategy identifies the need to reduce carbon switching from the dependence on fossil fuels to cleaner resources such as renewables and the resulting impact of climate change on biodiversity. This is targeted at the key themes of:
  - Biodiversity
  - Buildings and Land
  - Community
  - Economy
  - Travel

- Waste and Pollution

2.3. This policy will help the Council, its officers, and members, to work towards making HBBC carbon neutral by 2030 (direct council emissions) and ensure the borough is net zero by 2050, considering both production and consumption costs, minimising the environmental impacts of our activities, and through our leadership role influence and empower others to take similar actions. To ensure all the council decisions consider the carbon usage and the resulting impact. We recognise the importance of a healthy and biodiverse environment that ensures our borough's future prosperity and assists the wellbeing of all who live and work in the borough. Therefore through sustainability we can support out Corporate Objectives of:

- People: Helping people to stay safe, healthy, active, and in employment
- Places: Creating clean, sustainable, and attractive places to live, visit and work in
- Prosperity: Encouraging sustainable commercial economic and housing growth, as well as attracting businesses, improving skills, and supporting regeneration

### **3. Putting sustainability into the procurement process**

3.1. The first and most direct way to make our procurement more sustainable is to minimise consumption. Before purchasing is decided upon, consider if you really need to buy that item or service; could you borrow, hire, or share instead. Also, make sure you buy the amount you need and don't buy extra just in case. By asking yourself these kinds of questions you can cut down significantly on your impact on the environment as well as making savings. Always when making procurement decisions remember the four 'Rs':

- Reduce the amount you use;
- Reuse what you can,
- Repair where economically preferable, and
- Recycle what you can't reuse.

3.2. Examples of how you can build in sustainability into you procurement decisions.

- Can you reduce the environmental impact by sourcing certified sustainable materials.
- Can you make decisions that reduce the distances that goods need to be transported.
- Can you purchase something that has a social label, such as a fair trade label.
- Can you deliver additional training opportunities through the delivering of a contract.
- If you are using the ESPO online or catalogue system some suppliers will have their environmental icons displayed, these icons show where products are made from recycled materials, can be recycled, or reused and so on. The icons may offer a more environmentally friendly option but remember to consider if this is the most environmentally friendly option for your particular project.
- The products we procure may make many environmental or ethical claims, but it is not always easy to assess the validity of such claims – one of the best ways to check on the validity of claims is to check if it has been certified or accredited under any scheme.

When making a procurement decision there are several aspects that you will need to take into consideration.

Value for Money	A key consideration is the requirement to deliver value for money. This does not always necessarily mean the cheapest. Value for money is the 'optimum combination of whole life cost and quality (fitness for purpose) to meet requirements'.	<p>A concern that is often raised is that the sustainable item will cost more than buying the 'standard' item. As the market for more sustainable products develops the difference will in many cases be small.</p> <p>When considering value for money you need to consider not just the initial cost of an item but the full 'life cycle' costs (More details are in appendix 1) of a product or service. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acquisition costs</li> <li>2. Ownership / running costs.</li> <li>3. Disposal costs</li> <li>4. Sustainability costs</li> </ol> <p>Item four includes:</p> <p><b>Environmental:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable product (made from recycled material, second hand)</li> <li>• Pollution costs</li> <li>• Green credentials</li> <li>• Cost of extraction (e.g. impact on environment of mining)</li> </ul> <p><b>Social costs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce used in supply chain.</li> <li>• Working conditions Producers paid a fair price.</li> <li>• Economic:</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Training opportunities</li> <li>• Local economic cost</li> <li>• Regeneration</li> </ul>
Specification	Ensure that any environmental considerations are built into the tender specification at the earliest possible stage.	When writing a specification, consideration should be given to the products or service over its lifecycle. The following list can be used to assist with identifying

	<p>To comply with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the council's CPRs the specification must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be applied equally to all tenderers;</li> <li>• be appropriate and relevant to the product or service required;</li> <li>• be a legitimate client interest;</li> <li>• include sustainability requirements in the tender documents (and reference the council's climate emergency plan for context);</li> <li>• not be anti-competitive or specify branded products; and</li> <li>• not be non-commercial.</li> </ul> <p>Consideration will need to be given to how you specify sustainability requirements, for example, to specify that timber should not come from tropical rain forests may be considered restrictive but to specify that timber 'should be supplied from sustainably managed forests' is reasonable.</p>	<p>the potential sustainability impacts of the products or service you are purchasing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specify the use of sustainably sourced materials, for example those that have a Fairtrade Mark or can demonstrate similar principles.</li> <li>2. Impact of the disposal of the products at the end of their useful life.</li> <li>3. Minimise energy or water consumption.</li> <li>4. Decrease pollution: air, land, and water pollution.</li> <li>5. Decrease transport impacts.</li> <li>6. Consider the use of renewable energy.</li> <li>7. Decrease the use of hazardous materials, toxic chemicals, solvents, and ozone depleting substances.</li> <li>8. increased use of recycled materials and materials which can easily be re-used or recycled at the end of their life.</li> <li>9. Identify the appropriate 'environmental' symbols.</li> <li>10. Consider including a paragraph such as 'all contractors and sub-contractors must operate in an ethical and environmentally sound way. As a minimum requirement the contractor must adhere rigorously to all relevant human rights, equality, labour, social values, and environmental laws.</li> <li>11. Other factors to consider when creating the specification are issues like location and community buy-in which may have a positive impact on the community and help regenerate a local area. Consider the needs of both the current generation but also the long-term and future needs of the community.</li> <li>12. Use of technology to enhance customer interactions</li> <li>13. Request if suppliers have achieved a relevant certification such as an International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) for environmental management or have similar processes in place which demonstrate good levels of management.</li> </ol> <p>This is not an exhaustive list - it is intended to assist and guide you in identifying potential sustainability issues with your procurement. Not all will apply and there are many others that you will no doubt identify.</p>
Evaluation Criteria	The constitution allows for procurement evaluation, which is based on the most economically advantageous tender, to have consideration of Environmental and Social Value in the evaluation criteria.	This policy allows for up to 10% of the scoring evaluation to be allocated to Environmental and Social Value criteria for tenders over £50,000 where it is considered applicable to the contract.

		<p>Where possible our procurement decisions should align with our Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy 2024 to 2028 and seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce our impact on climate change through the procurement of goods and services with a lower carbon impact;</li> <li>• Protect and enhance open spaces and the natural environment;</li> <li>• Minimise our use of energy, water, and other natural resources;</li> <li>• Minimise waste and prevent or minimise pollution;</li> <li>• Specify goods that, wherever possible, have a minimal environmental impact in the extraction or sourcing of materials, manufacture, use and disposal.</li> </ul>
Supporting the Local Economy	<p>HBBC spends considerable amount each year on procuring items and services. The local economy has benefits greatly from the public sector when procurement can be used to support local businesses.</p> <p>Therefore, where possible, we should be providing opportunities to local businesses and third sector organisations to help foster economic growth and maximise sustainability benefits.</p>	<p>Efforts should be made to ensure opportunities of interest to local suppliers are promoted in a way that encourages local suppliers to get involved in providing quotes as long as done in a non-discriminatory way.</p> <p>Review the procurement documentation to ensure it does not impose barriers that would make it less attractive to SMEs. For example, ensuring insurance levels are applicable to the requirement and risk level.</p> <p>Also, as part of the evaluation criteria ask suppliers to explain how they would promote training and local employment opportunities if successful.</p> <p>We will continue to engage with businesses such as local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), the third sector (voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, and cooperatives), ethnic and minority owned businesses, sheltered businesses and women owned businesses to encourage a wider and more diverse base of suppliers and to promote equality of opportunity.</p> <p>You should also consider working with locally based organisations early in the process for example, you can engage with small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary and community sector to seek their views. However, when doing this you must ensure that you do not give preference or an unfair advantage to local suppliers as this would be considered discriminatory.</p>



		<p>You can involve local organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses or East Midlands Chamber of Commerce who may be able to circulate a specification to their local members on your behalf.</p>
<p>Ensuring high ethical standards</p>	<p>The Council will ensure it uses procurement activity to promote and ensure high ethical standards from those it deals with.</p>	<p>The Council will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not knowingly work with contractors and suppliers who do not comply with the conventions of the International Labour Organisation.</li> <li>• where possible, purchase fair trade products and I continue to promote Hinckley and Bosworth as a Fairtrade area.</li> <li>• not knowingly engage with suppliers who support, encourage, or facilitate the trade in illegal drugs, arms, tobacco, slavery, or prostitution.</li> <li>• not knowingly buy foodstuffs that are genetically modified or contain genetically modified ingredients.</li> <li>• consider animal welfare when making purchasing decisions and therefore contributes to the end of animal testing</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1: Life cycle costs

Life cycle Stage	Example
Initial cost	Purchase Price
Direct running costs	This can include energy, water and other resources & consumables used over the lifetime of the product or service. Buying more efficient products may initially appear more expensive but this could change considerably when factoring in running costs over the lifetime of the product.
Maintenance costs	Consider the maintenance costs over the lifetime of the product or servicing. Good maintenance may extend the life of a product.
Indirect costs	Indirect costs can include for example, less energy efficient equipment will produce more heat causing air conditioned buildings to work harder, thus increasing electricity bills
Administration costs	Factor in admin costs and overheads from purchases requiring special handling. For example, some products or services may require specialist advice or extra time required by stakeholders to get up to speed with specialist practices.
Spending to save	What are the expected years of useful life. Buying more durable or utility efficient products may initially cost more but result in long-term savings. Buying products which are component based. This allows issues to be resolved by repairing rather than replacing the whole item.
Training costs	Different products may require more or less effort spent training staff to operate specialist products if they are not user friendly
Cost of disposal	Factor in disposal costs. NB: Check whether there is a legal obligation for the retailer or manufacturer to take back and reuse or recycle packaging and/or products.

## HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### HOUSING TASK & FINISH GROUP

1 AUGUST 2024 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Cllr MJ Crooks - Chair  
Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr C Lambert and Cllr P Williams

Officers in attendance: Valerie Bunting, Steven Connor, Rebecca Owen, Jon Owst, Madeline Shellard and Sharon Stacey

16. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Harris and Surtees.

17. **Declarations of interest**

No interests were declared.

18. **Minutes of previous meeting**

It was moved by Councillor Williams, seconded by Councillor Crooks and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the previous meeting be confirmed as a correct record.

19. **Private sector housing**

The letting agent was unable to attend and it was agreed he would be invited to the following meeting.

20. **Council tax and empty properties**

A representative of the revenues & benefits service updated members on changes to council tax on empty properties over recent years and the current consultation on charging 100% council tax on properties empty between one and five years and 200% for those empty from five to ten years.

Members expressed concern that owners could circumvent the legislation by adding furniture to an empty property, although it was noted that it must be 'substantially furnished' to be considered not empty.

In response to a question about whether council tax on empty properties could be used to purchase council properties, it was noted that it was returned to the council tax fund and spent according to council priorities – whilst this meant that it could be spent on council housing, this was not currently the policy.

It was noted that the increased council tax on empty homes was discretionary and could be waived if, for example, the property had been repossessed, the owner had gone into care or prison, it was unsafe to live in or it was subject to

a compulsory purchase order. It was hoped that the exceptions would be included in legislation soon.

It was noted that there were 66 long-term empty properties in 2023 – 45 had been empty for more than two years, 12 had been empty for 5 – 10 years and nine had been empty over ten years. It was agreed that a breakdown of the size of properties would be provided to the housing service, and a note of whether any of them were council properties.

It was further noted that the list of empty properties was no longer supplied to the housing service by the revenues team and it was requested that this be investigated so the private sector housing team could consider targeted work. It was also requested that a list of second homes where the owner lived in the borough be provided.

Members asked for a view on whether there were any areas that they could lobby government on in relation to council tax on empty homes which would improve the position. Officers agreed to consider the request.

## 21. **Lobbying**

The different areas that had been considered during the review were discussed to look at whether there would be a benefit to lobbying government. It was noted that different housing federations were lobbying the new government on different aspects of housing so it was important that the work undertaken by the authority supported the wider lobbying taking place. The following points were considered:

### Empty homes

It was considered whether allocating resources to try to bring the 66 empty properties across the borough back into use would make a difference to the homelessness problem, given that they were in private ownership and not in the control of the council. Members were reminded that officers would give consideration to any areas of lobbying linked to empty homes.

### Section 106 and registered providers

It was suggested that the lack of registered providers willing to take on S106 properties made it difficult for the council to achieve its affordable housing targets. It was noted that the Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer was part of an LGA group on which Homes England was also represented, and the problem had been identified by that group. It was also felt there should be changes made nationally to tie developers into S106 provisions of affordable housing so they could not claim the scheme wasn't viable further down the line.

### Right to buy

It was noted that freedoms in relation to right to buy may not benefit the council as it used all receipts from the right to buy scheme already. Concern was also expressed that should the discounts available to tenants be reduced in future, there would be a flurry of purchases in a short space of time.

It was agreed that a briefing note on lobbying already underway and potential areas for the task & finish group to focus on would be brought to the next meeting.

22. **Date of next meeting**

Thursday, 5 September at 2pm.

Agenda for next meeting:

Letting agent

Briefing note on lobbying.

It was intended that the next meeting would conclude the review. A final report would then be presented to Scrutiny Commission, which would then report to the Executive or Council as appropriate.

(The Meeting closed at 11.13 am)

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CHAIR

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