

**HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

**AGENDA FOR THE
MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

TO BE HELD ON

TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2025

AT 6.30 PM

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



Date: 20 January 2025

Dear Member

I hereby summon you to attend a meeting of the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council in the Council Chamber at these offices on **TUESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2025 at 6.30 pm**

Yours sincerely

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

Miss RK Owen
Democratic Services Manager

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 1 - 4)**
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024.
3. **Additional urgent business by reason of special circumstances**
To be advised of any additional items of business which the Mayor decides by reason of special circumstances shall be taken as matters of urgency at this meeting. Items will be considered at the end of the agenda.
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. **Mayor's Communications**
To receive such communications as the Mayor may decide to lay before the Council.

6. **Questions**

To deal with questions under Council Procedure Rule number 14.

7. **Petitions**

To deal with petitions submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.

8. **Leader of the Council's Position Statement**

To receive the Leader of the Council's Position Statement.

9. **Minutes of the Scrutiny Commission (Pages 5 - 8)**

To receive for information only the minutes of the Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 12 December 2024.

10. **Audit Committee annual report 2023/24 (Pages 9 - 20)**

To present the Audit Committee's annual report for 2023/24 for approval.

11. **Audit Committee review of terms of reference (Pages 21 - 28)**

To recommend changes to the terms of reference for the Audit Committee to be incorporated into the council's constitution.

12. **Devolution White Paper (Pages 29 - 40)**

To brief members on the key features and implications of the government's English Devolution White Paper, to confirm the council's position and next steps, and to recommend delegation of authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of Council to undertake any work required to facilitate an effective response to the White Paper.

13. **Motions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17**

Motion to be proposed by Councillor M Mullaney, seconded by Councillor Cope:

Council notes that:

- The recent 2024 autumn budget change to inheritance tax relief announced by the Labour government will introduce a family farm tax and will have a detrimental impact on family farms and farmers' ability to pass on their farms to the next generation of farmers and essentially put at risk our nation's food security
- House of Commons Library research, commissioned by the Liberal Democrats, has revealed that farming subsidies have fallen by 20% in real terms since 2015 – equivalent to the loss of £722 million in public funding for farmers
- Last year alone, 8100 UK farms closed their doors – equal to one in 25 of all farms in the country.

Council believes that:

- Whilst it is true that the financial inheritance left by the Conservatives was shameful, the Labour government has committed a shameful betrayal and let down farmers by breaking their promise to not introduce a family farm tax

- The family farm tax will damage the ability of farmers to pass on their farms to the next generation of local farmers
- Labour's family farm tax will threaten food security by forcing the sale of family farms and, with a smaller number of farmers, removing competition from the marketplace by stealth, risks basic food cost hikes for our residents
- The Labour government's family farm tax will make British food production harder
- The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Steve Reed and Keir Starmer promised not to introduce a tax like this
- Numerous rural and farming organisations such as the National Farmers' Union and Country Land and Business Association have warned that countless farms will be harmed, threatening food security and rural areas like ours
- The comments made of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Steve Reed, that already struggling farmers will have to "do more with less" shows an absolute ignorance as to how the rural economy works
- At a time when many farmers in Hinckley & Bosworth are struggling with soaring costs and energy prices, this sudden tax rise will damage the future of their farms and our local economy.

Council further believes that:

- Farmers are key allies in tackling climate change and the natural capital crisis, caring for and restoring the countryside while producing high-quality food for our tables, but their ability to do this has already been threatened by the transition away from the basic payment scheme which has resulted in many farmers fearing that new systems will fall short of what is needed
- The many failings of the Conservative's Brexit deal have also contributed to the problems facing farmers including increased food production costs and shortages as well as severely damaging their ability to export to their main markets in Europe. New trade deals have undermined animal welfare and environmental protection, undercutting responsible British farmers and setting a dangerous precedent for future deals
- The decision by Leicestershire County Council to sell off, or explore selling off, county farms is also deeply concerning and damaging to future food production – these include farms in Hinckley, Stapleton and Barlestone.

Council resolves to:

- Request that the Chief Executive writes to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to outline the Council's dismay at this decision and to call on the government to stop the family farm tax
- Call on Leicestershire County Council to halt its policy of selling off county farms.