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Harborough District Council,

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council,

North West Leicestershire District Council,

Working in Partnership to provide better services...

Meeting Committee

Leicestershire Partnership Revenues & Benefits Joint

Time/Date

3.30 pm on Thursday, 22 JANUARY 2026

Location

De Montfort Suite, Hinckley Hub

Officer to contact

Rebecca Valentine-Wilkinson

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Councillor P Beadle
Councillor S Bray
Councillor J Knight

Councillor K Lynch
Councillor A Woodman
Councillor M Wyatt

Recording of meetings

All persons present are reminded that the meeting may be recorded and by attending this meeting you are giving your consent to being filmed and your image being used. You are kindly requested to make it known to the Chairman if you intend to film or record this meeting.

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**LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES & BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE -
22 JANUARY 2026**

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and note any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Under the code of conduct members are reminded that in declaring interests they should make clear the nature of that interest and whether it is a disclosble pecuniary interest, registrable interest or other interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 1 - 2)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

4. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TO DECEMBER 2025 (Pages 3 - 8)

To update members on the financial performance to December 2025

**5. 2026/2027 PROPOSED BUDGET - LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP
REVENUE & BENEFITS (Pages 9 - 14)**

2026/2027 Proposed budget for members to approve.

6. PERFORMANCE REPORT TO NOVEMBER 2025 (Pages 15 - 26)

Performance report update for members

7. LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP SERVICE PLAN 2026/2027 (Pages 27 - 42)

To update members on the Partnership service plan for 2026/2027

8. FORWARD PLAN (Pages 43 - 44)

To note the joint committee's forward plan.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday 26 March 2026

NWL, Coalville

2026/27

Annual Meeting

Thursday 25 June 2026

Harborough DC

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES & BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE

18 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 3.30 PM

PRESENT: Cllr KWP Lynch - Chair

Knight, Cllr KWP Lynch, Merrie and Cllr Wyatt

Also in attendance:

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny, Sally O'Hanlon, Sean Prosser, Paul Stone, Rebecca Valentine-Wilkinson and Ashley Wilson

13. **Appointment of Chair**

In the absence of chair and vice-chair, it was moved by Councillor Wyatt, seconded by Councillor Knight and

RESOLVED – Councillor Lynch be appointed as chair for the meeting.

14. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Beadle, Bray and Woodman with the substitution of Councillor Merrie for Councillor Woodman in accordance with paragraph 4.3 of the joint committee's constitution.

15. **Declarations of interest**

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

16. **Minutes of previous meeting**

It was moved by Councillor Wyatt, seconded by Councillor Merrie and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2025 were confirmed as a correct record.

17. **Performance Report**

Members were presented with an update on the performance of the partnership for the period June 2025.

The report was noted.

18. **Financial Performance**

Members were presented with the financial performance of the Partnership for the period April 2025 to August 2025.

Members noted the report.

19. **Forward Plan**

The forward plan was noted.

20. **Dates of future meetings**

The dates of future meetings are:

20 November 2025 at Harborough District Council
22 January 2026 at Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
26 March 2026 at North West Leicestershire District Council
25 June 2026 at Harborough District Council (annual meeting 2026/27).

(The Meeting closed at 3.46 pm)

CHAIR



Leicestershire Partnership Revenues & Benefits

Financial Performance to December 2025

Joint Committee

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Joint Committee of the financial performance of the Partnership for the period April 2025 to December 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the financial performance of the Partnership is noted.

3. INFORMATION

Budget Position

- 3.1. The financial position of the Partnership has been outlined in **Appendix 1** to this report. The key headlines are detailed below for information.
- 3.2. As of 30 December 2025, the Partnership had an overall net underspend on expenditure of £118,109 as a variance to date. Therefore, at the year end, there is likely to be an overall underspend on expenditure due to the vacancy position noted below.

Table 1 31 December 2025	Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Variance to Date
Income	(£3,290,611)	(£3,290,611)	£0
Expenditure	£3,412,709	£3,294,600	(£118,109)
Net Expenditure Over / (Under) Spend	£122,098	£3,989	(£118,109)

- 3.3 The key variances to the end of December 2025 to bring to the attention of the Management Board are:
- Salaries are underspent by £104,000 due to vacant posts at the end of December 2025, which is lower than previously reported due to one off staff costs.
 - Postage is currently overspent by £13,000.
- 3.4 The forecast year end position:
- If the current salary underspend continues at the same rate, there will be an underspend of approximately £120,000, as there are currently a high number of vacant posts.
 - This would significantly increase the reserves held (Appendix 2) by the partnership from £638,940 on the 31 March 2025 to £758,940.

Appendix 1: Leicestershire Revenues & Benefits Partnership Monitoring Report to 31st December 2025

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Expenditure / Income Type	2025/26 Latest Budget to Date	Actual to Date	Timing Differences	Variance after Timing Differences		2025/26 Total Estimate (Original)		2025/26 Total Estimate (Revised)
	£	£	£	£		£		£
Employees	2,561,447	2,175,790	278,883	106,774		3,414,150		3,414,150
Premises Related Expenditure	33,343	33,337		6		44,450		44,450
Transport Related Expenditure	9,000	5,578	20	3,402		12,000		12,000
Supplies & Services	785,519	777,374	217	7,928		1,032,130		1,032,130
Central & Administrative Exp	23,400	23,400		0		31,200		31,200
Revenue Income	-3,290,611	-2,555,938	-734,673	0		-4,533,930		-4,533,930
Sum:	122,098	459,542	-455,553	118,109		0		0

Timing Differences

	HDC	NWLDC	HBBC	Total
Salaries - Quarter 3- 2025/26	76,325	202,559		278,883
Mileage & Disturbance Costs - Quarter 3- 2025/26	20			20
Supplies & Services - Quarter 3- 2025/26	217			217
Contributions - Quarter 3- 2025/26	-198,149	-246,141	-290,384	-734,673
	-121,587	-43,582	-290,384	-455,553

<u>Explanations</u>	Variance at 31/10/25(Over) / Under Spend £	Year end Forecast	Explanation £5k+
Salaries	104,000	120,000	This is due to a number of vacant posts and is after including the agreed pay award, payable to date
Training	3,000		Variance < £5k
Car Allowances	3,000		Variance < £5k
Printing & Stationery	4,000		Variance < £5k
Consultancy Fees	5,000		Variance < £5k
Postages	-13,000		Postage costs higher than anticipated
Liability Expenses	8,000		Court Costs lower than anticipated
Minor Variances	4,000		Variance < £5k
	118,000	120,000	

Appendix 2: Reserves at 31/03/2025

Reserves at 31/03/2025	Earmarked	General	Total
Review on Automation	£61,000		£61,000
Agency Cost Back Fill	£40,000		£40,000
Transfer to FERIS Reserve	£44,626		£44,626
ICT Reserve - ICT Kit & Server	£60,727		£60,727
Single employer project management costs	£99,016		£99,016
Forecast underspend 2023/24 (Use for IT pressures)	£199,199		£199,199
Forecast underspend 2024/25 (Use for IT pressures)	£84,372		£84,372
Balance B/F		£50,000	£50,000
Forecast Total at year end	£588,940	£50,000	£638,940

Appendix 3: Capital initiatives

Project Name	Description	One off set up costs	Year 1 Cost	Charge in 2026/27	27/28 to 30/31
Govtech	WebCAPTURE	27,600	77,200.00	104,800.00	86,000.00
	Ecapture	15,000	36,000.00	51,000.00	36,000.00
	Govtech expenditure				
	Total GovTech	42,600.00	113,200.00	155,800.00	224,000.00
Citrix work (to be determined)	Migration of Citrix environment or move to different Virtual Desktop provision	55,000	17,000.00	72,000.00	17,000.00
Academy hosted	Migration from on-premises to MRI or Azure Hosted	55,000		55,000.00	
Academy hosted (excludes licencing and support costs)	Annual additional costs for hosted solution management		65,000.00	65,000.00	65,000.00
Benefits Assistant (Public facing Chatbot)	Develop a public facing chatbot to enhance digital channel shift and support residents	25,000.00	5,000.00	30,000.00	5,000.00
Service Enhancements (Automation and AI)	Developing AI tools to improve productivity and automate tasks and provide insights into new or revised processes	45,000.00	10,000.00	55,000.00	10,000.00
Data Analytics (Insights, Dashboards)	Develop data driven insights and reporting dashboards	15,000.00	5,000.00	20,000.00	5,000.00
	Total Other	195,000	102,000	297,000	102,000



Leicestershire Partnership Revenues & Benefits

2026/27 Proposed Budget

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Joint committee of the draft budget for 2026/27.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the 2026/27 budget proposals for the Partnership be approved for agreement by the by the Joint Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The timetables for budget setting for the Partnership is that the budget will normally be approved prior to the 31st of January each year.

Budget overview

3.2 In preparing this draft budget for 2026/27 the following factors and assumptions have been considered:

- As per the partnership agreement the contribution rates from partners are reviewed periodically and amended to reflect changes in caseload. A review was carried out based on the caseload performance as at July 2025. This has led to amendments to the contribution rates.
- Actual spend for 2025/26 has been used as an indicator where relevant.
- A provision has been made on salaries for a 3.2% pay award for 2026/27 based on the current establishment provided by each Partner.
- In terms of general inflation, no provision has been made other than for contractual increases at RPI.
- Salary costs also include additional costs or savings associated to pension contributions; annual pay increments due during 2026/27.

3.3 The draft 2026/27 budget shows an increase of **£189,170** for the Partnership (net of other body contributions) and is detailed below (Table 1).

3.4 The main cause of the increase in 2026/27 is due to capital investment for strategic improvements in systems and software, and a process of laptop and equipment replacement. If there is any slippage in these programmes a saving will occur in the year.

Table 1 Expenditure / Income Type	2025/2026 Budget (OR)	2025/2026 Budget (LA)	2026/27 Draft Budget (5% Vacancy Factor)	Increase/ Decrease on 2025/26 Revised
		£	£	
Employees	3,414,150	3,414,150	3,417,540	3,390
Premises Related Expenditure	44,450	44,450	45,560	1,110
Transport Related Expenditure	12,000	12,000	12,000	0
Supplies & Services	1,032,130	1,032,130	1,215,810	183,680
Central & Administrative Exp	31,200	31,200	32,190	990
Total Expenditure	4,533,930	4,533,930	4,723,100	189,170
Partner Contributions	(4,515,030)	(4,515,030)	(4,704,200)	(189,170)
Contributions from Other Bodies	(18,900)	(18,900)	(18,900)	0
Contributions from Reserves	0	0	0	0
Total Funding	(4,533,930)	(4,533,930)	(4,723,100)	(189,170)

- 3.5 After allowing for a 5% vacancy factor, the budget for the Partnership will increase by £189,170 requiring increased funding from partners.

Partner Contributions

- 3.7 Partner contributions have been calculated on the basis of the budget and split in accordance with the Partnership Agreement, with the updated contribution rates: The only exception to this split is:

- Search and liability expenses which are charged to each partner based on activity. Partners will be billed quarterly for actual costs incurred and will receive any recovered income directly into their own General Fund

Based on this methodology, the estimated contributions for each partner are detailed below for a budget with a vacancy factor at 5%.

Table 2	Total	Other Bodies	HBBC	HDC	NWLDC
			36.01%	30.17%	33.82%
Total Partnership Contributions excluding Searches and Liability Orders	4,674,600	0	1,683,320	1,410,330	1,580,950
Searches	8,700	0	2,070	1,660	4,970
Liability Order Expenses	20,900	0	7,450	7,290	6,160
Total contribution (A)	4,704,200	0	1,692,840	1,419,280	1,592,080
Contributions from Other Bodies	18,900	18,900	0	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	0		0	0	0
Total contribution 2026/27	4,723,100	18,900	1,692,840	1,419,280	1,592,080
2025/26 Contribution (B)	-	0	-	-	-
	4,515,030		1,683,480	1,303,890	1,527,650
Contributions from Other Bodies	-18,900	-18,900	0	0	0
Total funding and contribution 2025/26	-	-18,900	-	-	-
	4,533,930		1,683,480	1,303,890	1,527,650
Difference – Increase/(Decrease) Partners	189,170	0	9,360	115,390	64,430
Actual Increase from requested contribution in year (A)-(B)	189,170	0	9,360	115,390	64,430

- 3.7.1 The change in the contribution percentages has the impact shown in the table below.

Table 2 (a) Contribution changes	Total	HBBC	HDC	NWLDC
Previous percentage split	100%	37.32%	28.87%	33.81%
Revised percentage split	100%	36.01%	30.17%	33.82%
Change	100%	-1.31%	1.30%	0.01%
Difference – Increase/(Decrease) Previous split	£189,170	£70,600	£54,620	£63,960
Difference – Increase/(Decrease) Revised	£189,170	£9,360	£115,390	£64,430
Change		-£61,240	£60,770	£470

3.7.2 The change in contributions is mainly due to staff cost changes, see table 3 below.

Table 3: Cost pressures	£
Pay Award - 2026/27 - 3.2%	107,180
Pension Contribution	-133,990
Increase (Decrease) in NI Contribution	-1,620
Vacancy Factor associated with additional salary costs	39,050
Other Minor Variances	9,920
Total	20,540
Additional ICT & Telephone Costs	35,270
Additional ICT Capital Costs	133,360
Total	189,170
Partner Contributions	-189,170

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of budgets

Detail Code Name	2025/2026 Budget (OR)	2025/2026 Budget (LA)	2026/27 Draft Budget (5% Vacancy Factor)
Salaries - Full Time	3,402,100	3,402,100	3,405,460
Shared Service Employees- Salaries	0	0	0
Criminal Records Bureau Checks	900	900	900
Training Incl Conferences & Seminars	10,000	10,000	10,000
Professional Subscriptions	1,150	1,150	1,180
Rent	44,450	44,450	45,560
Mileage	12,000	12,000	12,000
Computer Software Maintenance & Upgrade	644,830	644,830	812,870
Computer Consumables	5,000	5,000	5,000
Flexible Working	23,350	13,350	3,350
Clothes & Uniforms	600	600	600
Printing & Stationery	8,940	8,940	8,940
Consultancy Fees	2,000	12,000	2,000
Audit Fees	7,660	7,660	7,900
Liability Order Expenses	20,900	20,900	20,900
Postages	18,840	18,840	20,250
Virtual Mail Room	267,240	267,240	287,280
Telephone	13,080	13,080	26,990
Mobile Telephone	1,740	1,740	1,780
Subsistence	500	500	500
Travel Arrangements	500	500	500
Subscriptions	7,250	7,250	7,250
Company Searches	8,700	8,700	8,700
Other - Miscellaneous	1,000	1,000	1,000
S151 Officer - Shared Services	12,000	12,000	12,380
Accountancy Support - Shared Services	6,000	6,000	6,190
Democratic Services - Shared Services	1,200	1,200	1,240
Monitoring Officer - Shared Services	12,000	12,000	12,380
Total Costs	4,533,930	4,533,930	4,723,100
Miscellaneous Income	-18,900	-18,900	-18,900
Contributions from Outside Bodies	-4,515,030	-4,515,030	-4,704,200
Contributions and funding Total	-4,533,930	-4,533,930	-4,723,100

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Revenue and Benefit Service

Performance Report November 2025

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Management Board of the performance of the Partnership for the period October 2025

1.2 That performance is noted

Caseload Data							
Position at:			31/3/2025		2025/26		
Banded Council Tax Dwellings					Current Position (30/11/25)	Movement	Percentage Movement
HBBC			52,845		53,277	432	1%
HDC			44,892		45,469	577	1%
NWLDC			49,150		49,912	762	2%
Totals		Current Total:	146,887		148,658	1,771	1%
NDR Rated Assessments				Position	Current Position	Movement	Percentage Movement
HBBC			3,358		3,361	3	0%
Debit (£)			(previous month)	£48,757,534	£48,765,888		
HDC			3,364		3,364	0	0%
Debit (£)			(previous month)	£67,505,846	£67,655,160		
NWLDC			3,555		3,553	-2	0%
Debit (£)			(previous month)	£117,262,957	£116,006,520		
Totals		Current Total:	10,277		10,278	45	0%
HB/CTLS Live Caseload				Caseload	Current Caseload	Movement	Caseload %
HBBC			5,210		5,160	-50	
	Joint HB/CTS		1,437		1,228	-209	24%
	HB only		293		281	-12	5%
	CTS only		3,480		3651	171	71%
HDC			3,072		3,062	10	
	Joint HB/CTS		1,013		875	-138	30%

	HB only			149		121	-28	4%
	CTS only			1,910		2066	165	66%
NWLDC				4,834		4,766	-68	
	Joint HB/CTS			1,527		1,268	-259	27%
	HB only			157		120	-37	3%
	CTS only			3,150		3,378	228	70%
Totals	Current Total:			13,116		12,988	-128	

Leicestershire Partnership - Revenues and Benefits Performance Indicators

North West Leicestershire District Council													Cumulative 2025/26	Year End 2025/26 target
BENEFITS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In month: New Claims (Days)	17.3	21.71	18.5	18.3	13.7	15.2	14.5	TBC					17	
Position for 2024/25	18.4	16.6	14.2	14.6	13.9	14.9	13	14.5	15	15.8	17.7	13.4	15.2	15
In month: Change Events (Days)	3.9	4.39	5.35	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.9	TBC					4.2	
Position for 2024/25	5.6	4.9	5.9	4.9	5.9	5.7	5.4	4.8	4.3	5.1	2.3	3.2	4.8	6
COUNCIL TAX	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In Year (%)	10.1%	19.2%	28.2%	37.2%	46.2%	55.2%	64.1%	73%					73%	97.3%
Position for 2024/25	10.0%	19.1%	28.1%	37.3%	46.3%	55.4%	64.5%	73.5%	82.5%	91.5%	94.3%	97.2%	97.2%	
Prior years' arrears	£7.4m	£7.2m	£7.1m	£7.0m	£6.9m	£6.8m	£6.7m	£6.7m					£6.7m	INFO
Position for 2024/25	£6.7m	£6.6m	£6.4m	£6.3m	£6.1m	£5.9m	£5.8m	£5.8m	£5.7m	£5.5m	£5.5m	£5.4m	£5.4m	
NON DOMESTIC RATES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In Year (%)	8.1%	17.3%	26%	34.7%	44.7%	51.9%	59.6%	71.4%					71.4%	99.0%
Position for 2024/25	8.9%	18.6%	26.9%	36.7%	45.5%	53.6%	62.3%	72.0%	80.3%	89.3%	93.1%	96.8%	96.8%	
Prior years' arrears	6.2m	£6.3m	£5.4m	£6.3m	£7.2m	£7m	£6.3m	£6m					£6m	INFO
Position for 2024/25	£3.3m	£1.6m	£2.7m	£2.3m	£3.0m	£3.1m	£3.2m	£3.2m	£3.2m	£3.0m	£3.0m		£3.0m	
HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
HB Overpayments outstanding end of month	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.4m	£1.3m	£1.3m					£1.3m	INFO
Position for 2024/25	£1.4m	£1.4m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m	£1.3m
HB Overpayments Recovered	1.25%	2.3%	3.5%	4.4%	5%	6%	8%	8%					8%	34%

Position for 2024/25	1.6%	2.3%	6.9%	9.8%	11.3%	12.9%	15.7%	16.3%	16.6%	17.6%	18.0%	20%	20.0%	
FRAUD	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
CTLS Sanctions gained	1	2	0	1	1	1	0	0					6	6
Position for 2024/25	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	9	

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council													20.4	Year-End 2025/26 Target
BENEFITS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In month: New Claims (Days)	16.7	22.3	18.1	16.3	13.6	15.9	13.5	TBC					16.9	15
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	17.9	18.4	15.2	15.3	14.6	13.0	12.2	11.7	11.7	15.2	15.6	14.7	14.6	
In month: Change Events (Days)	3.8	4.9	5.1	4.0	4	4.1	4	TBC					4.3	6
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	6.1	4.5	5.9	5.8	5	5.7	5	4.5	4.0	5.6	1.9	3.4	4.8	
COUNCIL TAX	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In Year (%)	10.5%	19.5%	28.1%	37.7%	46.7%	55.9%	65.0%	74%					74%	97.6%
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	10.5%	19.6%	28.6%	37.8%	46.8%	56.1%	65.2%	74.2%	83.2%	92.2%	94.8%	97.6%	97.6%	
Prior years' arrears	£6.6m	£6.4m	6.3m	6.2m	6m	£6m	£5.9m	£5.9m					£5.9m	INFO
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	£5.9m	£5.8m	£5.7m	£5.5m	£5.4m	£5.3m	£5.2m	£5.2m	£5.1m	£4.9m	£4.9m	4.8m	£4.8m	
NON DOMESTIC RATES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In Year (%)	10.7%	18.7%	27.5%	37.4%	46%	54.7%	63.1%	71%					71%	98.8%
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	10.5%	20.0%	28.8%	39.1%	47.9%	56.6%	65.2%	73.6%	82.6%	91.7%	94.8%	97.8%	97.8%	
Prior years' arrears	£1.9m	£1.8m	£2.5m	£1.8m	£2.1m	£1.8m	£1.8m	£1.5m					£1.5m	INFO
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	£1.5m	£1.3m	£1.4m	£1.4m	£1.2m	£1.1m	£1.2m	£1.2m	£1.3m	£1.2m	£0.70m		£0.7m	
HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
HB Overpayments outstanding end of month	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.2m	£1.3m	£1.35m	£1.1m					£1.1m	INFO
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.0m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.2m	£1.1m	£1.1m	£1.1m	
HB Overpayments Recovered	3.6%	5.7%	9.5%	13.6 %	15%	17%	19%	21%					19%	36%
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	1.5%	3.0%	4.5%	9%	10%	11%	12%	15%	16%	17.2%	20.6%	22%	22%	
FRAUD	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
CTLS Sanctions gained	3	0	0	3	0	0	2	0					8	6
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	9	

Harborough District Council													Cumulative 2025/26	Year - End 2025/26 target
BENEFITS	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In month: New Claims (Days)	18	25.4	17.6	17.4	18.1	12.9	16.6	TBC					18.1	15
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	19.2	16.5	20.4	17	15.5	14.4	13.6	15.1	14.6	13.4	12.9	15.6	15.7	
In month: Change Events (Days)	4.3	5.1	5.4	3.4	43.8	3.5	3.6	TBC					4.1	6
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	5.1	5.4	6.7	5.2	6.3	5.5	3.9	3.9	4.7	5.8	2.0	4.4	4.9	
COUNCIL TAX	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In Year (%)	10.6%	19.7%	28.8%	38%	46.8%	55.9%	65.1%	74%					74%	98.1%
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	10.5%	19.7%	29.0%	38.1%	47.1%	56.5%	65.7%	74.6%	83.6%	92.5%	95.3%	98.1%	98.1%	
Prior years' arrears	£4.4m	£ 4.3m	£4.1m	£4.1m	£4m	£3.9m	£3.8m	£3.7m					£3.7m	INFO
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	£3.8m	£3.7m	£3.6m	£3.5m	£3.4m	£3.3m	£3.2m	£3.2m	£3.1m	£3.0m	£3.0m	£3.0m	£3.0m	
NON DOMESTIC RATES	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
In Year (%)	8.9%	18.1%	26.7%	36.2%	48%	54.9%	63.2%	76.1%					76.1%	99.2%
This years profiled target (based on 24/25)	8.9%	18.4%	27.6%	36.9%	46.2%	55.7%	65.1%	73.3%	81.8%	90.8%	95.0%	99.1%	99.1%	
Prior years' arrears	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.2m	£0.1m					£0.1m	INFO
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	£0.4m	£0.2m	£1.0m	£0.2m	£0.1m	£0.03m	£-0.1m	£-0.1m	£0.20m	£0.25m	£-0.4		£-0.4m	
HOUSING BENEFIT DEBT	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
HB Overpayments outstanding	£0.8m	£0.7m	£0.74m	0.74m	£0.8m	£0.9m	0.9m	0.8m					£0.8m	INFO
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	£0.78m	£0.77m	£0.77m	£0.77m	£0.77m	£0.77m	£0.78m	£0.77m	£0.77m	£0.76m	£0.76m	£0.79m	£0.79m	
HB Overpayments Recovered end of month	1.58%	13.5%	14.6%	16.9%	18%	18%	19%	20%					19%	34%
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	1.2%	3.6%	5.3%	6.5%	7.4%	8.7%	9.7%	11.5%	12.5%	13.5%	14.5%	15%	15%	
FRAUD	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
CTLS Sanctions gained	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0					2	6
<i>Position for 2024/25</i>	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	8	

DWP Housing Benefit Subsidy impact – ‘Local Authority Error/ Time Delay’

HBBC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Lower Threshold	£6,206	£10,697	£14,605	£18,874	£23,137	£27,201	£31,005	£34,634				
Upper Threshold	£6,982	£12,034	£16,431	£21,233	£26,029	£30,601	£34,881	£38,963				
Actual	£472	£978	£1,831	£4,620	£3,443	£4,247	£6,056	£8,154				
Lower Tolerance	£5,735	£9,719	£12,774	£14,254	£19,694	£22,954	£24,949	£26,480	£0	£0	£0	£0
Upper Tolerance	£6,510	£11,056	£14,600	£16,613	£22,586	£26,354	£28,825	£30,809	£0	£0	£0	£0

HDC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Lower Threshold	£4,532	£7,317	£9,847	£12,460	£14,805	£17,348	£20,006	£22,185				
Upper Threshold	£5,099	£8,231	£11,078	£14,018	£16,655	£19,517	£22,507	£24,958				
Actual	£173	£ 234	£400	£1,586	£2,232	£2,193	£2,193	£2,347				
Lower Tolerance	£4,359	£6,585	£9,447	£10,874	£12,573	£15,155	£17,813	£19,838	£0	£0	£0	£0
Upper Tolerance	£4,926	£7,408	£10,678	£12,431	£14,424	£17,324	£20,314	£22,611	£0	£0	£0	£0

NWLDC	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
Lower Threshold	£5,051	£8,828	£12,059	£15,284	£18,782	£21,856	£25,118	£27,968				
Upper threshold	£5,682	£9,932	£13,566	£17,194	£21,130	£24,588	£28,258	£31,464				
Actual	£7,779	£9,372	£11,826	£12,884	£13,018	£13,734	£14,647	£16,569				
Lower Tolerance	-£2,728	-£544	£233	£2,400	£5,764	£8,122	£10,471	£11,399	£0	£0	£0	£0
Upper Tolerance	-£2,097	-£40	£1,740	£4,310	£8,112	£10,854	£13,611	£14,895	£0	£0	£0	£0

Benefits Operational Team

(Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Fraud)

Speed of Processing

Although the official speed of processing data is currently unavailable, the overall trajectory indicates continued improvement in both New Claims and Changes. Additional intelligence suggests that the performance for both areas is expected to remain consistent with previous months.

The DWP national average processing times remain at 21 days for New Claims and 7 days for Changes. The Partnership continues to deliver well within these benchmarks, demonstrating strong performance and efficiency.

LA Error and Subsidy

The subsidy position continues to reflect a healthy position across all three authorities with good bandwidth against thresholds being established providing protection against any issues which may be identified later in the year or future subsidy audits.

The NW Subsidy claim for 2023/24 is now ready for sign-off. Focus has shifted to the 2024/25 audit, with the initial kick-off meeting with KPMG successfully completed last week.

Welfare Reform

- **Crisis and Resilience Fund Update**

The new Crisis and Resilience Fund will be introduced from 1 April 2026. This represents the first ever multi-year settlement for locally delivered crisis support.

The DWP are clear on the need for a new approach to local crisis support that prioritises cash-first support to help people through a sudden financial crisis. Work to draft a process and procedure will be required before the new financial year to ensure readiness to support household in crisis.

- **Universal Credit Roll-out**

The final stage of managed migration for all remaining legacy benefit claimants will conclude in December 2025. The DWP plans to issue migration notices to 1 million lead carers and disabled people, ensuring full-scale managed migration is completed by March 2026. Following this, the DWP will shift its focus to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Universal Credit reforms, scheduled to roll out from April 2026.

MOU

Work has progressed this period on ensuring compliance with the MOU and requirements identified through audits conducted with the DWP.

Benefit Manager

A temporary Benefits Manager started in November.

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Revenues Operational Team (Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayments)
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Council Tax Collection

The collection position remains consistent during the period with the exception of HBBC where prior years arrears have been reduced by £0.3m, which is a result of various activities including EA success and targeted work on recovery stage actions.

The work position on the team has improved with the lowest amount of outstanding work for the year and the oldest unallocated work being looked at within a week of receipt. Members of the Benefits team have been trained to deliver some Council Tax action to reduce hand-offs and deliver a more efficient process which has reduced activity on the team.

There is one member of the team currently on long-term sick and a new starter due on the team early in December who has some CT knowledge.

Detailed work on recovery stages has identified opportunities to undertake targeted action to boost recovery and work more efficiently in the work. In addition there is focused work being undertaken to identify cases which should be targeted for high-level recovery action.

It should be noted that universal credit migrations will see a cessation of attachments to legacy benefits, which may have an impact on Council Tax collection – an approach needs to be agreed on how these will be handled. Further details are to follow.

The budget did not deliver any changes to service delivery for the 2026/27 financial year and there have not been any further announcements on the proposed changes which were consulted on earlier this year, though it has been suggested

a change to regulations is imminent.

Business Rate Collection

The normal volatile nature of the caseload and rateable value continues to make for complex reading of performance with two of the three authorities continuing to track below 24/25 and Harborough tracking in excess of the previous year. This has been a result of varied factors including targeted work for certain debtors and closer working with the finance team to ensure credits are identified and moved on earlier

The work position remains healthy; however, there is one officer currently on long-term sick with work ongoing to assist them to return as soon as possible. However, this is at the detriment of development work and contingency for the additional work required to prepare for Annual Billing (AB).

The budget announcements have placed a lot of pressure on the team and created a substantial risk on the AB timetable. The team has commenced work to identify the accounts subject to the changes to the new multipliers and removal of Retail Relief. The software providers do not appear to have the readiness or solutions currently to provide confidence and are being pushed for answers, and we are expecting detailed answers at the December user group and upcoming webinars.

As above, the team has been short on resources in the second half of the month due to an officer going on long-term sickness. An agency worker has started in November to provide cover and to support the additional work required from proposed changes due to take effect for

Business Development & Support (Systems and Administration)

There were two system upgrades delivered during the period, both completed in their expected timescale however a weakness in the process was identified which is being remedied to ensure communications are clear and timely and arrangements with other services are made in collaboration.

Preparative work has commenced on Annual Billing with the timetable set, subject to the impact of budget changes, and preparations with key stakeholders in place.

There was one P1 incident raised in this period, however it was resolved quickly and did not result in any lost processing time and the teams were able to concentrate on other activities for the brief period of unavailability.

Innovation and Improvement

A number of processes are currently in development for change which will improve efficiency, reduce stationery and postal cost, including Attachment of Earnings and reporting household changes.

Work on developing high-level recovery action is progressing to enable more accounts to be worked in the future, with many opportunities developed.

The hybrid mail solution to move more post through our external supplier and benefit from the reduced costs has been progressed and is set to be rolled out across the teams in December.

Options appraisal for automation activity have been progressed alongside colleagues from LICT and recommendations due to be delivered in the near future.

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SERVICE PLAN 2026/27

The Leicestershire Partnership
Revenues and Benefits (LRBP)

Executive Summary

The 2026/27 Service Plan for the Leicestershire Revenues and Benefits Partnership outlines our commitment to delivering efficient, customer-focused services across three councils. Our priorities are aligned with each council's corporate objectives, emphasizing community wellbeing, economic growth, sustainability, and operational excellence.

Key aims for the year include:

- Accurate and timely administration of benefits and revenues.
- Maximising collection rates while supporting those in financial hardship.
- Advancing digital access and automation for improved efficiency.
- Ensuring compliance, equality, and value for money.

We will monitor performance closely and manage risks proactively to ensure high-quality outcomes for residents and stakeholders.

COUNCILS' AIMS AND PRIORITIES:



Harborough District Council

Place and Community:

Community leadership to create a sense of pride and wellbeing.

Healthy Lives:

Promoting health and wellbeing and encouraging healthy life choices .

Environment and Sustainability: Creating a sustainable environment to protect future generations.

Economy:

Supporting businesses and residents to deliver a prosperous local economy.



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

People:

Helping people to stay healthy, active, and protected from harm.

Places:

Creating clean and attractive places to live and work.

Prosperity:

Encouraging growth, attracting businesses improving skills and supporting regeneration.

North West Leicestershire District Council

Planning and regeneration: Economic growth and physical development of the district.
Clean, green and Zero Carbon: Looking after the environment we live in.
Communities and housing: Looking after our tenants and keeping our communities safe.
A well-run council: Making sure our services are provided in a positive and friendly way, that we provide value for money and that our finances are in good order.

Our Mission and objectives

To deliver a high-quality Revenues and Benefits service for residents and businesses that is:

- Efficient and Effective – Streamlining processes to maximise value and minimise delays.
- Customer-Focused – Putting people at the heart of everything we do, ensuring clarity, fairness, and accessibility.
- Continuously Improving – Driving innovation and best practice to meet evolving needs.
- Enhancing the Customer Journey – Providing choice of access channels, reducing avoidable contact, and creating a seamless experience.

Our commitment: Align services with customer requirements while empowering teams to deliver excellence and measurable outcomes.

Objectives:

- **Deliver Accuracy and Speed**
Assess and pay Housing Benefit Council Tax Support and DHP promptly and correctly, ensuring financial stability for those who need it most.
- **Maintain Compliance and Partnership**
Fulfil all DWP liaison requirements by making timely and accurate referrals in line with statutory obligations.
- **Maximise Collection and Support**
Issue precise and timely Council Tax and NNDR (including BID) bills to optimise collection rates, while providing fair and compassionate support to those in financial difficulty.
- **Champion Digital Self-Service**
Promote self-service as the default, while maintaining a choice of access channels to meet diverse customer needs.
- **Raise Awareness and Provide Guidance**
Proactively publicise discounts, exemptions, reliefs, and benefits, offering clear advice on all Revenues and Benefits matters.
- **Ensure Legal and Ethical Compliance**
Uphold all statutory requirements, including those relating to Revenues and Benefits administration, Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Human Rights, and Health & Safety.
- **Promote Equality and Diversity**
Embed fairness and inclusivity in every interaction with residents and staff.
- **Innovate for Better Services**
Develop and deliver innovative solutions that enhance customer experience and operational efficiency.
- **Communicate and Adapt**
Engage effectively with customers and stakeholders, evolving services to meet changing needs. Position ourselves to be best in class in readiness for Local Government Reorganisation

- **Empower Our People**
Build a skilled, motivated, and proud workforce through training, empowerment, and recognition.
- **Ensure Fairness and Consistency**
Treat every customer with respect, fairness, and transparency.
- **Learn and Improve**
Act on feedback from compliments and complaints to continuously refine service delivery.
- **Deliver Value for Money**
Achieve financial and operational efficiencies that provide sustainable, cost-effective services.

Scope of Services Delivered by the Partnership

We provide a comprehensive, end-to-end Revenues and Benefits service designed to maximise efficiency, compliance, and customer satisfaction. Our scope includes:

- **Council Tax Management**
Full lifecycle billing, recovery, and enforcement to ensure accurate charges and timely collection.
- **Housing Benefit Administration**
Accurate assessment and payment of Housing Benefit, supported by proactive customer guidance.
- **Business Rates (NNDR) Management**
Billing, recovery, and enforcement, including BID levies for HBBC and NWLDC and Freeport for NWLDC.
- **Council Tax Reduction Scheme**
Administration of Council Tax Support to assist those in financial need.

- **Fraud Investigation**
Detect and investigate Council Tax Support fraud in partnership with DWP.
- **Overpayment Recovery**
Efficient billing and recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.
- **Customer Support & Guidance**
Multi-channel support, advice, and training to empower customers and staff.
- **Hardship Awards & Reliefs**
Administration and promotion of discretionary reliefs and hardship schemes.
- **Grant Certification & Audit**
Ensure compliance and accuracy in grant claims within Revenues and Benefits.
- **Community Financial Support**
Delivery of ad hoc government schemes (e.g., flooding relief) to support local communities.
- **Strategic Collaboration**
Work closely with economic development and planning teams to monitor business rate growth and support financial forecasting.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL AGENDA ITEMS

There are new and existing matters that will need to be addressed during the early part of 2026 and throughout the year to meet both central government aims and the Partnerships. The items are:

- Crisis and resilience funding
- Continuation of the Housing Benefit Award Accuracy initiative

- Impact on businesses of the removal of Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief – Support for eligible retail, hospitality, and leisure businesses will be removed from 01.04.2026. Linked to a new valuation list and five multipliers
- Changes to service delivery brought about by unplanned changes beyond our control including changes to systems and loss of key personnel.
- Financial pressures on partner authorities, impacting the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) resulting in additional work streams linked to efficiencies and savings.
- Expected change to Council Tax from the consultation exercise that was undertaken during 2025.

- Legislative changes affecting Revenues and Benefits - consultation and prep for “The Mansion Tax” and actions to facilitate that

Changes to Service Delivery:

Although we are aware of forthcoming initiatives, local authorities remain the go-to for delivery of national schemes. Against a backdrop of ensuring that our ‘business as usual work’ is maintained we need to be mindful of the potential for further demands.

KEY PROJECTS – OUR IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In addition to the 'business as usual' projects we are currently working on several projects during 2025/26 which will continue into 2026/2027

Description	Key actions	Responsible Officer(s)	Critical Support
Implement a sustainable solution to allow customers to make applications and ensure they are delivering as required and an enabler to self-serve	To include. E-Claim E-Change of circumstances Discount & Exemption module Change of address	Operational Managers	Academy/Systems/IT/Third party suppliers
Finalise automation of benefit file transfers into LA systems	Testing to ensure that DWP data is updated as required and not compromised	Benefit Operational Manager	Academy/Systems

(UCDS) during quarter 1			
Business Process re-engineering	Fully utilising the functionality provided by the Capita product. To be planned and deliver across the service	Operational Managers	Academy/Systems
Review the product provided by Destin Solutions.	Investigation of additional functionality provided by the product.	Operational Managers	PMT, Systems, LRBP Team leaders
Description	Key actions	Responsible Officer(s)	Critical Support
Align processes across partners	Including refunds, reliefs, and any other areas where processes aren't aligned	Operational Managers	PMT/Team Leaders/Critical Friend

Review and implement policies for high level recovery and enforcement	Including insolvency, charging orders, orders for sale.	Head of Partnership	PMT/Team Leaders
Produce a feasibility study for the update of the proprint offer	Feasibility and recommendation and business case.	BD&S	
Consider undertaking a County wide SPD review	Agree process, schedule, deliver.	Operational managers	S151 officers, LRBP partners and LTA input
Review of SBRR/Charitable Relief cases	Agree process, schedule, deliver.	NDR Team Leader / Operational Managers	ICT/ NDR Team Leader / NDR Team
Description	Key actions	Responsible Officer(s)	Critical Support
Budget efficiency	Continue to review all transactions to ensure best value	Head Partnership	LRBP team leaders Finance

	and challenge own thinking		
Ashby Bid renewal	Work with BID & NW with regard to the ballot that will take place	NDR Team leader, manager, BD&S	Director Finance , ICT, BID
Evaluation of what if any work is needed to ensure businesses are placed in the correct multiplier , post annual billing and moving forwards	Evaluate feedback from customers, wider RB benchmarking and plan accordingly	NDR TL, Manager	S151 officers, ER officers
Implement the outcomes of the EM Council review of the partnership	Consider and implement recommendations	All	Management Board reps

Maximise NDR & Council Tax income streams at first point of awareness to LRBP via Visits Team	Review of processes, training and prioritisation of income streams and priorities	Revs OM , TL's and visits team members	S151 officers, planning, SNN, regeneration
Recruit to OM Roles post EMC review		Director CS , Head LRBP	HR, TL's

Customer Service Commitment

The Leicestershire Partnership is unwavering in its pledge to deliver services that reflect equality, diversity, and fairness at every level. We will:

- **Ensure Accessibility and Responsiveness**
Provide services that are easy to access, inclusive, and tailored to meet the needs of all customers.
- **Champion Fairness in Employment**
Demonstrate equality of opportunity through transparent recruitment, robust training, and a corporate approach that values every individual.
- **Lead on Equality and Diversity**
Actively promote and embed equality and diversity principles across all councils and operations, ensuring fairness is not just a policy but a practice.

Our standard: Every interaction will be professional, respectful, and focused on delivering the best possible customer experience.

Performance Review and Target Setting

All performance targets will undergo a full review following the 2025/26 out-turn to ensure accuracy and alignment with strategic priorities.

The proposed targets for the 2026/27 financial year will be developed based on this analysis and presented to the Joint Committee for formal approval, ensuring transparency, accountability, stretching targets and continuous improvement.

RISKS

All identified risks will be monitored and reported to the Management Board on a quarterly basis, ensuring robust oversight and timely action through structured quarterly reporting.

- Consider risk as an integral part of service improvement planning, key decision-making processes, and project and partnership governance.
- Communicate risk information effectively through a clear reporting framework.
- Increase understanding and expertise in risk management through targeted training and the sharing of best practice.

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FORWARD PLAN FOR JOINT COMMITTEE 2025-2026

Decision	Date of Decision (approx.)	Contacts
Budget Setting Report	January 2026	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Financial Performance Report	January 2026	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Service Plan 2025/26	January 2026	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Performance Report	January 2026	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Financial Performance report	March 2026	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Performance Report	March 2026	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Internal Audit Final report	March 2026	Mazars – Internal Auditors
Year End Performance Report	Annual meeting June 2026	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Year End Financial Report	June 2026	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Schedule of meetings	June 2026	Democratic Services
Financial Performance Report	September 2026	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Performance Report	September 2026	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership
Financial Performance Report	November 2026	Ashley Wilson – Section 151 Officer
Performance Report	November 2026	Sally O’Hanlon – Head of Partnership

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