



**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission 28 July 2022

Wards affected: All Wards

**Hinckley & Bosworth Economic Regeneration Strategy
2021 – 2025 Update Report**

Report of Director (Community & Development Services)

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To provide Members with an update on work undertaken in the last 12 months, including ongoing initiatives, in order to fulfil the aims of the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021 - 2025.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That Members note and endorse the Economic Regeneration work undertaken and outcomes achieved and endorse the ongoing work highlighted in the report appendix.

3. Background to the report

3.1 The overall aim of the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021- 2025 is to promote economic well-being for all local businesses and residents across the whole of the borough. In particular it incorporates policies that will help both businesses and residents build economic resilience to combat the difficulties that many are facing due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.2 Update in Respect to Projects

3.3 Places Theme

Summary and Highlights of Places Theme:

- Town Centres' Strategy vision – Consultants are finalising a high-level document identifying opportunities for investment and improvement to deliver, through a separate masterplan the physical, social and

environmental aspirations for the town centre. It will provide a framework for the regeneration of sites within Hinckley by identifying and targeting specific sites. The strategy will have a life of between 5 and 15 years dependent on the progress against objectives.

- Working with partners 42 family events were delivered and promoted widely to attract residents and visitors. Reporting 50% increase in visitor numbers when hosting an event. Events promoted on: www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/events
- HBBC Communications team working with Hinckley BID and Wonderful Hinckley team created a film showcasing Hinckley and the borough as a whole with footage from businesses, leisure and retail. It will be promoted extensively on social media, online and to partners. Wonderful Hinckley launched on Instagram with over a thousand followers to date.
- Major Projects Team commissioned consultants to produce a Hinckley Town Centre Wayfinding Strategy. The Strategy has been endorsed and the Team are commencing with its implementation including design and preparing for installation of the wayfinding elements.
- Hinckley High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) – The Hinckley HSHAZ has now entered its third year (2022/23 period) and continues to deliver 15 projects that intend to record, promote, protect, repair and enhance historic buildings and environment within the defined HSHAZ area. The Hinckley HSHAZ Scheme is particularly focussing on delivering the following projects this year: Building Improvement Scheme, Public Realm Projects, HSHAZ Hub, Community Engagement Programme, Building Maintenance Guidance and Cultural Programme.
- To promote improved walking and cycling access a local cycling framework document has been developed and cycle routes shared on HBBC website: www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/info/200123/cycling
- The Major Projects team have regular dialogue with the Leicester Inward Investment Team and development industry on employment sites within the Borough. The team also engage with CWLEP Growth Hub on the support available to businesses in the borough.
- MIRA Technology Park and Enterprise Zone – Continuing support of the ongoing expansion through advice, grant and loan support.
- New Tourism destination leaflet launched and rebranded to RichardiiiCountry. Bosworth 1485 sculpture trail is progressing well, details can be found www.richardiiicountry.com/richard-iii/index
- The Environmental Improvement Programme 2021/22 within budget delivered nine schemes. Highlights include: various war memorial cleaning work including repairs carried out to Hinckley War Memorial on Argents Mead and repair to Dakins Bridge, Ashby Canal and the bankside at Congerstone

3.4 Prosperity Theme

Summary and Highlights of Prosperity Theme:

- Since the start of the pandemic in order to support and sustain local businesses through recovery from COVID19 the Council has distributed £32,381,222 on 5673 mandatory Covid grants and we have spent £5,426,329 on 2005 discretionary grants.

- Using the business database continue to signpost businesses to the latest business support, events, news and grant funding information. In particular the Councils discretionary fund programmes and information on Covid to help support business especially support available from the Leicestershire Growth Hub.
- Participated in a County wide six month programme of business start-up support activity targeting businesses under two years old providing access to training, mentoring, digital workshops and a small-scale grants programme.
- A flyer has been included in the business rates demands with one side promoting the Leicestershire Growth Hub and the other promoting the Councils social media profiles promoting business support available.
- There has been high business rates growth arising from the councils inward investment initiatives, leading to retained business rates growth increasing from £1.2m in 2019/20 to an expected £2.6m for 2022/23.
- The Hinckley & Bosworth Employment & Skills Taskforce has continued to go from strength to strength with an excellent representation from local businesses, LLEP, the college and secondary schools.
- A local business survey was held in December 2021 and follows a similar survey that was undertaken in September 2020. The survey showed that the top priorities for support was financial followed by recruitment/training and then business rate relief. Looking to hold a business show case event to take place after the summer, to showcase local businesses and address the results of the survey.
- Successful bid for Levelling Up fund monies for a £19.9m project at Twycross Zoo to deliver a national science and conservation centre.
- Commenced work on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment plan to release the Councils conditional allocation of £2,600,011.
- Newly created Hinckley Town Centre Vacant Unit Working Group established, a mini action plan has been developed with a new Destination Hinckley brochure designed and distributed: www.hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk/destinationhinckley

3.5 People Theme

Summary and Highlights of People Theme:

- The Council has supported cross-border (North Warwickshire Borough Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) employment and skills initiatives and events such as the Career Speed Networking and Teen Tech live events at Mira Technology Institute.
- The Council continues to support the Primary Engineers programme and Secondary Engineers programme for schools in the Borough promoting engineering careers for pupils through inspiring programmes and competitions.
- Through the Councils Employment and Skills Taskforce officers are regularly engaging with local schools and academies on topics such as climate change and events such as the South Charnwood United Business Alliance.
- Working with North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College and partners on a large scale STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts

and Maths) into your future event aiming to inspire the future workforce to pursue a career within STEAM. This will be done through employer demonstrations, and links with local and national employers.

- Regular meetings are held between officers and Job Centre Plus to exchange information on new employment site job opportunities and the number of people seeking work and what help they might need to do to take advantage of these posts.
- Working with the planning policy team to ensure the Economic Prosperity section Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2020-2039 meets employment land requirements for both existing and new business. Also ensuring proposals for major development will be required to submit a Local Employment & Training Strategy (LETS) through S106 agreements. LETS documents continue to support employment opportunities for local people and are requested on large housing sites such as Westfield Farm and employment sites such as the new ALDI National Distribution Centre for both the construction and operational phases.
- In order to encourage the upskilling of local people, to retain local skills and encourage the retention of local graduates continued liaison and promotion of local employment programme opportunities such as the WILL Project and Leicester Employment Hub.
- A fully branded careers and jobs fair offer is being created to highlight the range of different careers options and benefits of working for a local authority to inspire local students to consider working for the council as a future career option.
- Hinckley High Street HAZ Hub at the Atkins building held their first recruitment event in June 2022, hosted by Job Centre Plus it showcased job opportunities from local employers.

3.6 **Well-being Theme**

Summary and Highlights of Well-being Theme:

- Working with the Councils Health Improvement Officer and County Councils Workplace Health Officer have disseminated various health information leaflets to businesses themed on prevention and wider determinants of Health and promoted surveys on chance to shape the next phase of this work.
- The Council have acted as a Kickstart Gateway supporting local businesses accepted on the scheme with their six month placements for creating new jobs for 16 to 24 year olds.
- Working in partnership with Active Together (formerly LRS) 15 workplaces have signed the Wellbeing at Work Charter to improve the health and wellbeing of their staff offering bespoke support packages.

3.7 **Climate Change Theme**

Summary and Highlights of Climate Change Theme:

- Established the Hinckley and Bosworth Business Climate Change Forum chaired by Hinckley and Rugby Building Society aiming to work with local businesses to bring best practice together and share knowledge on how businesses are reducing their carbon footprint and limiting the impacts of climate change.

- Posted regular updates on climate change initiatives and action on social media and regular press releases and Borough Bulletin articles on climate positive actions.
- Promote via the business database and business forum to businesses financial assistance initiatives available such as Green BELLE- Green Grants to Grow Your Business and carbon literacy training for business.

4. Financial implications [CS]

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report. Any future funding for projects will be requested in accordance with financial procedure rules.

5. Legal implications [MR]

- 5.1 None

6. Corporate Plan implications

- 6.1 The Economic Regeneration Strategy has synergy with the Corporate Plan's vision as a 'Place of Opportunity'. Particularly under 'Prosperity' by 'Supporting the regeneration of our town centres and villages' and 'Boosting economic growth and regeneration by encouraging investment that will provide new jobs and places to live and work all over the borough'.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 The Economic Regeneration Strategy was subject to public consultation via the council's website, our business database and through liaising with key partnerships.

8. Risk implications

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

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
None		

9. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 9.1 Projects put forward in the Economic Regeneration Strategy generally have a good spread over the whole of the Borough to include both the urban and rural areas.
- 9.2 It is considered that this report will not have any effect on equality for any of the protected characteristics and therefore no further analysis or action is necessary.

10. Climate implications

- 10.1 A section of both the strategy and action plan are devoted to climate change and relate to the council's declared climate emergency

11. Corporate implications

- 11.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community Safety implications – none directly as a result of this report
 - Environmental implications – various projects identified will have a positive impact
 - ICT implications - none directly as a result of this report
 - Asset Management implications - none directly as a result of this report
 - Procurement implications - none directly as a result of this report
 - Human Resources implications - none directly as a result of this report
 - Planning implications – planning matters will be dealt with, when appropriate, through the regeneration projects being brought forward
 - Data Protection implications - none directly as a result of this report
 - Voluntary Sector – the voluntary sector is supported through a number of initiatives identified in the strategy.

Background papers: Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021 to 2025

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Appendix A

The following are actions from the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021- 2025 that will continue be a focus of ongoing work priorities over the next year:

Places

- Produce new Town Centres' Strategy vision document in order to promote the vitality of our town centres
- Work with partners including the BID to develop our plans and new events programme to attract shoppers and visitors to help increase footfall to pre-COVID levels and above in our town centres while maintaining social distancing
- Invest in marketing and communication to promote our town centres i.e. shop local campaigns
- Re-imagine Hinckley town centre through the new Public Realm Masterplan to identify new opportunities that will secure the ongoing regeneration of Hinckley
- To implement the Hinckley High Streets Heritage Action Zone to improve the appearance of identified historic buildings and public spaces
- Promote improved walking and cycling access to our town centres and implement the Hinckley Public Realm Masterplan proposals related to this by working with partners to access funding and deliver sustainable and COVID safe improvements
- Continue to support our rural town centres
- Promote and regularly update the Investor Prospectus and its sites
- Bring forward employment sites and facilitate quality 'move on' space for businesses wishing to expand
- To promote the MIRA Technology Park and Enterprise Zone
- To work with tourism bodies in relation to tourism matters
- Continue to deliver the Environmental Improvement Programme

Prosperity

- Consider financial impacts on all types of businesses and provide support to access both grant and support programmes from sources such as government, the LLEP Growth Hub, Leicestershire County Council and HBBC
- Engage with our Employment & Skills Taskforce to deliver its action plan on intervention and support, including securing local data to inform on trends and inform actions
- Establish relationships with and an understanding of the needs of both existing and new businesses especially related to skills in order to establish likely future skill requirements of businesses
- Facilitate and promote business events by working in partnership on subjects chosen through collaboration with local businesses
- Through relevant digital programmes enable businesses to best use superfast broadband opportunities
- Work with tourism partners and the LLEP to secure external support for key tourism destinations in our area
- Through the Local Plan identify opportunity sites for re-imagined development and investment opportunities such as grow-on space and small affordable units for start-ups

- Make use of data collection and intelligence to engage with local commercial agents to understand changing market conditions and build confidence
- Undertake a review of our own commercial estate and opportunities for the future
- Review the opportunities through master planning for potential re-uses of vacant office/commercial buildings in our centres and enable more people to live in appropriate locations of town centres in order to support local businesses

People

- Through the Employment and Skills Taskforce to work with local schools and colleges to enable young people to have confidence in their future, raise aspirations and ensure students have an understanding of local employment and training opportunities
- To promote specific sector job opportunities at schools and colleges in order to improve perceptions and attract young people into employment in these sectors
- To work with education providers and businesses to match training courses and apprenticeships to local business needs including any replacement demand requirement
- To encourage the upskilling of local people, to retain local skills and encourage the retention of local graduates
- To support people to overcome barriers to employment and work with the Voluntary and Community Sector to provide support programmes
- To support people wishing to set up in business and those working from home
- To work with construction companies and developers on local sites to encourage them to take on local people for jobs, apprenticeships and work placements
- To engage with appropriate local transport providers and enablers to help people access employment and training

Well-being

- Support the well-being and health of the local workforce through working in partnership to help with mental health issues, business diversification possibilities and upskilling

Climate Change

- Identify how we can support new working practices for businesses which have a positive impact on carbon emissions such as investment in renewable energy technology
- Support LCC to deliver active travel interventions that will encourage greater use of walking, cycling and electric vehicles

To work in partnership to fulfil the economic potential of the area

- To ensure a broad range of support packages are available to local businesses, particularly micro and small enterprises
- To develop strong partnership relationships, which have the capacity to lever in funding where required to deliver both large and small scale projects
- Support and work with town centres groups in respect to initiatives and events
- To source appropriate Section 106 Agreement funding to support the regeneration of town centres.