

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

1 October 2024 AT 6.30 pm

PRESENT: CLLR R WEBBER-JONES - MAYOR
CLLR REH FLEMMING – DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr RG Allen, Cllr MC Bools, Cllr SL Bray, Cllr MB Cartwright,
Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr WJ Crooks, Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr CE Green,
Cllr C Harris, Cllr L Hodgkins, Cllr C Lambert, Cllr KWP Lynch,
Cllr LJ Mullaney, Cllr MT Mullaney, Cllr LJP O'Shea,
Cllr A Pendlebury, Cllr MJ Surtees, Cllr A Weightman and
Cllr P Williams

Officers in attendance: Ilyas Bham, Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen,
Caroline Roffey and Sharon Stacey

189. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors C Allen, Cook, Cope, S Gibbens, Glenville, Hollick, Moore, Stead-Davis, Sutton and Walker.

190. Minutes of the previous meeting

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bools and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting on 3 September be confirmed
as a correct record.

191. Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

192. Mayor's Communications

The Mayor provided an update on events that he and the Deputy Mayor had attended recently.

193. Questions

(a) From Councillor R Allen

“There has been repeated mention of a promise to provide an NHS ‘walk-in centre’ for Hinckley.

I would like to learn more about this proposal for the benefit of borough residents, as my own enquiries have produced little information.

I would very much appreciate if the Executive member could confirm when this promise was made and who made it, plus provide me with all and any supporting correspondence and documentation please”.

Response from Councillor Bray, Leader of the Council:

“Reference to the provision of a walk-in centre was mentioned in Conservative election literature as far back as 2015 that was distributed in Barwell, Burbage and Hinckley so I suggest Cllr Allen checks his archive. In addition to comments about a walk-in centre, his colleagues also talked about improving GP access, which again many residents believe is a broken promise.

Everyone will also remember the visit of the disgraced former Health Secretary Matt Hancock in December 2018 which included the announcement to relocate ‘the out-of-hours primary care service from Hinckley & Bosworth Community Hospital into the new developed urgent care hub in Hinckley Health Centre providing out-of-hours urgent care for local patients’. The former Conservative Council Leader updated the Council on this in the following January. Cllr Allen was a member of Mr Hall’s Executive at the time so I’m surprised he doesn’t remember this”.

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Allen asked for confirmation about whether the development of a walk-in centre had been mentioned as a wish or a promise. In response, Councillor Bray stated he felt that was irrelevant whether it was an aspiration or a promise as expectations had been raised as a result.

(b) From Councillor R Allen

“Can the Leader provide residents of the borough with an update on the crematorium project please?”.

Response from Councillor Lynch, Executive member for finance:

“I’m surprised to receive this question as the Scrutiny Commission was fully appraised of the current position at its meeting on 9 May 2024.

Officers have engaged consultants to identify the best options for the council to progress this project. Officers are currently appraising these options and will engage with members when due diligence has been applied to the options presented.

The administration inherited this project from the previous Conservative administration and is determined to ensure it succeeds”.

By way of supplementary question, Councillor Allen requested the current position following progress since the Scrutiny Commission meeting mentioned. In response, Councillor Lynch said he hoped further information would be available within the next few weeks.

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

In his position statement, the Leader referred to:

- Devolution deals
- Cineworld Hinckley which would be remaining open following intervention by the council
- The rural strategy

- The launch of the free tree scheme
- The cultural strategy
- The solar panel project for the leisure centre which had been granted planning permission
- The success of the Macmillan coffee morning which raised over £300.

Members expressed thanks to officers from across the authority.

195. **Minutes of the Scrutiny Commission**

The chair of the Scrutiny Commission presented the minutes of the last meeting.

196. **Procurement of HGV fleet**

Members were advised of the requirement to replace the HGV fleet. It was noted that whilst disappointing that it wasn't feasible to procure an all-electric fleet due to the cost of purchase and the infrastructure requirements, the move to using HVO had proven to be a good compromise. It was moved by Councillor Hodgkins, seconded by Councillor Bray and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) The procurement of the replacement HGV fleet from 1 September 2025 be approved;
- (ii) The following supplementary budgets be approved:
 - (a) A supplementary capital budget of £4,422,608 for the fleet;
 - (b) A supplementary revenue budget of £420,616 for the annual financing cost and additional maintenance;
 - (c) An increase in the council's capital financing requirement of £4,422,608 to allow for the purchase of the HGVs.

197. **Corporate Plan annual achievements 2023-24**

Consideration was given to the annual report summarising achievements against the council's corporate plan 2024 to 2028. Members thanked officers from across the organisation for their hard work. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bools and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) The annual summary of achievements be endorsed;
- (ii) The positive work being undertaken to deliver the corporate plan on behalf of the community be noted.

198. **Local Government Boundary Commission Review - Council Size Submission**

The proposed submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) in relation to Council size was presented. It was noted that this was part of the full review of electoral boundaries within the district. In relation to the proposal to establish a working group to look at ward boundaries as the next stage of the review, it was confirmed that the group would be politically balanced. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bools and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) The submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission on Council size be approved;
- (ii) The proposed request to the LGBCE to increase the number of members from 34 to 36 be approved;
- (iii) The creation of a member working group for completion of the next stage of the review to consider ward boundaries be approved.

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

Councillor M Mullaney, seconded by Councillor Bools, proposed the following motion:

“The two-child limit to benefit payments was introduced by the Conservative government in 2017 and is supported by the current Labour government. It prevents families from claiming child tax credit or universal credit for more than two children in the household.

Council notes the recent [research](#) conducted by the End Child Poverty Coalition which has found that:

- 1.5 million children in the UK live in households subject to the two-child limit on benefit payments. That is roughly one in ten children in the UK
- In 2023/24, the two-child limit cost families up to £3,235 per child each year
- There is a strong correlation between families affected by the two-child limit and those who are living in poverty
- Scrapping the two-child limit would lift 250,000 children out of poverty overnight, and significantly reduce the level of poverty that a further 850,000 children live in
- Scrapping the two-child limit would cost £1.3 billion, however it is estimated that child poverty costs the economy £39 billion each year.

In Hinckley & Bosworth, 1,680 children in 470 households are currently affected by the two-child limit to benefit payments. That is 7% of all children in the authority area. At the same time, 6, 427 local children are living in poverty.

Council strongly believes that the two-child limit to benefit payments is a cruel and armful policy that should be scrapped. [Research from the University of York](#) has shown its introduction has had no positive impacts on employment and earnings. Instead, it has dragged thousands of local families into poverty.

Council notes the Liberal Democrats have consistently opposed the two-child limit to benefit payments since it was introduced – calling for it to be axed in their 2017, 2019

and 2024 manifestos. Council notes with concern the stance of the Labour government which is committed to keeping the cap – going as far as suspending the whip from MPs who rebel against this position.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's strong belief that the two-child limit to benefit payments should be scrapped, which would help 1,680 children living in Hinckley & Bosworth
- Ensure the number of children a family has is considered when a hardship grant is given out by the council”.

During debate, the matter of balancing financial concerns with the risk of child poverty was highlighted.

Councillor Bray along with eight further members stood to request voting on the motion be recorded. The vote was taken as follows:

Councillors Bools, Bray, Cartwright, J Crooks, W Crooks, Flemming, Gibbens, Green, Hodgkins, Lynch, L Mullaney, M Mullaney, Pendlebury, Webber-Jones, Weightman and Williams voted FOR the motion (16);

Councillors Allen, Harris, Lambert, O’Shea and Surtees abstained from voting.

The motion was therefore declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) The Chief Executive be instructed to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council’s strong belief that the two-child limit to benefit payments should be scrapped, which would help 1,680 children living in Hinckley & Bosworth;
- (ii) Officers be requested to ensure that the number of children a family has is considered when a hardship grant is given out.

(The Meeting closed at 7.18 pm)

MAYOR