



## Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Scrutiny Commission                      14 December 2023

Wards affected:                              All Wards

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### Hinckley & Bosworth Economic Regeneration Strategy update report 2023

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Report of Director (Community & Development Services)

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny with an update on work undertaken in the last 12 months to fulfil the aims of the Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021 - 2025.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That Scrutiny note and endorse the Economic Regeneration work undertaken and outcomes achieved.

#### **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.

#### **3.2 Update in Respect to Projects**

#### **3.3 Places Theme**

Summary and Highlights of Places Theme:

- Over 500 'Destination Hinckley' branded brochures have been produced and distributed aimed at encouraging retailers to locate their business in the town centre.
- A draft Town Centres' Strategy vision document has been prepared by consultants identifying opportunities for investment and improvement to deliver the physical, social and environmental aspirations for the town centre. This provides a framework for the regeneration of Hinckley town centre and is a key document for providing a strong platform for

implementation as well as being part of the Local Plan as a Development Plan Document.

- Working with partners over 40 family events across the borough were delivered and promoted widely to attract residents and visitors with 60 plus days of activities attracting more than 60,000 additional visitors.
- Free public Wi-Fi and footfall counting has been installed in Barwell, Earl Shilton and Market Bosworth. The Town Centre manager assists with events in the rural area with staffing or expertise and a rural CCTV grant has been utilised by 5 parishes in 2022/23.
- A UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Shop Front Improvement Grant has been set up and is available for all locations in the Borough (up to £1,500 in funding available per unit).
- Following endorsement of the Hinckley Town Centre Wayfinding Strategy using UKSPF 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 entered its fourth and final year (2023/234 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.
- The Major Projects team have regular dialogue with the Leicester Inward Investment Team and development industry on employment sites within the Borough.
- MIRA Technology Park and Enterprise Zone – Continuing support of the ongoing expansion through advice, grant and loan support. Using available resources through enterprise zone (EZ) business rates retention HORIBA MIRA is undertaking a programme of activity to support the recovery of the EZ and neighbouring areas from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic through employment and skills initiatives and specific EZ delivery projects. This concentrates on employability and comprises; interventions and support for the unemployed, activities that engage with young people in schools, promotion of apprenticeship opportunities and creation of work experience placements where students are offered incredible opportunities to gain exposure to the professional world across various departments and businesses at MIRA Technology Park.
- The MIRA Technology Park currently has 1,300 jobs on site and the Council have invested £7,754,000 at MIRA Technology Park.
- The Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM) provides an indicative base of the local economic impact of tourism (from both staying and day visitors) for monitoring trends. The economic impact in 2022 was £226m, an increase of 4.1% on 2019. Just under 90% of all visitors to the borough are day visits however overnight visitors accounted for £143m of the total economic impact showing the importance of the staying visitor to the local economy.

- Work is underway on drafting of the Councils new Tourism Strategy 2024-2030; the visitor economy growth plan will outline the priorities for action and intervention in the visitor economy for the next six years.
- The Environmental Improvement Programme 2022/23 spent £29,527.50 within budget delivering eight schemes. Highlights include repairs to a section of the Charnwood stone wall that bounds the churchyard of All Saints' Church, Cadeby, repairs to two windows at St Peters Church, Copt Oak and installation of heritage lighting in Desford.

### 3.4 Prosperity Theme

Summary and Highlights of Prosperity Theme:

- Following the endorsement of the Councils UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) investment plan to release the allocation of £2,600,011 officer project leads have been working to deliver the 27 identified projects. An officer has also been recruited to support delivery and established a monitoring framework for quarterly returns to government.
- Addition to UKSPF the Council has been awarded £400,000 Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) capital only funding for 2023-2025 to support four key themes; support rural tourism sector businesses, support wider rural small and micro enterprises, support and enhance our heritage and improve community facilities. Officers are currently finalising the grant application process.
- Through our UKSPF allocation the council have worked with districts across Leicestershire to commission a business support and advice service. The Leicestershire Business Advice Service project includes business advisors to provide one-to-one support, specialist sectors advice and start-up support.
- The Councils LinkedIn is predominately used to promote business activity and has over 1,700 followers. Recently launched a monthly Economic Regeneration News e-newsletter to signpost businesses to the latest business support, events, news and grant funding information.
- The Hinckley & Bosworth Employment & Skills Taskforce has continued to go from strength to strength with an excellent representation from local schools and academies, local businesses – large and small, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LEEP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC), MIRA Technology Institute (MTI) and other key organisations and partners.
- Following the successful bid for £19.9m of Levelling Up funds for the Twycross National Science and Conservation Centre the council is supporting the zoo in progressing the project.
- A UKSPF funded tourism Taste the Place campaign Place highlighting food and drink offer to eat, buy or see in production has commenced with work underway on mapping the local offer. A Tourism Stay Local project to bring together new packages and bookable product to increase overnight stays is underway with UKSPF funding.
- Using the UKSPF a Market Bosworth managed industrial hub feasibility study has been funded. Another feasibility study Hinckley Town Centre Vacant Units Housing Assessment is underway. The purpose of the

project is to increase the amount of affordable housing in the borough by assessing available commercial property in Hinckley town centre and identifying opportunities to bring such property into a housing use.

### 3.5 **People Theme**

Summary and Highlights of People Theme:

- The Council continues to support cross-border (North Warwickshire Borough Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council) employment and skills initiatives and events such as the Career Speed Networking with 90 attending and Teen Tech live events with 310 students attending the virtual event and 148 in person at MIRA Technology Institute.
- The Council supported 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.
- 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.
- Hinckley Job Centre organise regular recruitment events, 5 events in the last 12 months, in conjunction with the Council at the Hinckley High Street HAZ Hub at the Atkins building. Overall, the feedback has been very positive from all customers and employers with many stating they would "attend again".
- 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.
- We are requesting proposals for major development to 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 and employment sites such as the new ALDI National Distribution Centre for both the construction and operational phases. The Hinckley Park LETS phase 3 has resulted in various local school site visits with over 105 students benefiting already with more visits planned.
- We have developed a 'Working with Us' brand showcasing the careers available in local government. We have produced a careers guide that aims to provide an overview of the type of work local people could become involved in and the directions a career could go in through working for the council. Officers are regularly attending careers fairs throughout the borough, including a first visit to a local primary school and have engaged over 400 students so far with more events coming up soon.
- Cultural Services developed a specific Unbox Your Future programme for special needs pupils at Dorothy Goodman Special School in Hinckley. The programme consisted of 5 lessons covering what a local authority does, the type of jobs in a local authority and planning to deliver a specific event,

in this case a sports event for people with special needs at Sport in Desford. The programme finished with a presentation at Sport in Desford where all the pupils involved received a certificate.

- For Apprenticeship Week 2023 the council created seven apprenticeship case study videos with HBBC employees talking about their experience showing first-hand the success and what it can lead to. The video for Daisy, one of our town planning apprentices has reached 1000 views on the Council's LinkedIn profile.
- UKSPF funds have been used to establish the Beam partnership to assist people at risk of homelessness into employment and skills.

### 3.6 **Well-being Theme**

Summary and Highlights of Well-being Theme:

- Working alongside Leicestershire Public Health team to promote the Healthy Workplace Leicestershire scheme to improve the health and wellbeing of their staff offering bespoke support packages.
- Active Hinckley & Bosworth have dedicated promotion of walking and cycling via web and social media platforms as part of a wider messaging campaign on Active Travel including a weekly guided walks programme.
- Using UKSPF funds a Graduate Active Travel and Physical Activity Assistant has been recruited to support people to make Active Travel choices for education, employment and recreation, wellbeing purposes through a workplace and community initiatives. The officer supported by the Active HB team, is working with LCC to consider future investment into Hinckley via the LCWIP (Leicestershire Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan).

### 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.
- The forum organised a group litter picking event during Great Big Green Week to raise awareness with local schools and businesses attending.
- Posted regular updates on climate change initiatives and action on social media and regular press releases and Borough Bulletin articles on climate positive actions.
- The UKSPF funds a Graduate Active Travel and Physical Activity Assistant is supporting local businesses in Hinckley to foster Active Travel enhancements, this includes HBBC as an organisation.

## 4. **Financial implications [CS]**

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report. Any future funding for projects will need to be approved 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.

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Background papers: Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021 to 2025

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