



Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

A Vital Cog for Local Employment and Skills

What you should know about us?

1. We play to our strengths by delivering skills and employment programmes at a locality level - we know our communities and key business sectors at a place-based level.
2. As a district we aim to maximise employment and skills opportunities through our taskforce arrangements. We are local to our community and therefore able to identify and convene the right partners to drive forward the agenda.
3. Through partnership arrangements, we can identify local experts in their fields to help with delivery of actions.
4. To maximise the impact, by empowering us with the responsibility and with the correct investment and funding capacity, we could do more.
5. Able to use data and local intelligence to identify trends and priorities.
6. With District Councils' Network (DCN) support look to inspire other districts to take up the challenge.

Overview

As a district council the Hinckley & Bosworth Employment and Skills Taskforce is vital for how we influence and drive the employment and skills agenda in the borough. The Taskforce, chaired by our Chief Executive, was established in 2017 and meets quarterly as a full group. Alongside this an operational group meets regularly to drive forward key priorities.

The aims and objectives of the taskforce are 'to maximise and enable the opportunities for local people to access and gain the right skills and qualifications to meet the needs of local businesses and our key growth sectors'.

A key part of the taskforce is networking and joining key partners up to facilitate projects. Working in partnerships has been key to our success, with the key local taskforce partners including local schools and academies, local businesses – large and small – as well as Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LEEP), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC), MIRA Technology Institute (MTI), Rural Community Council voluntary sector representative and other key organisations and partners.

Key Delivery Themes

The Employment and Skills Taskforce has key delivery themes, which are shared by all partners.

The key delivery themes are:

Inclusive skills and employment - Support the unemployed, update key baseline performance data, and inform DWP of new local business opportunities and companies setting up.

Young people - Work with schools and colleges to enable young people to have confidence in their future and raise aspirations, linking schools with businesses and working with parents in schools to share experience and skills.

Apprenticeships and training - Increasing the take up of apprenticeships and promoting Local Employment & Training Strategies (LETS) through Section 106 agreements on new developments.

Pathways to future jobs - Facilitating events such as Speed Networking, Teen Tech, Job Fairs, Primary and Secondary Engineer Programmes. We also promote careers pathways available in local government, understanding the offer to people returning to work and supporting the long term unemployed. *continued over...*



Skills transfer through innovation and collaboration - Maximising high skilled job opportunities, including those related to the Climate Change Agenda.

Improving digital literacy - Enabling businesses and local people to best use superfast broadband opportunities through relevant digital programmes.

A healthy workforce - Considering health & well-being impacts on businesses and the recently unemployed, as well as promoting wellbeing initiatives such as Active Together Wellbeing at Work Charter to local businesses.

External funding opportunities - Providing advice and support to local businesses on how to access financial support and grow their business.



Case study success on how we can deliver

Pathways to future jobs - Career Events

Recognising the need to make sure local students are aware of the wide range of roles and career opportunities across the local area. The council organises regular career speed networking events for the borough's Secondary Schools at Mira Technology Institute. We regularly secure hundreds of students aged between 12 to 14 who have the opportunity to gain careers advice in one to one, five minute networking sessions. More than 80 students aged 12 to 14 attended and had the opportunity to gain careers advice in one-on-one, five-minute networking sessions with professionals from 40 local businesses. Building on the success of this event, the council has helped facilitate the MIRA Technology Institute to run yearly cross-border career speed networking and high skilled engineer focused speed networking events.

For the past 5 years, the council has worked with the local college and councils to facilitate annual Teen Tech events at MTI. The events enable students from local schools to participate in workshops that offer an insight into the exciting high skilled engineering and technology industries. They also have the unique opportunity to explore the transport solutions of the future, from driverless vehicles to cybersecurity. The feedback from both students and teachers has been very positive.

Hinckley Job Centre organises regular recruitment events in conjunction with the council at the Atkins Building in Hinckley town centre. To make the events inclusive, the first 45 minutes are often "quiet times" specifically for customers who have health conditions or for those who suffer from anxiety in large groups. At the June 2023 event, 50% of attendees left one step closer to work. This was done by either completing an application form, or signing on to further training or obtaining general employment advice. Overall, the feedback has been very positive from all customers and employers with many stating they would "attend again".

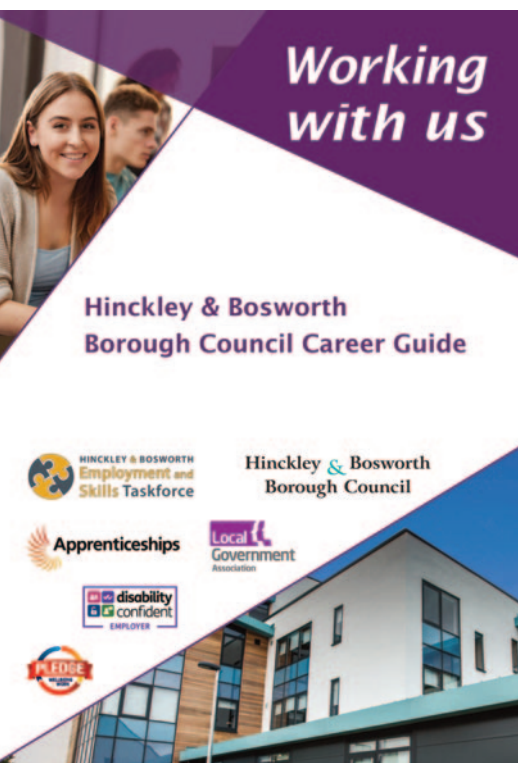




Young people intervention

At early stages of Taskforce meetings, local businesses highlighted the importance to make students aware of high skilled engineering opportunities as early as possible. An outcome has been working in partnership with Primary Engineers, the council has funded training for 17 primary schools, 7 early years providers and 2 secondary schools training 50 teachers to carry out Continuing Professional Development teacher training. This training has allowed teachers to deliver engineering projects in the classroom while being partnered with a professional engineer for support.

Taskforce member local South Charnwood High School run a South Charnwood United Business Alliance (SCUBA), which aims to strengthen relationships between businesses and the local community by providing a business networking event. This is organised and run by the students at the school. These events are well attended by businesses, including Council representatives, with often over 30 present. It also provides an opportunity for young people to develop their confidence and interpersonal skills.



Apprenticeships and training

The Council has developed a branded 'Working with us' setup showcasing the careers available in local government. We have also developed 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.

The taskforce aims to increase the take up of apprenticeships - the Council can act as a role model in doing this to promote apprenticeships to businesses, schools, parents and those seeking work. For Apprenticeship Week 2023, the Council created several apprenticeship case study videos with Council employees talking about their experiences and 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.

When new developments come forward it is important that they echo the Borough Council's commitment to benefitting local people. As a Council, we request proposals for major developments submit a Local Employment & Training Strategy (LETS) through S106 agreements. A recent example of this has been the IM Properties Hinckley Park development where they created an employment and skills charter, created schools construction careers event, engaged local schools and organised site visits, held a meet-the-buyer supply chain event, participated in local labour initiatives, worked with the local DWP to run Sector Based Work Academy Programmes involving a short training course with work experience and guaranteed interviews for completers. IM Properties regularly attend the taskforce meetings giving insight into local economy trends.





Apprenticeships and training continued

An example initiative, involving multiple taskforce partners, is the 'Pop-up' Groundworks Training Facility programme, which resulted from the Hinckley Park development. After identifying a need for more local people with the required groundwork skills, a local business teamed up with North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College to deliver construction training opportunities for the long term unemployed at Hinckley Park. Promoted by DWP colleagues, two cohorts of people completed the short training course, with work experience and guaranteed interviews for those who completed it.

Skills transfer through innovation and collaboration

We have established the Hinckley and Bosworth Business Climate Change Forum, chaired by taskforce member Hinckley and Rugby Building Society to adjust to the low carbon agenda, which was highlighted as an initial idea at taskforce meetings. We are aiming to work with local businesses to bring best practice together and share knowledge on how businesses are reducing their carbon footprint and to limit the impact of climate change. The group meets regularly to hear updates and exchange ideas and also organised a group litter picking event during Great Big Green Week to raise awareness with local schools and businesses attending.

Inclusive skills and employment- Supported Internship

Local Employment and Skills Taskforce member Cadent launched an 'EmployAbility' programme that offered young people aged 17 – 22 with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) supported internship placements. The young people worked in several roles within their company and had the chance to complete a BTEC qualification. This offer was rolled out to other businesses through the Taskforce meetings, with Cadent work coaches providing the support to both businesses and the students. The scheme enabled students to build evidence to show prospective employers their employability skills, while it also increased social skills, confidence and independence and raised aspirations. The scheme also helped break down barriers in

workplaces about recruiting people with additional needs.

Whilst Covid meant the scheme was halted, discussions are underway again with our local SEND school to offer work experience places. A business breakfast at the school is also being organised to rebuild the link with businesses.

Officers from the Council's 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, they worked on a sports event for people with special needs at Sport in Desford, a local charity with a

strong reputation for encouraging people with special needs to participate in sport. Planning for the event consisted of contacting local coaches, health and safety, planning for what will happen on the day and each participant practicing for their role on the day. Roles included guiding people to activities, meeting coaches and providing refreshments. The programme finished with a presentation at Sport in Desford where all the pupils involved received a certificate.





A healthy workforce

Back into the workplace - Having low unemployment rates is positive and having job vacancies that are not being fulfilled is a negative. Research tells us that being employed is a huge contributor to the health and well-being of individuals. To address this local issue, the borough council, alongside key partners such as DWP and Leicestershire Health Partnership Trust, is developing a series of interventions aimed at getting unemployed clients who have health conditions back in the workplace. From tailored support schemes to empowering individuals to cope and manage their health conditions more proactively, we aim to provide support packages that will assist us in helping this unemployed cohort return to work. As identified through meetings of taskforce partners a key focus area will be supporting individuals who have mental health challenges.

Funding opportunities

Using available resources through enterprise zone (EZ) business rates retention HORIBA MIRA, the global provider of automotive engineering, research and test services, and based in the borough, is undertaking a programme of activity to support the recovery of the Enterprise Zone (EZ) and neighbouring areas from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. This will be through employment and skills initiatives and specific EZ delivery projects. This concentrates on employability and includes interventions and support for the unemployed, activities that engage with young people in schools, promotion of apprenticeship opportunities and creation of work experience placements. In the placements, students will be offered incredible opportunities to gain exposure to the professional world across various departments and businesses at MIRA Technology Park. By supporting this cross-park scheme, the MIRA Technology Park employers have the chance to invest in promising candidates and participate in cross-skilling initiatives, all while maximising the student's overall experience.

Going forward using the UK Shared Prosperity Fund delivered by the borough council, we are working with local partners to establish year 3 projects related to Employment and Skills. Using established partnerships, we are currently looking at a project with local businesses to offer free, impartial recruitment support. This supports aims to increase demand for apprenticeships, traineeships, work experience, internships, volunteering, and work placements. Another project around community outreach to support those economically inactive through keyworker support to gain employment.

It's also been highlighted that we need to ensure that our future and current workforce have the skills to embrace new sectors in the so called fourth industrial revolution particularly around low carbon technologies. With support from the LLEP, districts across Leicestershire are currently investigating the requirements of green skills for the future, as well as exploring the diverse areas of expertise and competencies which are essential for building a sustainable world, including retrofit requirements locally.



**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

