

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

## **Community Governance Review**

Review of the unparished area of Hinckley

## **Recommendations for consultation**

Published 28 January 2026

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## **Introduction**

- 1.1. At its Council meeting on 8 July 2025, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) resolved that a Community Governance Review (the Review) be undertaken to consider the governance arrangements of the unparished area (the Review Area) of Hinckley, as defined in the published terms of reference.
- 1.2. At all stages of the Review, HBBC will be guided by and must have regard to:
  - Part 4, Chapter 3 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
  - Guidance on Community Governance Reviews issued by the Government and The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)
  - Its own Terms of Reference

## **2. The Review**

- 2.1. HBBC took the decision to undertake the Review because:
  - The Government's Devolution White Paper was issued with wide ranging implications for local government and its reorganisation
  - There were increased calls locally to undertake a review of the unparished area.
- 2.2. The aim of the Review is to bring about improved and stronger community engagement, more cohesive communities, better local democracy, and more effective and convenient delivery of local services.
- 2.3. The Review relates to the unparished area of Hinckley (the Review Area). The unparished areas are the borough wards of:
  - Hinckley Castle
  - Hinckley Clarendon
  - Hinckley De Montfort
  - Hinckley Trinity
- 2.4. An unparished area is one that is not represented by a parish or town council. Instead, all council services are delivered directly by HBBC and/or Leicestershire County Council.
- 2.5. The Review commenced on 14 July 2025 when HBBC published its Terms of Reference and invited initial submissions from individuals and organisations who have an interest in the Review Area. The Terms of Reference included an initial timetable for the Review. Since agreement and publication of the terms

of reference, HBBC councillors requested that the review be expedited and the timeline be recalculated.

- 2.6 The first phase of public consultation commenced on 14 July 2025 and closed on 10 October 2025 primarily via HBBC's.

The following methods of consultation were undertaken:

- Open consultation on the council's website
- Social media posts
- Email to borough councillors inviting them to respond to the consultation online or by email / letter
- Email to a database of voluntary & community sector bodies
- Email to a database of businesses in the Hinckley area
- Email to Leicestershire County Council inviting them as a body and county councillors to respond to the review
- Display at Snapdragon and Burbage Common Open Day
- Posters in the Hinckley Hub customer reception.

- 2.7 In preparing these Draft Recommendations, the Working Group has been mindful of the survey responses. Following analysis of the survey responses, the Working Group has developed these Draft Recommendations for the Review Area, which propose that a Hinckley Town Council be established

### **3. Background information, considerations, and evidence**

#### **3.1 Responses to the first phase of public consultation**

- 3.1.1 A total of **79** survey responses were received during the first phase of public consultation. Based on the Review Area electorate of 28,323, the response rate to the first phase of public consultation was **0.28%**.
- 3.1.2 39 of 79 comments (49.4%) were satisfied with the current governance arrangements of Hinckley town, with 19 respondents (24.1%) expressing that their current satisfaction meant they felt no change was required.
- 3.1.3 22 comments (27.8%) cited the importance of locality in good governance arrangements when considering whether Hinckley's current arrangements were effective and convenient and reflected interests and identities:
- 3.1.4 Though the Government's current plans for devolution and local government reorganisation are not within the scope of this review, 19 respondents (24.1%) expressed concern about the impact of changes on Hinckley town's future

governance arrangements, with particular focus on the loss of localised decision making, convenience and representation of the town's identity.

- 3.1.5 21 respondents (26.6%) explicitly mentioned a need for the creation of Hinckley Town Council. Of these, 12 comments (15.2%) stated a Town Council should be created if plans for devolution and local government reorganisation resulted in the dissolution of HBBC. The remaining 9 comments (11.4%) in this group suggested a Town Council would be beneficial for Hinckley without reference to devolution and reorganisation plans.
- 3.1.6 Overall, respondents were generally more likely to express satisfaction with the current governance arrangements in Hinckley town. However, acknowledging that change to the current arrangements will result from Government's plans for devolution and reorganisation, respondents were more likely to express support for the creation of a town council for Hinckley to protect their local interests, identity and services.

## **3.2 Council Tax and Assets**

- 3.2.1 The level of Council Tax is not a determining factor for this Review. However, we acknowledge that residents will want to understand the likely cost if the proposed Hinckley Town Council is established.
- 3.2.2 At present, the Review Area is unparished and not represented by a parish or town council. Instead, all local services are delivered by HBBC and/or Leicestershire County Council.
- 3.2.3 Residents in the Review Area pay 'special expenses' to HBBC via their Council Tax for the provision of services and costs incurred. As an example, the 2025/26 Band D property special expenses charge for Hinckley is £68.96.
- 3.2.4
- 3.2.5 Should the proposed Hinckley Town Council be established a proportion of Hinckley residents' Council Tax bills would continue to be spent on services for Hinckley as they are now. The amount would be set by its elected councillors and reviewed annually. It is not for the Review to determine what a newly established Hinckley Town Council precept would be.
- 3.2.7 The Government does not limit the amount a parish or town council can increase its precept by each year. Currently, borough councils are limited to a 3% increase each year and county councils 5%.

3.2.8 Businesses in a parish or town council area do not pay the precept. Instead, they are subject to Business Rates which are calculated separately from Council Tax.

3.2.9 The tables below show the 2025/26 precept charges applied by the 16 parish and town councils in the Borough of Hinckley & Bosworth. The costs shown are the annual precept for a Band D property. These figures are provided for information only.

Parish/Town	Band D precept (£)
Bagworth & Thornton	160.67
Barlestone	124.53
Barwell	106.19
Burbage	79.84
Cadeby	54.66
Carlton	57.05
Dadlington & Sutton Cheney	99.60
Desford	108.34
Earl Shilton	112.68
Groby	132.75
Higham on the Hill	60.15
Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton & Stapleton	88.07

Parish/Town	Band D precept (£)
Market Bosworth	139.29
Markfield	109.91
Nailstone	101.65
Newbold Verdon	86.23
Osbaston	86.58
Ratby	151.86
Shackerstone	91.38
Sheepy	59.98
Stanton Under Bardon	68.53
Stoke Golding	102.74
Twycross	81.93
Witherley	82.26

## Assets

4.2.10 There is no statutory obligation on HBBC to transfer any assets to a newly established parish or town council, except for allotments. Therefore, any

transfer of assets other than allotments would be entirely at the discretion of HBBC.

4.2.11 Within the correspondence issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 25 July 2025, the Government made clear that it is essential that all councils involved in local government reorganisation are 'cognisant that decisions taken now by existing councils could fetter the future decisions of new councils and act accordingly', and that 'Examples of those decisions include but are not limited to the sale and purchase of significant assets, transfer of local assets...'.

4.2.12 After the establishment of Hinckley Town Council, it would be for HBBC and the Town Council to consider what other assets and / or services, currently owned or leased by HBBC, it might wish to negotiate the transfer of. These negotiations do not form part of the Review.

### **3.3 Electorate size**

3.3.1. The electorate figure used in these Draft Recommendations is taken from the Register of Electors published on 3 November 2025. To help inform certain elements of these Draft Recommendations, such as the number of councillors and any parish warding, there is a requirement to provide an electorate forecast of 5 years from the start of the review.

3.3.3 To achieve this, data was collected from HBBC's Planning service about the number of additional dwellings estimated to be delivered in the Review Area wards between 1 July 2025 and 31 March 2030. The Review Area is comprised of four borough wards in their entirety. The table below gives details of the polling districts, number of borough councillors, and current electorate within each ward:

Ward	Polling Districts	Total electorate	Borough Cllrs
Hinckley Castle	DAA, DAB, DAC	5239	2
Hinckley Clarendon	EAA, EAB, EAC, EAD, EAE	7471	3
Hinckley De Montfort	ABA, ABB, ABC, ABD	8226	3
Hinckley Trinity	ACA, ACB, ACC	5530	2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>N/A</b>	26466	15

### 3.4 Parish and town council functions

- 3.4.1. Parish and town councils can play a key role at a local community level. They serve as a key representative voice and often act as the eyes and ears for other tiers of local government, public agencies, and other organisations to raise local concerns.
- 3.4.2. Parish and town councils are a statutory consultee on planning, highways, and other regulatory matters, and may deliver or support other local services. Depending upon the size, capacity, ambitions, and decisions of a parish or town council, the services provided can range from very few activities to wide ranging functions.
- 3.4.3. **Appendix C** of these Draft Recommendations illustrates the potential division of responsibility for delivering services between HBBC, Leicestershire County Council, and the proposed Hinckley Town Council. As can be seen and although not exhaustive, most services that could be delivered by a Hinckley Town Council are discretionary, meaning they are optional.

### 3.5 Benefits and disbenefits of parish and town councils

- 3.5.1. It is important to consider both the benefits and disbenefits of establishing a Hinckley Town Council. Set out within the two tables below are some of the benefits and disbenefits associated with parish and town councils.



**Benefits** (taken from the National Association of Local Councils)

Benefit	Description
Community representation	Give residents a stronger voice in local affairs, ensuring their needs and preferences are directly addressed.
Enhanced local services	Provide and maintain amenities like parks, playgrounds, and community centres. They can also improve services like street cleaning, lighting, and local events.
Focused development	Drive community projects and initiatives tailored to local needs, such as environmental conservation or youth programs.
Economic advantages	Parish and town councils can attract funding and grants unavailable to larger councils. They can also promote local businesses through initiatives and events, boosting the local economy.
Improved quality of life	Work on projects that enhance the quality of life, such as creating green spaces, supporting local sports teams, and organising cultural events.
Greater accountability	Parish and town councils are closer to their residents, leading to more accountability and transparency in decision-making.

## Disbenefits

Disbenefit	Description
Unlimited Council Tax precept increases	There is no limit on how much parish and town councils can increase their Council Tax precept by each year. This means residents may face higher local taxes (precepts) which can be a burden for some communities.
Low level of auditing and scrutiny	Parish and town councils are subject to lower levels of auditing and scrutiny than other tiers of local government.
Limits on service delivery	The range of services that parish or town councils can deliver is more limited than other tiers of local government.
Extra tier of complexity	The creation of parish or town councils adds an extra tier of complexity as to who delivers which council services.
No regulatory body	There is not a single regulatory body to hold ineffective parish or town councils accountable, which can lead to issues with performance.

### 3.6 Number of councillors

- 3.6.1 The legal minimum number of parish councillors for a parish council is five (Section 16, Local Government Act 1972). The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) considers that a council of no more than the legal minimum of five members is inconveniently small, and it considers that a practical working minimum should be seven.
- 3.6.2 There is no maximum number of councillors for a parish council. However, NALC suggests that the practical maximum should be 25 councillors for a parish council with over 23,000 electors.
- 3.6.3 There are no rules relating to the allocation of parish councillors between parish wards, but each parish ward must have at least one parish councillor.

### 3.7 Parish warding

- 3.7.1 The 2007 Act requires that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards for the purpose of elections of the parish council, HBBC should consider:

- Whether the number, or distribution, of the local government electors for the parish would make a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- Whether it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

3.7.2 HBBC will be mindful of government guidance on parish warding, noting that each case should be considered on its merits and based on information and evidence provided during the Review. HBBC will also be mindful of government guidance regarding urban parishes, noting that there is likely to be a stronger case to ward them.

3.7.3. Government guidance states that consideration should be given to the desirability of parish warding where the parish is already divided by district wards and county divisions.

#### **4. Working Group Draft Recommendations**

4.1. This section sets out the Draft Recommendations of the Working Group. It includes the Draft Recommendations in full, the rationale behind them, electoral arrangements, and any consequential matters arising from them.

#### **4.2 Draft Recommendations**

4.2.1. As part of the Review, under the Terms of Reference published on 14 July 2025, the Working Group has made the following Draft Recommendations in relation to the Review Area, that:

- A parish for the unparished area of Hinckley be created;
- The boundary of the parish of Hinckley be drawn to include the existing borough wards listed at paragraph 2.3 (in their entirety) and as outlined in red on the map at Appendix A of these Draft Recommendations;
- A parish council be created with the styling of “Hinckley Town Council
- The ordinary year of elections for Hinckley Town Council be set as 2027
- The council size for Hinckley Town Council be set at 20 councillors
- The parish be divided into four wards with the boundaries as defined in appendix A
- The name of each ward and number of councillors elected for each ward be set at:

Castle	4 Councillors
Clarendon	6 Councillors
De Montfort	6 Councillors
Trinity	4 Councillors

### **4.3 Rationale behind the Draft Recommendations**

4.3.1 Based on the evidence available, the working group considers that the above recommendations would:

- Help to better reflect the local identities and interests of the community
- Help to secure more effective and convenient governance of the area.

4.3.2 The working group considered alternative styles of governance including community, neighbourhood and village councils but felt that a parish council best reflected the local community and that the recommendation should reflect this style.

### **Council Tax precept**

4.3.3 As set out at section 3.3, at this stage it is impossible to provide an indication of the anticipated Council Tax precept for the proposed Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Council. This is because all the parish and town council functions listed at Appendix C, except for allotments, are discretionary and the annual operating costs for the proposed Hinckley Town Council are currently unknown.

## **5. Next steps**

- 5.1. All residents and any other persons or organisations wishing to make representations on these Draft Recommendations may do so by completing the online response form.
- 5.2. Alternatively, paper copies of the response form will be available on request from the Hinckley Hub reception or by emailing [julie.kenny@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk](mailto:julie.kenny@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk).
- 5.4. The deadline to respond is midnight on **28 February 2026**.