



Cabinet minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday 7 December 2021 in The Oculus, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, HP19 8FF, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 11.29 am.

Members present

M Tett, G Williams, S Bowles, S Broadbent, J Chilver, A Cranmer, C Harriss, N Naylor and P Strachan

Others in attendance

Cllr C Jackson

Apologies

A Macpherson

Agenda Item

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Angela Macpherson and Sarah Ashmead, Deputy Chief Executive. Carl Jackson attended as Deputy Cabinet Member for Public Health.

2 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 November 2021, including the Confidential Minutes were agreed as a correct record.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Hot Topics

The following hot topics were discussed:-

Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

As the Council was in the discover and exploration phase of the Local Plan for Buckinghamshire a survey had been posted on Your Voice Bucks to obtain views on where new development should be located and what the Council should do to protect Buckinghamshire. The deadline for the survey was 11 February 2022. Included in this was how the Council could make the best use of sites that had

already been built on (brownfield sites).

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/planning/local-plan-2021/>

Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources, Property and Assets

Reference was made to another consultation on the Winslow Sports Hub where the Council was proposing to build a new purpose-built sports hub on land at Redfield Farm. The deadline for the consultation was 21 December 2021.

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/culture-sports-and-leisure/winslow-sports-hub/>

Cabinet Member for Transport

Winter road maintenance was well underway with 27 gritting runs already undertaken.

Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) was a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 which invited people from across the United Kingdom to "**Plant a Tree for the Jubilee**". Everyone in the UK had been invited to plant trees and the service area was encouraging schools to play their part to enhance the environment by planting trees during the official planting season between October to March. Planting had commenced in Buckinghamshire schools.

Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment

In Buckinghamshire the Council was already leading on a major programme of woodland planting which with the Queen's Green Canopy initiative would aim to see approximately 543,000 trees planted on large sites of council-owned land over the next ten years in a bid to address climate change in Buckinghamshire. It was planned that the scheme, which linked to the Climate Change Strategy, would see the council becoming carbon neutral by 2050 or earlier. This was the best time of the year to plant trees.

There would be a campaign in the New Year on car idling and also a litter campaign. With car idling there was no legal power to enforce this but it would be an educational campaign.

Cabinet Member for Communities

Through the Helping Hand Service the Council were distributing £30 digital vouchers for food and support (including fuel prices) to help families; these vouchers could be used in most supermarkets. Also available was support for financial insecurity where free online events were being held to provide information to residents. The first one was organised through Red Kite Community Housing and was held on 2nd December 2021. The Leader also referred to the £2.4 million grant given to the Council by the Government as part of the Household Support Fund and thanked the Helping Hand Service who was helping with its distribution.

Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Regulatory Services

The Council was undertaking a consultation on the draft Gambling Act 2005

Statement of Licensing Policy. Buckinghamshire Council, in its role as the Licensing Authority, was responsible for issuing permits and licences for premises where gambling took place. The final, amended version of the Policy would then go to the Licensing Committee on 2 February 2022, followed by Full Council on 23 February 2022 for approval.

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/communities/gambling-act-policy/>

Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

The Chilterns Lifestyle Centre opened its doors to the public on Monday 6 December 2021. The new centre has a fantastic range of facilities to serve the entire community including a climbing wall, nursery, library, skateboard park, outdoor gym and spa.

<https://www.everyoneactive.com/centre/chilterns-lifestyle-centre/>

Deputy Cabinet Member for Public Health

The Government published the People at the Heart of Care: adult social care white paper on 1 December 2021 which set out a 10 year vision for adult social care and provided information on funded proposals in areas such as housing and home adaptations, technology and digitisation, workforce training, support for unpaid carers and innovation.

5

Question Time

Question from Councillor Stuart Wilson to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

“Buckinghamshire Council is required to deliver a new Local Plan no later than April 2025. Residents have been asked by the Planning Policy team to complete a new questionnaire from November 29th, 2021 to February 11th, 2022. The questionnaire is described as “The Discovery & Exploration Phase for the new Local Plan for Buckinghamshire”. It is seeking early views from residents on their views regarding their current communities and what would anticipate for themselves regarding housing need and their expectations for housing and communities in Buckinghamshire in the future. The introduction to the section on Homes (Q2) in the survey makes the statement:

“By 2040, the county is likely to need around 55,000 more new homes (based on latest estimates). Some of these already have planning permission or are already planned for in existing Local Plans (28,000). This leaves about 27,000 to be built.”

Question 5 goes on to ask: *In the future we need to build many more new homes in Buckinghamshire. What do you think are the best locations for new homes?*

Office of National Statistics 2018-Based Household Projections for Buckinghamshire are the most up-to-date dataset available and recommended for use by the Council’s own Business Insights team. The ONS 2018-Based Household Projections for Buckinghamshire show an increase of **only 22,533 households between 2021 and 2040**. This increase is allocated to Aylesbury Vale (+17,035), Chiltern (+2,157), South Bucks (+1,857) and Wycombe (+1,484). The equivalent increase in population

projection for Buckinghamshire between 2021 and 2040 is **26,170** (ONS 2018-Based Population Projections by Local Authority). The statement in the questionnaire issued on November 29th would therefore suggest that Buckinghamshire Council is intending to accommodate twice as many homes as the ONS projects would suggest are required.

“What is the basis and detailed explanation of how the requirement for 55,000 more new homes has been calculated relative to the up-to date and relevant evidence as required by the NPPF (i.e., 2018-Based ONS projections); and the extent to which there is a genuine shortfall in meeting housing need, taking into account current Local Plans, 5 year housing supply and evidenced windfall through up-to-date monitoring?”

RESPONSE from Councillor Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

“The inclusion of the figures on housing requirements alongside Question 2 of the survey is to provide some context of the potential broad scale of housing provision that may be required in the new Plan.

During the preparation of the Plan more information will become available on housing numbers, both in relation to the housing required and the supply of housing from existing commitments such as planning permissions and sites allocated in adopted local plans. As such it is important for Members to recognise that as we go through the preparation of the Plan, there are likely to be changes to the numbers, including what additional housing will need to be provided for in the Plan over and above existing commitments.

In relation to the basis of the figure of 55,000, the Government has set a “standard methodology” for determining what is called “local housing need” (LHN) – LHN forms the basis of establishing a housing requirement in a local plan. Applying the standard methodology to Buckinghamshire gives an annual LHN figure of 2,936 homes per year. Over a time period of 2022-2040 (2040 being the end date of the Buckinghamshire Local Plan), this results in a total of 52,848 homes. A contingency/flexibility allowance of 5%, which is established good practice in plan-making, is then added to that total and the figures rounded to the nearest 1,000.

The Government’s standard methodology is quite clear that for the purposes of calculating the LHN, the 2014-based household projections should be used in the calculation, not more recent household projections such as the 2018-based projections. It is understood that the standard methodology may be under review by the Government as part of their wider package of planning reforms. However, no proposals on this matter have been published by Government recently. As such, in terms of providing some context for people completing the questionnaire, it is right to base the information on the current position. The introduction to the questionnaire makes clear that the Government are currently making changes to the way Local Plans will work.”

Question from Councillor Robin Stuchbury to Councillor Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport

“Buckinghamshire Council on 24 November 2021 voted and agreed a policy regarding a 20 mile per hour speed limit. Will the Council now be communicating how the agreed policy will be implemented in the coming period to town and parish councils, community boards, interested parties and stakeholder groups? In particular how will the decision taken by the Council affect historical applications/bids to the community board for funding of potential schemes and feasibility studies. In this respect it would be helpful to know whether Community Board Chairman were consulted on the proposed policy before it was agreed at the Council meeting.”

RESPONSE from Councillor Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport

“Thank you for the question. At it’s meeting on 24th November 2021, the Council passed a motion that outlines the approach to 20 mph limits/zones. This approach is entirely in line with Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines and reasserts the guidance that has been in place in Buckinghamshire for some time. There are already a number of 20 mph zones/limits in place in Buckinghamshire and, as I said in the Council meeting, the most recent of these is in Haddenham.

If someone wishes to pursue a 20 mph zone/limit in their locality, they will need to request and fund the relevant speed assessment(s) and this will be completed as resources allow. The speed assessment will indicate whether the proposed location meets DfT speed criteria. Local people, Buckinghamshire Councillors and communities will then need to decide if they wish to prioritise the introduction of such a limit or zone as opposed to other works that could address their concerns about the speed of vehicles.

There will be no automatic reassessment of previous applications.

Community Board Chairs/Chairmen, were not specifically consulted on this motion, however, it should be noted that all of these positions are filled by members of Buckinghamshire Council.”

6 Forward Plan (28 Day Notice)

The Leader introduced the Forward Plan and commended it to all Members of the Council and the public, as a document that gave forewarning of what Cabinet would be discussing at forthcoming meetings.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.

7 Select Committee Work Programme

RESOLVED – That the Select Committee Work Programme be noted.

8 Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021- 2024

Cabinet received a report which explained, in background information, that one in 20 adults were estimated to experience domestic abuse every year equating to almost 21,000 people a year in Buckinghamshire or 57 people every day. It was a crime which disproportionately affected women, however it could happen to anyone anywhere irrespective of sexuality, religion, gender, ethnicity, income or age.

The impact of domestic abuse was far-reaching and long lasting, and could be devastating on physical and mental health with serious consequences for children witnessing domestic abuse. The pandemic had had an immeasurable impact and had been branded as an “epidemic beneath the pandemic”.

Buckinghamshire had many excellent statutory and voluntary sector services working well together but there was always more that could be done. The Domestic Abuse Act had placed new duties on local authorities, one of which was to establish a local Domestic Abuse Board. In Buckinghamshire this fell under the umbrella of the Safer Buckinghamshire Board. This multi-agency Board had helped co-design a strategy and would oversee an action plan to commission and deliver support to victims and their children within safe accommodation services. In drafting the strategy, the Board had considered research from the 2021 Director of Public Health’s annual report, the 2021 needs assessment and consultation feedback.

The Cabinet Member reported that the Domestic Abuse Bill was signed into law at the end of April this year and the Council had received £850,000 from Government for levelling up Housing and Communities to address issues locally and to deal with statutory requirements set out for local authorities as part of the Bill.

During discussion the following points were noted:-

- The Strategy would be communicated in a number of ways and a press release would be sent out following approval of the Strategy. Members had signed a pledge for White Ribbon Day and would help communicate information via Community Boards and town and parish councils. There would be lots of information about where residents could go for help and assistance, particularly a social media campaign to reach out to young women. It would be helpful if town and parish councils could put up posters in their local areas to help promote the Strategy. Local information was key.
- One in 20 adults were estimated to experience domestic abuse every year equating to almost 21,000 people a year in Buckinghamshire or 57 people every day which needed to be reduced and also it was important to recognise that this impacted on men (one in six) as well as women and children. The commitments were welcomed particularly early intervention and prevention through engagement with schools which was a good vehicle to reach children. Teachers should have a discreet way of reporting any concerns.
- In response to a question regarding a detailed smart action and delivery plan

to support the Strategy this was being developed by the Service Area. The Chief Executive reported that this would be monitored by the Domestic Abuse Forum which was part of the Community Safety arrangements.

- Members noted that the £850,000 was currently a one-off grant and further funding had not been guaranteed by Government although it was hoped similar levels of funding would be provided next year. It was important that this was sustainable and embedded into the community.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Buckinghamshire Domestic Abuse Strategy be approved.

(2) That the allocation of domestic abuse grant funding, as detailed at Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report, be approved.

9 Adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement

The Council was required to produce and keep an up-to-date Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to ensure effective community involvement at all stages in the planning process. The Council had consulted on a draft SCI from February to April 2021. The SCI had been updated to respond to the feedback from the consultation and this updated version was submitted to Cabinet for adoption by the Council. It set out the main issues raised and the Council's response to those issues.

The SCI explained when, how, and for what reasons the community would be able to participate in planning issues. These included plan making (local plans), Supplementary Planning Documents, neighbourhood plans, planning applications, and planning enforcement.

The main aim of the SCI was to make consultation and involvement in planning more transparent, accessible, collaborative, inclusive and consistent. As a minimum, the Council would comply with any legislation that was currently in force or came into force in the future. These legal requirements were therefore included as actions that 'we will' do in the SCI as opposed to ones that 'we may' do. It was however recognised that there needed to be a flexible approach to engagement depending on the scale, subject matter and sensitivity of the matter in hand.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration reported that this document went out to consultation. 700 responses were received although 140 of those were identical and these comments had been fed into the final draft before Cabinet, including increasing the number of commitments, being clear on commitments relating to planning notifications, a commitment to consulting on a draft Local Plan through a sites consultation and a policy consultation (in two stages) and improving involvement in planning. With regard to the draft Planning White Paper it was unclear currently what approach the Government would take on this area as the related legislation would probably come forward early next year. Under the current proposals a draft Local Plan stage did not exist. However, Buckinghamshire Council needed to start work on the Local Plan with current guidance.

Cabinet welcomed the flexibility of the various stages and engagement with communities which covered modern and traditional ways of engaging. It was important for local members to inform residents of key messages regarding this to ensure they became involved in local area planning so the notification process was critical. Members noted that one call for brownfield sites had allocated space for 5,000 homes but there was still a shortfall. There was a second call for brownfield sites which was being kept open permanently.

RESOLVED –

That the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) be adopted.

10 Voluntary Sector Grant Review

This item was deferred and would be considered by Cabinet on 21st December 2021.

11 Contract to award the Household Recycling Centre Service (HRC)

The new contracting arrangement for the Household Recycling Centre Service needed to be in place for the service commencement date of 1 April, 2022. The contract would consolidate numerous waste materials and service into a single contract.

The procurement process had been undertaken by a multi-disciplined project team with representatives from Council staff including Legal, Finance, Property and Strategic Waste Management and Enforcement and Procurement. Due to the complexities of the project additional external advisors were also appointed; Sharpe Pritchard (legal), Resource Futures (waste technical) and New Networks (financial).

The procurement had been undertaken as a Competitive Dialogue (CD) process in order to identify the most economically advantageous solution. The contract term would be for five years with an option to extend up to a further five years (total term up to ten years). Year six of the contract is the sole right of the Council to extend thereafter by mutual consent.

Following a detailed evaluation of all tenders and subsequent clarifications raised by the Council and bidders, Bidder B (confidential appendix) had been selected as the preferred bidder as their solution had been identified as the most economically advantageous in accordance with the published evaluation, criteria, weightings and methodology.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment reported that Buckinghamshire had nine sites; six which operated seven days a week and three operated five days a week. There were over 1 million visits each year, 60,000 tonnes were collected on site each year with 25 plus separate waste streams and 67% recycling. The new contract would look very similar to the previous contract and would need to start on 1 April 2022 (five year contract with an option to extend for another five years). The contract value was £15 million for five years and there would be flexibility in the contract to allow the Council to change provision. There would be contract performance targets in relation to reuse and recycling. This had been taken into account in the medium term financial plan.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the contract for the management of the Household Recycling Centre Service be awarded to the preferred bidder (Bidder B), as detailed in the confidential appendix.**
- (2) That the Service Director of Property and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources, Property and Assets, be authorised to finalise, agree, exchange and complete the lease documentation.**
- (3) That the Head of Strategic Waste Management and Enforcement be authorised to undertake all necessary appropriate steps in relation to the award and execution of the contract.**
- (4) That it be noted that funding for the HRC new service contract of £250,000 in 2022, going up to £300,000 by 2024/25, have been included within proposals for the current 3 year Medium Term Financial Programme.**

12 Exclusion of the public (if required)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Item 11 – Contract to award the Household Recycling Centre Service

Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The confidential appendices provide financial information about contracts for the provision of services.

13 Confidential appendix to the Contract to award the Household Recycling Centre Service

The confidential appendix was discussed in exempt session.

14 Confidential Minutes

The confidential minutes were agreed in the public meeting.

15 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 21 December 2021 at 10am.

