

Questions on notice

Full Council meeting 27 April 2022

Question 1 to Councillor Steve Bowles, Cabinet Member for Communities, from Councillor Robin Stuchbury in relation to Community Boards funding and audit trail

In the most recent budget approved by Buckinghamshire Council there was a reduction in funding available to Community Boards. How has this impacted on the number of funding applications being submitted, and has this meant that any of those applications have been unsuccessful due to the changes in funding?

As part of his response, I would be grateful if the Cabinet Member could:

- Advise on whether there has been any change in the Council's aspirations of how Community Boards will operate and in the principles for assessing and awarding funding
- Provide details of all funding applications submitted to the Buckingham and Villages Community Board, including date submitted and date validated, and whether or not funding has been successfully awarded or is still being considered
- Advise whether he believes that Community Boards will still be able to provide funding for a large number of applications with the reduced funding
- Advise whether the Section 151 Officer has had any oversight of the management of the Community Board funding or been involved in assessing and determining the use and spending of Community Board funding, and is the Cabinet Member confident that the Section 151 Officer is satisfied that good records and audit trails of Community Board grant funding are maintained and will a report on the management of this funding be submitted to a future meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee?

Response

I would like to thank Cllr Stuchbury for his question.

During 2021/22 Community Boards had 415 funding applications approved during the year, each of which will make a real difference to the communities and demonstrate the value our Community Boards are having in the local area. The details of the funding applications for the Buckingham and Villages Community Board will be sent to you following this meeting.

It is important that we recognise that to be successful, Community Boards need to be seen as more than grant funding bodies and need to build on the great work that has been undertaken to identify the local priorities that will make a real difference on the ground and working with our partners identify the best solutions to make these improvements happen.

I know that part of the solution will be funding projects locally but it also about working in partnership and leveraging a range of resources that can be used.

So whilst the funding available to Community Boards has reduced I am still confident the boards can be successful and building on the last two years continue to make a real difference locally. The level of funding applications isn't really what we should be measuring in looking at the success of the boards, it's more about the difference they are making locally.

As far as our aspiration for the boards is concerned, this hasn't changed. Whilst the role of the boards remains to support the Council priorities at a local level, what I hope I have done is to allow the boards more flexibility in how they operate. They can decide themselves on how they operate, whether they run small task and finish groups, how they would like to allocate their funding and how they develop their local priorities.

You also asked about oversight of the management of Community Board funding and whether the Section 151 officer was involved in this.

I can confirm that the S151 Officer does have oversight of the Community Board budgets and on the process through the budget setting for MTFP. In addition, the Finance team have regular oversight of spend against budget through the monitoring process.

We have recently reviewed and strengthened the process to improve transparency of decision making so I am confident we have a robust governance model. As part of our assurance arrangements, the Council's internal audit team will undertake a review of the governance and financial management of the Community Boards budgets and funding process in the Autumn.

Question 2 to Councillor Steve Bowles, Cabinet Member for Communities, from Councillor Adam Poland-Goodyer in relation to Community Boards funding

How many planned funded projects from Buckinghamshire's community boards had to be withdrawn due to the claw back of funds to help the Adult & Social Care Budget? What specific projects were lost?

Response

Having reviewed the position, I can confirm that no planned funded projects from Buckinghamshire's Community Boards had to be withdrawn as a result of changes to the funding available.

Community Board projects go through several stages before coming forward for approval. At any time, a Board may be considering a number of projects which are potentially feasible, some may be worked up from feasibility to a project for approval, and some may not be taken forward due to the project not meeting the priorities of the Council or the Board, the application not meet the funding criteria or applicants do not provide correct or additional information requested.

Question 1 to Councillor Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport from Councillor Adam Poland-Goodyer in relation to Highways and Pavements

You will see in Aylesbury Old Town, the cobbles and paving are removed and tarmac replaces these wonderful areas of heritage.

- How does the cabinet member feel about the state of the pavements in Aylesbury?
- Of the £100million spend approved last year on highways, how much (as a £ figure and a %) was spend on footpaths both countywide and in Aylesbury?

Response

The Council is investing over £8m in footpath improvements as part of the agreed capital programme which of course will include the Aylesbury area. We also work closely with third parties including statutory utility providers to ensure that suitable materials are used following works although the national regulations which govern such works do not require 'like for like' replacements to be completed immediately after works finish.

The £100m to be spent on Highways is across the MTFP programme (4 years). Out of this, 8% is dedicated to footpaths (£8.3m).

In 21/22, there was £2m in the MTFP programme, however there was an additional £700k of slippage from 20/21 added to the budget.

Out of the £2.7m spent in 21/22:

- £0.8m related to Aylesbury (30% of spend in 21/22)
- £1.9m related to the rest of the County (70% of spend in 21/22)

It is difficult to say how much will be spent on footpaths (both Countywide and Aylesbury) out of the £100m as this is spread across four years and we only have the details for 21/22 so far (no programmes for future years currently). The future allocations will be based on need/demand at a point in time however the MTFP has an average allocation of £2.1m for footpaths over the 4 year MTFP period.

Question 2 to Councillor Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport from Councillor Sarah James in relation to Planters

Can the council please explain why they have spent a small fortune (assumed) on new wooden planters at the entrance/exit to the bus station, filled them with beautiful plants and then left them unkempt leading to them looking untidy and unloved. What a waste of time, energy, plant life and money. The planters are not in keeping with the rest of the

towns planting scheme and furniture. What are the plans going forward and wouldn't it make sense to devolve this to ATC?

Response

The planters were not funded by the Council, but through the Welcome Back Fund, a government grant to local areas for their pandemic recovery activities. The Fund closed at the end of March. The planters installed around the bus station are in keeping with others funded through the WBF and used as part of road closure measures such as a Cambridge Street.

In spring, planting is watered twice a week and the planting thrives in cool, damp conditions. Unfortunately due to the early heat, despite the watering, the spring plants have not survived as they were not established enough to cope with the unexpected heat.

We are in the process of looking at options to replace the planting and bring colour back to that area. We have been working hard to improve the visitor experience in the bus station area which has been criticised in the past and will work with other partners to enable this.

Question 3 to Councillor Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport from Councillor Anders Christensen in relation to East West rail

With the Aylesbury Spur of the East West rail being pushed back with no delivery date, and the dropping of the plan for one of the Aylesbury Link roads, do you ever see any end to the Aylesbury traffic problems?

Response

The Aylesbury Vale Local Plan, adopted in September 2021 sets out the ambition that Aylesbury will have a link road network to relieve congestion in the town centre. You will be aware that another phase of the link road, Mike Griffin Way, was opened in December last year, and we have started site preparation work either side of the Wendover Road for the South East Aylesbury Link Road (SEALR). We continue to seek delivery of the other link roads, to relieve congestion, at the earliest possible opportunity.

Alongside the delivery of the Aylesbury Link roads the Council continues to press Government, Network Rail and the East West Rail Company hard for confirmation of the required funding for the Aylesbury Spur.

Please find the latest updates on progress of the SEALR project here <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/road-projects-and-improvement-schemes/south-east-aylesbury-link-road/>

Question to Councillor John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources, Property & Assets from Councillor Robin Stuchbury in relation to Council Property Assets

A list exists of 1,740 properties inherited by the Buckinghamshire Council upon becoming a Unitary Authority. The properties cover a wide range of types including schools, libraries, museums, offices, residential and land.

Could the Cabinet Member please advise me whether the Council has valued these properties and if so, is this information available to the elected Members of the Buckinghamshire Council? Has any process been put in place to notify local Members when land and property in their Wards is being considered for redevelopment or sale?

Response

The Council routinely gets its portfolio revalued for accounting purposes and is published in the Council's annual accounts. This also applies to the Companies that the Council has an interest in. Individual valuations can be made available upon request from Councillors, subject of course to normal commercial considerations and conditions. With regard to the question about a process for Ward Members being consulted on disposals or development opportunities on Council owned land, I can confirm there is a process in place, Ward Members are consulted in such circumstances by the property team both for Cabinet reports, and where an Officer Executive Decision is planned under the scheme of delegation.

Question to Councillor Anita Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services from Councillor Susan Morgan in relation to EHCPs

How many EHCPs were processed in the years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022? As part of the response please could the following also be provided:

- EHCPs processed within the 20-week guideline
- EHCPs processed outside the 20 week guideline

Response

The whole process of Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment and EHC plan development, from the point when an assessment is requested (or a child or young person is brought to the local authority's attention) until any final EHC plan is issued, must take no more than 20 weeks. The relevant legislation provides for exceptions to the time limits in certain situations. The figures provided exclude those exception cases.

- In 2019 Buckinghamshire issued 645 new EHCPs. 258 of these were issued within 20 weeks and 387 over 20 weeks. 40% of new EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks.
- In 2020 Buckinghamshire issued 562 new EHCPs. 420 of these were issued within 20 weeks and 142 over 20 weeks. 74.7% of new EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks.

- In 2021 Buckinghamshire issued 678 new EHCPs. 556 of these were issued within 20 weeks and 122 over 20 weeks. 82.0% of new EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks.
- In the first 3 months of 2022 Buckinghamshire issued 140 new EHCPs. 110 of these were issued within 20 weeks and 30 over 20 weeks. 78.6% of new EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks.

Compliance with the 20-week timeframe for issuing EHCPs has improved significantly over the last 3 years, from 40% in 2019 to 82% in 2021, and is now above the latest national average.

	Number of EHCPs issued, excluding exceptions				Number of EHCPs issued, excluding exceptions, within 20 weeks				Number of EHCPs issued, excluding exceptions, over 20 weeks				Percentage of EHCPs issued, excluding exceptions, within 20 weeks			
	2019	2020	2021	2022 to 31/3	2019	2020	2021	2022 to 31/3	2019	2020	2021	2022 to 31/3	2019	2020	2021	2022 to 31/3
Buckinghamshire	645	562	678	140	258	420	556	110	387	142	122	30	40.0%	74.7%	82.0%	78.6%
England	49519	54175	N/A	N/A	29895	31446	N/A	N/A	19624	22729	N/A	N/A	60.4%	58.0%	N/A	N/A

The Department for Education publishes information about the number of EHCPs issued each year at <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans>. Data is published by calendar year, with 2021 data due to be published on 12th May 2022.

Question 1 to Councillor Clive Harriss, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, from Councillor Robin Stuchbury in relation to the Buckingham Skate Park project

Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the Buckingham Skate Park project - how is work progressing, when will the project be completed and what difficulties and subsequent lessons learnt have been experienced by the Council in delivering this project and will these be taken account of for future projects?

Lastly, and most importantly, will the Mayor of Buckingham as civic representative of the community be invited to the ceremony when the Skate Park project is officially opened? The Buckingham Town Council has been involved for a number of years in seeking to bring this project forward for the young people of the area.

Response

The existing skate park's location - in the flood plain next to the River Great Ouse - has caused complications with the new design which have impacted on project timeframes.

The skate park is an obstruction in the flood plain which means that without mitigation it has the potential to cause flooding pressures either upstream or downstream of the facility. Since the volume of the new design is greater than that of the existing skate park, the design

team has been required to provide evidence to the Environment Agency of mitigation of the potential impacts of the new design, by providing other areas in the park where other obstructions in the floodplain can be removed, to mitigate the growth in volume of the new facility.

The design contractor has been working with other specialist contractors to complete topographical surveys and flood modelling to provide the Environment Agency with data to demonstrate that the flood risk of the new design has been appropriately mitigated. This data will form part of a flood risk assessment and be submitted to the Environment Agency within the next few weeks, and may take up to 8 weeks for them to assess.

Assuming this is approved, we will then be able to discuss mobilisation with our contractor; with the actual installation estimated at around 12 weeks' work. We will consider the impact on user groups of the existing skate park in planning when to install the new design, but will also need to consider the time of year and the river conditions when planning this work.

There are some lessons learned around reviewing the tender process where there are foreseen complications like a flood plain, for example to consider additional weighting around the contractors' capacity to deliver this type of complex mitigation modelling and evidence. It should also be noted that to date all the design work has been at the contractor's expense and until construction commences no payments will be made; it is understandable that fee generating work is likely to be a priority for a small company and hence a phased payment plan may be preferable to ensure that the company is motivated to push the work to the top of their delivery programme.

Officers would like to thank the local community and politicians who have been involved in the process for their patience and hope that work on the new facility will commence later in the summer.

Question 2 to Councillor Clive Harriss, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure, from Councillor Susan Morgan in relation to the Parks and Lighting

Who do you feel should take responsibility for parks within Aylesbury? For example, when reporting issues with the park and lighting in Whiteleaf Park, which is owned and managed by Buckinghamshire Council, the concerns are dropped by Buckinghamshire Council and moved to Aylesbury Town Council, but it is not their responsibility. The same is happening in the Aylesbury Boat Basin. Who is responsible?

Response

There are several services who contribute to the management of the Parks facilities in Aylesbury. Please direct any enquiries about the Parks in Aylesbury to the Parks e-mail address parks.av@buckinghamshire.gov.uk and the enquiries will be redirected to the appropriate service within the Council or dealt with by the Parks Officers.

The boat basin itself is the responsibility of the Canal and River Trust however, the public realm (purple on the plan marked Appendix B) is the responsibility of Buckinghamshire Council; issues with these areas should be forwarded to the main FM helpdesk – candlminorworks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk who will arrange for maintenance and/or repairs to be completed through their network of contractors.

Question to Councillor Nick Naylor, Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Regulatory Services from Councillor Robin Stuchbury in relation to Affordable and Key Worker housing

Within your response to my written question at Cabinet on the 15th of February on the provision of social housing, key worker housing and affordable housing, you kindly indicated that a report around the outcomes of the motion passed by Full Council on 9 December 2020 in respect of Buckinghamshire Council becoming a social housing provider, would be coming to the March Cabinet meeting. Unfortunately, the report did not make March's meeting of Cabinet and the April meeting has subsequently been cancelled. I note that there has been a working group looking at these matters and recognise that insufficient social and key worker housing is a significant issue for residents of Buckinghamshire, a county which is one of the most expensive in the country to live in.

Please can you advise me whether the report will be presented to the Cabinet meeting taking place on 10 May, and provide assurance that the report will recognise the unanimous agreement of full Council on the actions required to address this important matter?

Response

I can confirm that the report on the important matter of the Council's approach to the provision of affordable housing in Buckinghamshire that Councillor Stuchbury refers to is currently on the agenda forward plan for the Cabinet meeting of 10th May 2022.

Question 1 to Councillor Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment from Councillor Susan Morgan in relation to fly-tipping

What is the reported incident level of fly tipping in Buckinghamshire for the years 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022?

As part of the response please could the following also be provided:

- Prosecution rates
- Removal and disposal costs
- Fly-tipping incidents per ward

Response

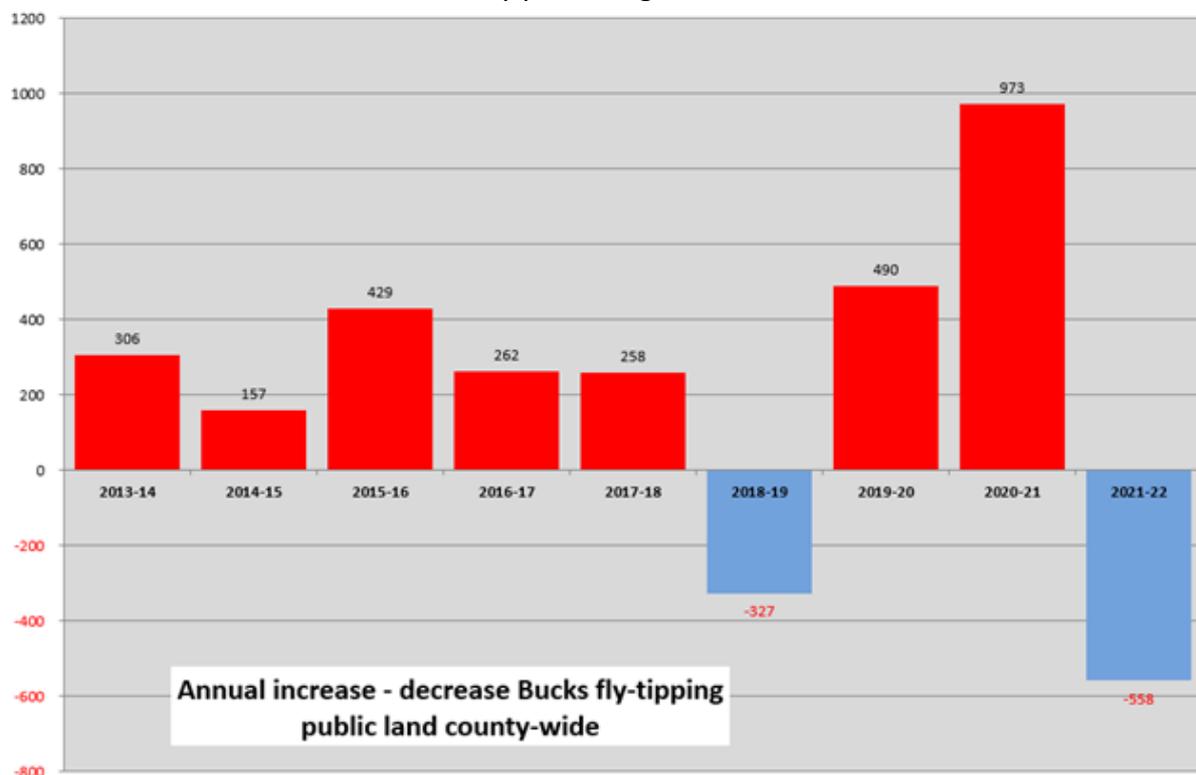
Buckinghamshire Council records only the numbers of 'clearances' of fly-tips, rather than the 'reported incident level' as requested. We have done this consistently since 2003 (to allow comparison between years) in order to count only verified waste dumps and to exclude multiple reports of the same dumped waste

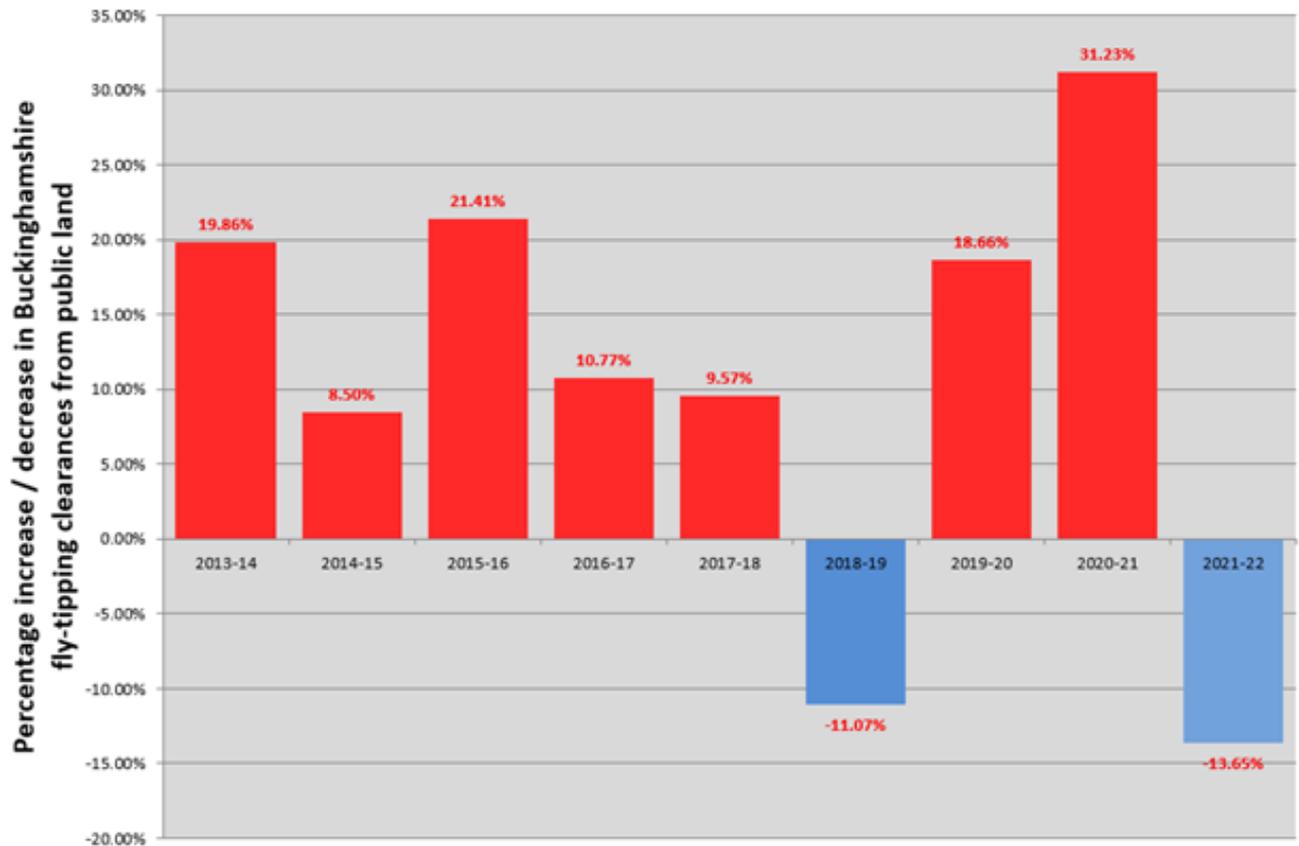
2019-2020 3116 clearances

2020-2021 4089 clearances

2021-2022 3276 clearances

The attached graphs may help show the annual increases/decreases in clearances both by absolute numbers of clearances and by percentage :-





Fly-tipping in Buckinghamshire reached its highest ever recorded level during the Covid Pandemic

Enforcement responses:-

2019-2020 53 convictions (at court) incl one immediate imprisonment of the offender

2020-2021 34 convictions incl one imprisonment and 2 drivers disqualified, 40 Fixed Penalties (FPNs) issued (95%+ paid, issued at the national max allowed of £400)

2021-2022 35 convictions incl 3 prison sentences (2 of them 'suspended sentences'), 56 FPNs issued (95%+ paid, issued at the national max allowed of £400), 2 vehicles seized and crushed

Removal and Disposal costs are estimated here :-

2019-2020 £655,000

2020-2021 £859,500

2021-2022 £697,450

We have no data to provide in respect of fly-tipping incidents per ward

As an aside, we would add that since March 2020 we have gathered data regarding the locations and sources of all waste which has met with a formal enforcement response (168 incidents either prosecuted or FPN issued). That data confirms that 117 incidents (69.6%)

involved waste which was brought into Buckinghamshire from elsewhere before being fly-tipped. 70 incidents (41.9%) were 'trade' carried waste, and 83 (49.7%) involved household waste which would have been 'free to recycle' at HRC site. Trade waste has always been chargeable at HRC sites accepting 'trade waste' which means that 91.6% of these incidents were demonstrably unaffected by the charging for non-household wastes at HRC sites.

Question 2 to Councillor Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment from Councillor Adam Poland-Goodyer in relation to tree planting

This council has plans to plant a tree for every resident by 2050. The council has stated in public documents aspirational 2030 targets as well.

- a. What are the plans to deliver all these trees and what is the planned percentage rollout per year to 2050?
- b. What is the aspirational plan to reach the 2030 target?
- c. Is the number of trees based on the 2020 population figure or the projected 2030 or 2050 population estimate?

Response

The Council has adopted a target to plant 543,000 trees over a 10-year period which was agreed in 2021 and so the target delivery date is 2031 rather than 2050. This is a tree for every resident based on the 2019 population estate for Buckinghamshire, the most recent estimate at the time the target was adopted. There are currently no plans to change the target.

Buckinghamshire Council's target is to reach net zero no later than 2050 and earlier if possible, potentially by 2030, subject to resources. We have a programme of projects of close to £10m which will allow the council to achieve net zero by 2050. However, we are also doing our best to make the most of any new opportunities that may arise so that we can get as close to net zero as we can by 2030, and that is the aspirational target we refer to.

Our approach involves using the carbon absorbed by the 543,000 trees to reduce our net carbon emissions to zero toward 2050, when the trees are maturing and their rates of carbon absorption increasing. Our targets are to reduce emissions by 75% by 2030 and 90% by 2040 and so we plan to be very well progressed against this target by 2030.

Regarding plans to deliver the 543,000 trees, much of this will be delivered on large sites where new woodland will be established by planting thousands of trees. However, we also recognise the benefits which can be delivered by planting smaller groups of trees as well as individual trees, and so we will also be planting in this way where suitable.

Question 3 to Councillor Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment from Councillor Steven Lambert in relation to climate change

The IPCC report was released on Monday 4th April into actions urgently needed to mitigate climate change. There is a more urgent need for 2030 targets and outcomes. This council is meeting 3 weeks after the publication. What urgent actions (that is not an existing programme) is this council taking in response to this pivotal report?

Response

The report released on 4 April 2022 was the IPCC Working Group III report, Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of climate change. This report highlights the urgent need for action globally to reduce emissions and sets out the global reductions in emissions required to limit warming within certain boundaries. This is captured in the associated [Press Release](#) as follows: *In the scenarios we assessed, limiting warming to around 1.5°C (2.7°F) requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by 43% by 2030.*

Buckinghamshire Council's targets are to have reduced emissions by 75% by 2030, far ahead of the 43% stated here. Furthermore, our emissions are already lower than our baseline and so have peaked already. So, when compared to the IPCCs analysis for global emissions reductions required, we are already going beyond these.

It is important to highlight that the IPCC report looks at global emissions, which are still rising – though the report highlights that this rate of increase has slowed. However, Buckinghamshire Council, and the UK's national emissions, are already falling. Climate change is a global challenge, and we must recognize that without major global emitters such as China, India and the USA achieving similar reductions, the world will not avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

This report highlights the urgency and importance of addressing climate change; what this does not change is where globally emissions continue to rise and what the methods for reducing emissions are. As important as this report is, and the urgency with which climate change must be addressed, it does not fundamentally alter how we must address climate change and so we have not changed our approach due to this report being released.

Question 1 to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, from Councillor Robin Stuchbury in relation to Planning Committee call-ins

Noting that Buckinghamshire Council amended the constitution reinstating the historical right for planning applications to be called to committee by Parish/Town Councils I would like to ask for a breakdown of the following figures since the amendment of the Constitution:

- The number of major applications where there was a large number of houses within a development called in / determined within the various Area Planning Committees through Buckinghamshire Council Member(s) calling the application in.
- The percentage of applications determined under delegated powers through decisions of the Committee Chairman/Business Manager/Planning Officer, where possible broken down by planning area and to include decisions made under delegated powers where an elected member had requested the decision be made by the relevant Planning Committee.
- The number of Member call-ins within the old Aylesbury Vale area resulting in an application going to the Area Planning Committee or the Strategic Sites Committee.
- The number of applications called in by a parish/town council to the relevant Area Planning Committee or Strategic Sites Committee.

Response

Noting that Buckinghamshire Council amended the constitution reinstating the historical right for planning applications to be called to committee by Parish/Town Councils I would like to ask for a breakdown of the following figures since the amendment of the Constitution (from the 1st July 2021 when “call in” powers were made available to Town and Parish Councils):

From 1st July 2021 to 31st March 2022.
Question 1
The number of major applications where there was a large number of houses within a development called in / determined within the various Area Planning Committees through Buckinghamshire Council Member(s) calling the application in.
Response 1
Five applications “called up” from delegated decision to committee decision by either officers, members of a Town/Parish Council (or combination of these). These are listed below and also include applications proposing large numbers of houses which were always Committee decisions and so were not “called-up.” A full list of applications considered by a planning committee is attached as Appendix A.
Central Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee
Thursday 3rd February 2022
Application Number: 20/02611/AOP

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 200 dwellings together with associated parking, landscape and access from Rabans Lane together with means of access only to be determined following demolition of existing buildings on Land to the east and west of Rabans Lane. Full planning application for erection of 7,500m² of B2/B8 floorspace together with means of access from Rabans Close Site location: Land To The East And West Of, Rabans Lane, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP19 8TS
Not called up: The applicant (Aylesbury Vale Estates) is a joint venture company which the Council

Wednesday 30 March 2022

Application Number: 20/02611/AOP

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of up to 200 dwellings together with associated parking, landscape and access from Rabans Lane together with means of access only to be determined following demolition of existing buildings on Land to the east and west of Rabans Lane. Full planning application for erection of 7,500m² of B2/B8 floorspace together with means of access from Rabans Close. Site location: Land To The East And West Of, Rabans Lane, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP19 8TS.
(Originally reported to Central Area Planning Committee 3.2.22)

Not called up: Deferred from a previous meeting

West Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Tuesday 17 August 2021

Application Number: 21/06007/VCDN

Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (plan) attached to 18/08309/FUL (Demolition of existing buildings and construction of an up to five storey building containing 58 x 1 bed flats to be provided as temporary housing accommodation, re-provision of the British Red Cross Office in dual (B1 and A1) use, together with alterations to access, landscaping and associated works) to allow for substitution of amended plans

Site Location: Car Park 0505 C35 West End Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire

Not called up: Buckinghamshire Council are the applicant

Tuesday 12 October 2021

Application Number: 21/05368/OUT

Proposal: Outline for up to 50 dwellings including details of the junction with Horns Lane (not internal roads) and associated highway works, with all matters (relating to appearance, landscaping, scale layout and access) reserved.

Site Location: Land off Horns Lane High Wycombe Buckinghamshire

Not called up: Buckinghamshire Council are the applicant

Wednesday 8th December 2021

Application Number: 21/07911/FUL Proposal: Construction of 10 x 1-bed flats, 10 x 2-bed flats, 3 x 2-bed houses, 22 x 3-bed houses and 5 x 4-bed houses (50 residential units in total), with associated landscaping, parking, amenity space and infrastructure. Site Location: Land Rear Of 33 To 45, Glynswood, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire Applicant: Inland Ltd

Called Up: By officers in consultation with the Chairman, due to previous Committee refusal.

Strategic Sites Committee

Thursday 18 November 2021

Application Number: 15/00314/AOP

Proposal: Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access for a mixed-use sustainable urban extension on land to the south west of Milton Keynes to provide up to 1,855 mixed tenure dwellings; an employment area (B1); a neighbourhood centre including retail (A1/A2/A3/A4/A5), community (D1/D2) and residential (C3) uses; a primary and a secondary school; a

grid road reserve; multi-functional green space; a sustainable drainage system; and associated access, drainage and public transport infrastructure.

Site Location: Land South of the A421 West of Far Bletchley North of the East West Rail Link and East of Whaddon Road, Newton Longvill

Called Up: By officers in consultation with the Chairman, due to strategic significance.

Thursday 25 November 2021

Application Number: PL/21/3151/OA

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of residential dwellings including affordable housing (Use Class C3), new vehicular access points off Amersham Road and the Eastern Relief Road, a local centre including a community building (Use Classes E(a)(b)(c)(d)(e), F1(d)(e), F2(a)(b) and C3), a primary school and pre-school (Use Classes E(f) and F1(a)), public open space and associated infrastructure (matter to be considered at this stage: access)

Site location: Land adjacent to Amersham Road and Minerva Way, Beaconsfield

Called up: Members

Thursday 16 December 2021

Application Number: 19/00148/AOP

Proposal: Outline Planning Application (with all matters other than means of access reserved) for a residential development of up to 420 dwellings (including affordable housing), and associated infrastructure including provision of open space (including formal playspace); car parking; new pedestrian and cycle linkages; landscaping and drainage works (to include SuDS attenuation) and two new accesses off Osier Way and one new access off Gawcott Road. Includes demolition of the existing pigsty.

Site Location: Land off Osier Way, East of Gawcott Road and South of Buckingham Ring Road, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire

Called Up: By officers in consultation with the Chairman, due to strategic significance.

Thursday 24 February 2022

Application Number: 18/07194/OUT

Proposal: Outline application (including details of access and layout) for erection of 101 dwellings with all other matters reserved (amended plans received)

Site Location: Tralee Farm 20 Wycombe Road Holmer Green Buckinghamshire HP15 6RY

Called up: Members

Question 2

The percentage of applications determined under delegated powers through decisions of the Committee Chairman/Business Manager/Planning Officer, where possible broken down by planning area and to include decisions made under delegated powers where an elected member had requested the decision be made by the relevant Planning Committee.

Response 2

This information is not specifically recorded as it's not information that has previously been requested to be reported. As it is of interest a procedure will be introduced to collect this information moving forward so that in the future such data can be provided on request.

Question 3

The number of Member call-ins within the old Aylesbury Vale area resulting in an application going to the Area Planning Committee or the Strategic Sites Committee

Response 3

Four applications were “called up” from delegated decision to committee decision by members, relating to sites within the former Aylesbury Vale District Council.

Central Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Thursday 9 December 2021

Application Number: CM/0037/21

Proposal: Continuation of the development at Hangar 5 and on adjoining land at variance to conditions 6 (Vehicle Movements) and 11 (Waste Throughput) attached to planning permission CM/0022/19, to increase vehicle movements and the annual waste throughput limit. Site Location: Building 214 (Waste Recycling Facility at Hangar 5 and on surrounding land) Westcott Venture Park Westcott Buckinghamshire HP18 0XB

Called up: The three local members ‘called in’ the application

North Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Wednesday, 29th September, 2021

Application Number: 20/03822/APP

Proposal: Design Technology & Engineering Building for Stowe School. Accommodation to include workshops, teaching rooms and staff facilities, with associated landscape works to immediate surroundings. Site location: Stowe School, Stowe Park, Stowe MK18 5EH

Called up: Member

Strategic Sites Committee

Thursday 18 November 2021

Application Number: 20/03539/APP

Proposal: Installation of a gas tanker off-loading facility for injection of renewable gas into the national gas distribution network

Site location: SGN Gas Depot, Bletchley Road, Newton Longville, Buckinghamshire

Called up: Members

Thursday 24 March 2022

Application Number 21/02851/AOP - HM Prison Grendon, Springhill Road, Grendon Underwood, Buckinghamshire, HP18 0TL

Called up: Members

Question 4

The number of applications called in by a parish/town council to the relevant Area Planning Committee or Strategic Sties Committee.

Response 4

Nine applications were “called up” from delegated decision to committee decision by a Town or Parish Council.

Central Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Thursday 3rd March 2022

Application Number: 21/02821/APP

Proposal: Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of up to 49.99 MW, including mounting system, battery storage units, inverters, underground cabling, stock proof fence, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure, DNO substation, landscaping and environmental enhancements for a temporary period of 40 years. Site location: Land at Whirlbush Farm, Risborough Road, Kingsey, Buckinghamshire, HP17 8NE

Called up: Call in by Dinton with Ford and Upton Parish Council.

North Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Wednesday 12 January 2022

Application Number: 21/03284/APP

Proposal: Temporary 7-year change of use of agricultural land for the establishment of an operator skills hub for training operatives in relation to the development of major infrastructure projects and caravan park and erection of temporary buildings Site location: Red Furlong Farm, Twyford Road, Poundon, Buckinghamshire, OX27 9BG

Called up: Twyford Parish Council

West Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Wednesday 12 January 2022

Application Number: 21/07860/FUL

Proposal: Householder application for erection of side/rear single storey extension, raising of roof and insertion of front and rear dormers in connection with rooms in roofspace and new front porch
Site Location: Rosalie Kingsmead Road Loudwater Buckinghamshire HP11 1JL

Called up: Member and Parish

Wednesday 2 March 2022

Application Number: 21/07373/FUL

Proposal: Householder application for construction of two storey rear extension, garage conversion and fenestration, roof and external material alterations

Site Location: Lindsey House Pheasants Hill Hambleden Buckinghamshire RG9 6SN

Called up: Hambleden Parish Council.

South Buckinghamshire Area Planning Committee

Tuesday 13 July 2021

Application Number: PL/21/1785/FA

Proposal: Demolition of single storey rear projection (unlisted building within a Conservation Area) and erection of single storey rear extension, alterations to roof including insertion of 2 rear rooflights, rendering of walls and adjustments to the existing parking arrangements.

Site location: Victoria Cottage High Street Taplow Buckinghamshire SL6 0EX

Called up: Member and Taplow Parish Council

Tuesday 26 October 2021

Application Number: PL/21/2574/FA

Proposal: Conversion of single dwelling house into 3 self-contained flats, two storey side/rear extension, single storey rear extension, front porch and extension to vehicular access

Site location: 18 Chesterton Green Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire HP9 1RE

Called up: Beaconsfield Town Council

Application Number: PL/21/3679/FA

Proposal: First floor extension over existing ground floor

Site location: 68 Vine Road Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire SL2 4DP

Called up: Stoke Poges Parish Council

Tuesday 21 December 2021

Application Number: PL/21/2556/FA

Proposal: Installation of new lighting on existing columns and increased hours of usage of floodlights.

Site location: Burnham Football Club Wymers Wood Road Burnham Buckinghamshire SL1 8JG

Called up: Member and Burnham Parish Council

Tuesday 15 February 2022

Application Number: PL/21/4226/FA

Proposal: Demolition of existing bungalow and 2 outbuildings and erection of 2 dwellings, 2 cycle sheds and 2 bin stores and associated hardstanding and landscaping

Site location: 10 Upper Road Higher Denham Buckinghamshire UB9 5EJ

Called up: Denham Parish Council

Question 2 to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, from Councillor Karen Bates in relation to the emerging Local Plan

Can the Cabinet Member please provide details on the development of the emerging Buckinghamshire Local Plan:

- What progress has been made in defining the scope, aspirations and detail of the Plan?
Could the answer please address:

- Whether there have been meetings held with Member sub Groups or Planning Committee chairmen to discuss issues such as possible development / site allocations / infrastructure / future housing growth within the north of Buckinghamshire
- What the membership of any sub-group is
- Whether any discussions have been held about the total expected housing numbers in the plan and where these discussions took place
- How consideration will be given to Neighbourhood Plans in developing the Local Plan, with policies addressing issues such as the provision of future health needs and education

Response

Thank you for your question.

[What progress has been made in defining the scope, aspirations and detail of the Plan?](#)

As detailed in the report to the GIH Select Committee meeting on 13 April 2022, there continues to be considerable uncertainty on how authorities should progress plan-making.

This uncertainty was introduced by the Government when it published its White Paper 'Planning for the Future' in August 2020. The process of plan-making is complex and subject to challenge from all quarters. Without definitive guidance from the Government on, for example, the method for assessing the housing numbers that the Plan is required to deliver, premature work on the Plan could easily be unravelled and waste both time and Council resources.

The current understanding is that there will be Government announcements about changes to the planning system in 'spring 2022' – although there are no further details of when exactly this may be, if this timescale will be met or the level of change that will result. We also understand that the extent of the proposed reforms will be less significant than those envisaged by the Planning White Paper published in August 2020. Furthermore, that they will be included, together with other proposed changes, within a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill rather than a dedicated Planning Bill. We expect to hear more about this in the Queen's Speech on 10 May.

The Council recognises that particularly in the south and east of the Council area there is concern about the lack of protection from an up to date plan. Much of this area benefits from national protections such as the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Metropolitan Green Belt and we will continue to challenge inappropriate development in these areas robustly.

The Council continues to make progress on the lower-risk elements of the Plan. It has:

- Prepared and approved a Local Development Scheme
- Prepared and adopted a Statement of Community Involvement
- Introduced two 'calls for sites' for brownfield land
- Undertaken a Discovery and Exploration engagement exercise, which we expect to report on imminently

- Begun the process of commissioning various baseline studies including an economic review
- Started conversations with neighbouring authorities as part of the Council's Duty to Cooperate.

It is also preparing to expand the scope of our current call for brownfield sites to become a call for other sites. It is anticipated that this will commence in late spring / early summer.

The Local Plan Members' Working Group is composed of the Chairs of the six Planning Committees and the following members of the Cabinet:

- Cllr Martin Tett
- Cllr Gareth Williams
- Cllr Steve Broadbent
- Cllr John Chilver
- Cllr Anita Cranmer
- Cllr Nick Naylor
- Cllr Peter Strachan

The Group meets regularly for briefings on a range of matters relating to the making of the Plan but at this stage the opportunity for significant steer on the Plan is limited.

All-member engagement to date has included the following briefing sessions:

- 10 December 2020, together with a Member survey inviting their views on past experience of plan-making and their aspirations for their locality
- 25 February 2021, together with a Member survey inviting their views on housing density and town centre regeneration (only 28 responses to this)
- 6 December 2021, on the Local Plan engagement exercise

Parish briefings on the Plan were held in March and April 2021, and on 19 January 2022.

Until the Government announces any changes, the Council must use the 'standard method' as a starting point for assessing the housing needs for the area. At present, this shows that the Council would need to deliver about 3000 homes per year.

Presuming that a plan period might run from 2022-2040, this creates a possible requirement of 55,000 homes. Around 28,000 of those homes already have planning permission or are allocated through the Wycombe and Aylesbury Vale Plans. This leaves a further 27,000 homes for the new Plan to supply.

The Plan is still at a very early stage in assessing how this supply could be delivered, but the Council is determined to explore all possible sources before allocating undeveloped, or greenfield, land including:

- Redevelopment of brownfield land
- Evaluating the viability of land currently used for employment to see if it can be repurposed for housing
- Regeneration of town centres
- 'Windfall' – small developments and infill which are not allocated by the Plan.

The Council recognises the potential for Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) to assist this process in a way that wins local support. As well as 30 made (adopted) plans, there are 34 other NDPs under development in the council area. To accord with current Government planning policy, the Plan will need to include strategic policies that set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.

As a matter of course, the process of plan-making will include engagement with all infrastructure providers (including for health and education) to assess the need for new or expanded provision as a result of proposals for growth. These requirements would usually feature in the Plan as being delivered through planning obligations (either through section 106 agreements or pooled contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy).

However, that is one of the areas subject to change as the Government [has confirmed](#) (p12) that it is exploring the introduction of a new Infrastructure Levy, which will replace section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy. We are eager to understand more about this so that the Plan can respond appropriately.

Question 3 to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, from Councillor Susan Morgan in relation to Planning Applications

How many planning applications has this council received in the years 2020-2021, 2021-2022? From these, over the same period, how many planning applications:

- Were determined by officers
- Were determined by Committee
- Were refused to go to Committee by Planning Committee Chairmen
- Are currently outside of the statutory determination period and what deadlines or targets are in place for when applications need to be decided by

Response

How many planning applications...	2020-2021 Q1	2020-2021 Q2	2020- 2021 Q3	2020- 2021 Q4	2021- 2022 Q1	2021- 2022 Q2	2021- 2022 Q3	2021- 2022 Q4
...has this council received	1406	1668	1762	2026	1995	1878	1607	N/A
...were determined	1211	1431	1505	1585	1701	1820	1691	N/A
...were determined by officers	1179	1400	1476	1560	1685	1797	1674	N/A
...were determined by Committee	32	31	29	25	16	23	17	N/A
*Figures taken from those reported on a quarterly basis to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government)								

How many planning applications...	
...were refused to go to Committee by Planning Committee Chairmen.	This information is not specifically recorded as it's not information that has previously been requested to be reported. As it is of interest a procedure will be introduced to collect this information moving forward so that in the future such data can be provided on request.
...are currently outside of the statutory determination period and what deadlines or targets are in place for when applications need to be decided by.	<p>National Planning Policy Guidance explains that once a planning application has been validated, the local planning authority should aim to make a decision on the proposal as quickly as possible, and within the statutory time limit unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a longer period is agreed in writing with the applicant, known as an Extension of Time (EOT), or, • a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) is in place. <p>Where a valid application has not been determined within the relevant statutory period (or an EOT or PPA agreed) the applicant has a right to appeal to the Secretary of State against non-determination. This is however relatively rare as most applicants would rather work with the Planning Authority to reach a successful outcome to their application.</p> <p>The statutory time limits for applications for planning permissions vary depending on the type of application. In very simple terms its 13 weeks for a major application and 8 weeks for all others; there are several exceptions to this such as whether it's subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).</p> <p>Performance information is collected nationally on the number and type of planning applications submitted and determined every quarter. The government have monitored the "speed of determination" of planning applications for decades by dividing them into three categories, each with its own performance measure; "Major", "Minor" and "Other". (This is explained in full in the table below).</p> <p>Where a planning application takes longer than the statutory period to decide, and an extended period has not been agreed with the applicant, the government's policy is that the decision should be made within 26 weeks at most in order to comply with the 'planning guarantee'. The Council has taken the decision to move all the legacy back office planning systems onto a new single system (the One Uniform Project). All planning application</p>

	<p>data being held on a single system will allow accurate real time monitoring of things such as the 26 week planning guarantee.</p> <p>The government use the data they collect quarterly to identify Local Planning Authorities that “are not adequately performing their function of determining applications.” This is assessed against published criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the speed of decisions made by local planning authorities for applications for major and non-major development, measured by the percentage of applications that have been determined within the statutory period or such extended time as has been agreed between the local planning authority and the applicant. • the quality of decisions made by local planning authorities for applications for major and non-major development, measured by the proportion of decisions on applications that are subsequently overturned at appeal (including those arising from a ‘deemed refusal’ where an application has not been determined within the statutory period). <p>Buckinghamshire Council therefore measure the speed of decision making to ensure that performance remains well above the special measures criteria. Although the government currently only measure “major” and “minor” applications, the Council also measures “Other” applications as it is likely they will be added at some point in the future.</p>
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Category	Description	Government “special measures” planning application determination targets
Major	<p>The provision of dwelling/houses where —</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The number of dwelling/houses to be provided is 10 or more: or 	60% of “major” planning approvals to be determined in 13 weeks, unless subject to an agreed Extension of Time (EOT), a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the number of dwelling/houses to be provided is 10 or more. <p>The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1000 square metres or more: or</p> <p>Development carried out on a site having an area of one hectare or more.</p>	or an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
Minor	<p>For dwelling/houses, minor development is one where the number of dwelling/houses to be provided is between one and nine inclusive on a site having an area of less than one hectare.</p> <p>Where the number of dwelling/houses to be provided is not known, a site area of less than 0.5 hectares should be used as the definition of a minor development.</p> <p>For all other uses, a minor development is one where the floor space to be created is less than 1,000 square metres or where the site area is less than one hectare.</p>	70% of “minor” planning approvals to be determined in 8 weeks, or with agreed extension of time.

Category	Description	Buckinghamshire Council planning application determination target
Other	Change of Use (a change of use not falling within “major” or “minor”), Householder Developments (extensions, garages, conservatories, dormer windows, swimming pools, porches, etc), Advertisement Consent, Listed Building Consent, Relevant demolition in a conservation area, Permission in Principle and Technical Details Consent.	80% of “other” applications determined in 8 weeks, or with agreed extension of time.

As a Local Planning Authority, Buckinghamshire Council, performance on speed of determination of planning applications for 2021/22 is as set out in the table below.

2021/22	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	21/22	Commentary
Target(s) for the speed of planning application determination	outturn	outturn	outturn	outturn	outturn	
	01 April – 30 June	01 Jul – 30 Sept	01 Oct– 31 Dec	0 Jan – 31 Mar	01 April – 31 March	
60% of major planning approvals determined in 13 weeks, or with agreed extension of time, PPA or EIA.	82%	77%	79%	88%	82%	<p>Performance in processing “major” planning applications has been particularly good in the final quarter of the year; with several significant applications being determined by Strategic Planning Committee.</p> <p>Overall the year, consistently high performance has ensured that this element of the governments “special measures” target for the year has been exceeded by 22%.</p>
70% of minor planning approvals determined in 8 weeks, or with agreed extension of time.	78%	74%	75%	72%	75%	<p>Minor application determination performance has remained strong in the final quarter. Exceeding the government target by 5% for the year</p>
80% of other applications determined in 8 weeks, or with agreed extension of time.	83%	84%	84%	85%	84%	<p>Similarly “Other” (e.g. house extensions, advert consent, or Listed Building Consent) application determination performance has remained strong in the final quarter. Exceeding the Councils target for the year by 4%.</p>

It is appreciated that this information is looking back, and the question asked for a “real time” total current figure. This figure would however be constantly changing as applications are determined, new applications are validated and extensions of time are agreed. While officers are aware of their individual targets, we do not currently have a report set up to produce the information in the format requested.

As explained above, once planning application data is being held on a single back office system it will allow accurate real time monitoring of such information if it was required.

Question 4 to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, from Councillor Sarah James in relation to Kingsbury and Market Square redevelopment

There has been a delay in delivering the redevelopment of Kingsbury and Market Square in Aylesbury and now the project is facing rising costs and the budget has been reduced by 1.3£M.

- a. Does the Cabinet Member believe the delays are acceptable?
- b. Does the County Town deserve better than this?

Response

Thank you for the question – I am pleased to advise that there is not a reduction in budget. Unspent capital referred to will be carried forward and has not been lost as suggested. On the question of delays and delivery, it is the case nationally that there are significant inflationary pressures, this has meant some value engineering is and will be necessary to meet the budget criteria, that is not unusual at the moment and an issue faced in many situations currently throughout the construction procurement chain. Inevitably these delivery uncertainties which are outside the control of any Council, means that some delays are inevitable as the Council responds to these external pressures. I am aware how hard the Council Officers are working on these projects and I am sure will welcome the Local Members support in the delivery of this exciting project.

Question 5 to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, from Councillor Anders Christensen in relation to Town Centre consultancy spend

How much is the council spending on consultants to undertake a Town Centre Consultation for Aylesbury and why wasn't the existing staff used for the consultation before they left our employment?

Response

The Council is in the process of contracting a Consultant to undertake a review of the town centre management function in Aylesbury. It will consider a number of things related to the needs of Aylesbury town centre businesses, best practice including looking at how other similar towns deliver town centre management, consider the views of stakeholders such as Community Board and Town Council, it will also consider how we deliver services in the context of the wider Buckinghamshire town centre delivery models.

Prior to staff departing, existing Council officers were leading the works to shape the scope of the Review and organise the current tasks of the function to be reviewed. Existing officers will now remain involved in managing the process and ensuring the successful completion of the Review. The value of this piece of work is c£20,000.

There was a similar question received separately, initially directed to the Leader in relation to the Aylesbury Garden Town programme and consultancy spend on media and PR services. The programme is funded from government capacity grant funding which we bid for annually. As part of our programme we have had a communities workstream which in the past has been delivered by consultants we have commissioned and funded from the grant. Perki Productions has been one of the providers of this work. The commission is titled Community and stakeholder partnership programme services and does not provide media or PR services to the programme. This commission is coming to an end at the end of May 2022 as the focus and resource of the Aylesbury Garden Town programme is evolving.

Since the transition to the unitary council we have been integrating elements of the AGT programme into services within the council including communications support and communities projects. As the external capacity we have had on the communities work ends, the AGT team will continue to develop relationships with stakeholders, strategically promote sustainable and thriving communities including the growing projects which are now supported by Public Health and the voluntary sector through Community Transform who continue to work in this area.