

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Meeting - 22 May 2007

Present: Councillors Adams, Binns, Bradford, Brown, Bullock, Busby, Chapman, Chhokar, Clark, Mrs Cranmer, Dhillon, Mrs Evans, Grover, Harding, Hollis, Mrs Holloway, D.F.A. Jones, Mrs Khan, Lidgate, Mrs Lowen-Cooper, Dr Merrick, Oxley, Reed, Mrs Royston, Sandy, Mrs Simmonds, Thomson, Ms Vigor-Hedderly, Mrs Wallis, Walters, Ms Webber, Weir, Wilson and Mrs Woolveridge.

Apologies: Councillors Miss Arnold, Bowater, Hardy, Ms Hazell, S.W. Jones and Tilbey.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

On the proposition of Cllr Mrs Simmonds, seconded by Cllr Binns, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr Dev Dhillon be elected Chairman of the Council for 2007/08.

Cllr Dhillon subscribed his statutory declaration of acceptance of office and thanked the Council for electing him.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

On the proposition of Cllr Reed, seconded by Cllr Hollis, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr Mrs Maureen Royston be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for 2007/08.

Cllr Mrs Royston subscribed her statutory declaration of acceptance of office, and thanked the Council for appointing her.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 April 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reiterated his appreciation of the support of the Council for his election as Chairman and promised to carry out the duties expected of him to the best of his ability. He invited Cllr Busby to pay tribute to the service of the retiring Chairman, Cllr Peter Adams, during his year in office. He referred to the sterling efforts of Cllr Adams to attend the meetings, events and functions to which he was invited and to be an exemplary representative of the Council to all within the District and further afield.

5. LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

On the proposition of Cllr Sandy, seconded by Cllr Mrs Lowen-Cooper, it was

RESOLVED that Cllr Busby be appointed Leader of the Council 2007/09.

Cllr Busby thanked the Council for its support in electing him Leader and the kind words of his proposer and seconder. He looked forward to an interesting and challenging period for the Council in the four years ahead and in particular the opportunities which the Buckinghamshire Pathfinder would present.

The Leader also paid tribute to the work of the retiring Leader, Cllr Peter Hardy, over his four years in office. During his term he had lead the Council through a number of difficult issues including the Office move and a period of financial constraint. He referred

particularly to his work with other Leaders to ward off the threat of structural change in the shape of a Buckinghamshire Unitary Authority in favour of closer joint working.

6. **MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

On the proposition of the Leader it was

RESOLVED that the Members of the Cabinet be appointed, with Portfolio responsibilities as set out, for 2007/09 as follows:-

Cllr Reed	Deputy Leader
Cllr Bowater	Planning Policy
Cllr Lidgate	Environment
Cllr Tilbey	Community, Leisure and Communications
Cllr Mrs Woolveridge	Health and Housing

The Leader indicated that he would be responsible for the Resources Portfolio for the next few months but would look to appoint a Cabinet Member to take this over in due course.

7. **QUESTIONS**

Notice had been give by Mr P J Chapman of Gerrards Cross of the following questions he wished to put to the Chairman:

“Chairman, you were present at the election count in the early hours of May 4. Do you think we can afford to buy a soap box and a microphone/PA system for the Returning Officer to use at future elections?

Do you agree that it is important that the Returning Officer can both be seen and heard on these occasions?

On the afternoon of May 4, I was present at the Wycombe count where the Chief Executive stood on a dais and used a hand-held cordless microphone to address candidates and others. It turned out to be particularly important because two contests resulted in a tie and the winning candidate was elected by drawing a name from a hat and the procedure had to be explained and then seen to be fair by all those present.

Chairman, do you agree that we don't want to appear second best to Wycombe merely on the presentational aspect of election night when we have such a first-class team of staff in the Electoral Services Department?”

On behalf of the Chairman, the Chief Executive responded as follows:

The announcement of election results was not a case where the Council was in competition with Wycombe or any other Council. We have not had to utilise a PA system in the past and were assured that the acoustics in the Pinewood Film Studio where the results were announced was sufficiently good to mean that we would not need one on this occasion. That was an incorrect assumption and is a decision that will need to be corrected next time.

8. **PRESENTATION - CHIEF CONSTABLE, THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Sara Thornton, Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, who addressed the meeting on current Police issues. The Chief Constable was accompanied by Chief Inspector George Wrigley, the recently appointed Local Police Area (LPA) Commander for South Bucks.

The Chief Constable began by reminding Members of the Thames Valley Police mission:

“Working with communities to reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime as a leading, caring and professional Police service”.

She went on to outline the strategic objectives of the force. All Police forces were now measured against the National Policing Performance Assessment Framework and at the last assessment, Thames Valley had been shown to be improving in all but one of the seven main areas of performance and as regards local Policing had been assessed as excellent. Overall, the force was placed about thirteenth out of the forty-three Police forces. The British Crime Survey showing figures over the last three years indicated that South Bucks was the best of all LPAs in Thames Valley and in the last year had shown a 6.9 reduction against a target of 6%. Crimes per one thousand of population were 108.79 in South Bucks; there had been a slight fall in the sanction detection rate in the Buckinghamshire Command Unit in the last year.

With regard to resources, the number of Police Officers had grown to about 4,300 and increases were also taking place in support staff and PCSOs. On budget, Thames Valley remained in the third quartile as regards budget per one thousand population.

The Chief Constable referred to a number of challenges affecting the force, referring in particular to neighbourhood policing. A chart showing the way neighbourhood policing was to be rolled out across the District was shown. Further slides were shown depicting crime levels in South Bucks and hotspots for certain types of crime e.g. anti social behaviour, personal robbery, common assault, theft from vehicles.

There followed a number of questions to the Chief Constable from Members and the following points emerged:-

- The Thames Valley Police Authority had a statutory duty to set policing targets. Targets were also set as part of the Public Service Agreement and given that these were set at different times over different periods they did not always coincide. The priorities and targets set by Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) overall targets. Multi-Agency working through NAGs and the CDRP was pivotal to success.
- The results of the CCTV review report were due to be given to County Local Authority Chief Executives in June. Whilst acknowledging the value of CCTV it would be for local authorities to decide on the shape of future development of CCTV and the monitoring arrangements required.
- Parking enforcement would continue to be a low priority for the Police. If PCSOs were diverted onto parking duties they would have less time available for other matters. The situation had improved in other districts where decriminalised parking powers had been used and a special parking area introduced.
- While exclusion orders e.g. in Burnham Village, had proved an effective tool to be used in the right circumstances, the key to tackling anti-social behaviour was sustained multi-agency working. Links to schools were important and the designation of a Liaison Officer for Burnham Upper School together with other local schools was welcomed.
- The Chief Constable commented on the recruitment and retention in respect of both Police Officers and PCSOs and how this was affected by payment of allowances and transfers to the Metropolitan Force

The Chairman thanked the Chief Constable and thanked him for attending, for making the presentation and answering questions. The Leader reiterated this underlined the commitment of the Council to work with the Police to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

9. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/GROUPS

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Resources regarding the appointment of Committees/Groups for the ensuing two year period. A supplementary report contained the nominations from each political group for the seats allocated to it on each Committee and Group taking into account one minor amendment to the nominations brought forward at the meeting it was

RESOLVED that the nominations of the groups to the seats as set out below be confirmed:-

Conservative (C), Beaconsfield Independent (1), Liberal Democrat (LD)

<u>Planning Committee</u>	(C)	(LD)
(C)	R. Reed	D. Jones
F. Bowater	J. Simmonds	
M. Bradford	J. Lowen-Cooper	
A. Cranmer	M. Thomson	
D. Dhillon	B. Weir	
D. Holloway	J. Woolveridge	
<u>Licensing Committee</u>	(C)	(I)
(C)	S. Khan	K. Brown
P. Adams	G. Sandy	
N. Arnold	J. Simmonds	
N. Binns	S. Tilbey	
M. Bradford	R. Vigor-Hedderly	
L. Hazell	J. Wilson	
<u>Personnel Committee</u>	(C)	(I)
(C)	D. Merrick	G. Grover
P. Adams	J. Simmonds	
H. Evans	A. Walters	
<u>Overview & Scrutiny Ctte</u>	(C)	(LD)
(C)	G. Hollis	A. Oxley
S. Bullock	S. Jones	
S. Chhokar	M. Royston	
B. Harding	K. Webber	
<u>Audit Sub-Committee</u>	(C)	
(C)	G. Hollis	
N. Binns	M. Thomson	
S. Bullock	J. Wallis	
P. Chapman		
<u>Community Leisure & C. PAG</u>	(C)	(I)
(C)	A. Cranmer	G. Grover
P. Adams	S. Khan	
N. Arnold	S. Tilbey	
D. Clark	J. Wilson	
<u>Health & Housing PAG</u>	(C)	(LD)
(C)	M. Royston	D. Jones
A. Cranmer	J. Simmonds	
H. Evans	R. Vigor-Hedderly	
G. Hollis	J. Woolveridge	

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<u>Environment PAG</u> (C) M. Bradford D. Clark P. Chapman	(C) D. Holloway B. Lidgate J. Wallis A. Walters	(I) K. Brown
<u>Resources PAG</u> (C) F. Bowater S. Bullock A. Busby	(C) P. Hardy D. Merrick M. Thomson J. Wilson	(I) G. Grover
<u>Planning PAG</u> (C) F. Bowater P. Chapman G. Sandy	(C) D. Holloway S. Jones R. Reed B. Weir	(LD) D. Jones
<u>Standards Committee</u> (C) N. Arnold S. Chhokar	(C) P. Hardy G. Sandy K. Webber	(LD) A. Oxley

10. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Council considered a report of the Director of Resources on the appointment of representatives on Outside Bodies. The report contained a list of representatives serving on Outside Bodies up to the present time, detailing the relevant Portfolio Holder and Officer contact.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The following initial appointments to Outside Bodies be approved:-

ACTVaR

K Webber
D Holloway (Deputy)

Bucks Children and Young Persons Trust

H Evans

Bucks Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Public Health)

M Royston
J Woolveridge (Deputy)

Bucks Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Community and Environmental)

A Walters

Bucks Pathfinder - Joint Improvement Board

R Reed

Waste Committee for Bucks

B Lidgate
A Walters (Non-Executive Member)
J Woolveridge (Deputy)
J Wallis (Deputy Non-Executive Member)

Local Government Association

A Busby
R Reed (Deputy)

Padstones

R Vigor-Hedderly
J Woolveridge (Deputy)

South East Employers

J Simmonds
A Walters (Deputy)

South East Regional Assembly (SEERA)

A Busby
R Reed (Deputy)

- (2) The remaining Outside Body positions be fixed by the Cabinet.

11. **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 18 April 2007 was presented.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

12. **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 7.45 p.m.