

## Report to Cabinet

---

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Unitary Transition Arrangements – Appendix</b>
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 10 January 2019
<b>Author:</b>	Leader of the Council
<b>Contact officer:</b>	Sarah Ashmead
<b>Local members affected:</b>	All
<b>Portfolio areas affected:</b>	All

### Summary

This appendix to the Unitary Transition Arrangements Cabinet report dated 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 outlines the details within the draft Structural Changes Order confirming the arrangements for the transition to the new Council.

A draft of the structural change legislation - *The Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) Order 2019 and The Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) (Modification of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2019*, has been sent to the County and District Councils, together with a letter from the Secretary of State outlining the changes. A copy of this letter to this Council is attached as Appendix 2.

The draft Regulations are scheduled to be laid before Parliament on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 with the draft Structural Changes Order following shortly afterwards and, subject to Parliamentary approvals, expected to take effect in April or May 2019.

As set out in paragraphs 4 and 8 of the main report, in accordance with Section 15 of the Cities and Local Government Devolution 2016 Act, the Regulations to amend other legislation to implement the Secretary of State's decision require the consent of at least one of the relevant local authorities. In separate correspondence the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has asked the County Council to consent to the making of *The Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) (Modification of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) Regulations 2019*. If authority is given the County Council will reply consenting to this.

## Recommendation

1. In line with the main report Unitary Transition Arrangements Cabinet is recommended to confirm that the County Council gives consent to the making of the Regulations. This consent is on the basis of the Secretary of State's decision on the draft Structural Changes Order as set out in the letter at Appendix 2 and detailed in the table at paragraph 1 below.
2. Cabinet is also recommended to delegate to the Leader responsibility for appointing the County Council's nominees to the Shadow Executive.

### A Background

1. The Secretary of State has confirmed that the key arrangements for the implementation of the County Council's single unitary proposal are as detailed below.

Details of Draft Structural Changes Order	
Name of Council	The new Council will be called Buckinghamshire Council. This is in accordance with the County Council's business case that was accepted by the Secretary of State.
Number of Elected Members	The new Council will have a total of 147 elected members. These will be elected based on the existing 49 County Council wards. This will provide for 3 members for each of the existing wards of the current County Council. The original business case from the County Council asked for 98 members.
Elections to new Unitary Council	Elections to the new Unitary Council will take place on Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2020.  The term of office for members elected to the new Council in May 2020 will initially be five years with the next elections planned for May 2025. Subsequent terms will revert back to four years thereafter.
District and Town and Parish Council Elections	Separate orders have already been laid by the MHCLG confirming the elections for both the District and Town and Parish Councils planned for May 2019 will be deferred. The Town and Parish Council elections will instead take place in May 2020, alongside the elections to the new Unitary Council.
Shadow Authority	This will be made up of all existing County and District Councillors, a total of 202 elected members taking into account 34 councillors who currently sit on both the

	County and a District Council
First meeting of the Shadow Authority	The first meeting of the Shadow Authority is to be convened by the proper officer of the County Council with a deputy, who is the proper officer of Wycombe District Council. In accordance with the County Council's constitution the designated officer for the County Council will be Sarah Ashmead.
Shadow Executive	<p>The Shadow Executive will consist of 17 County and District members. This will consist of the Leader of the County Council, eight members nominated by the County Council and two members nominated by each of the four District Councils. The chair of this group will be the Leader of the County Council.</p> <p>The draft order also allows for substitute members to be nominated for each permanent member of the Shadow Executive.</p>
Implementation Team	The Shadow Executive Committee will also create an Implementation Team that will manage the change to the new council. This will be made up of officers across the county and district councils and will be led by the Chief Executive of the County Council with an officer of one of the District Councils acting as the deputy implementation team leader.

2. The Shadow Authority will be established once the Structural Changes Order takes effect which is expected to be in April or May 2019; its first meeting has then to take place within 14 days of the order coming into effect.
3. The Shadow Authority will undertake specific functions associated with the creation of the new council including setting a budget for the new council.
4. The Shadow Authority will establish a Shadow Executive. The functions conferred on the Shadow Authority are to be delegated to, and discharged by, the Shadow Executive. The Shadow Executive will need to meet within 21 days of the Structural Changes Order coming into effect.
5. The Leader of the County Council will chair the Shadow Executive and a Deputy Chair will be chosen from one of the members of the Shadow Executive nominated by the District Councils.

6. It is proposed that the Leader is authorised to appoint the members of the County Council who will sit on the Shadow Executive.
7. Three interim officer posts will be created under the Shadow Authority, which are to be filled by officers from the existing councils and will carry out their required duties on behalf of the Shadow Authority. There will be no additional remuneration for these posts which will remain in place until the substantive appointments are made to these posts in the new Council. The posts are Head of Paid Service, Chief Finance Officer, and Monitoring Officer.
8. The designation of the interim officers will be the responsibility of the Shadow Executive subject to consultation with members of the Shadow Authority. The final decision will rest with the Shadow Executive.

## **B. Implementation of the Proposal for a Single Unitary Council**

9. The draft Structural Changes Order confirms the Implementation Plan for the new Council must have regard to the information supplied to the Secretary of State by the county council in support of its proposal for a single tier of local government in Buckinghamshire.
10. This is referenced in the letter from the Secretary of State to each Council (Appendix 2) which states that he has *'decided to implement the county council single unitary proposal, and the shadow authority and executive must have regard to that proposal in discharging the functions for transitioning to the single unitary authority set out in the Structural Change Order'*. The proposal includes implementation of the following:
  - To have a single voice, speaking on behalf of residents, businesses and partners.
  - To be more local and to enable greater empowerment at a local level, through the establishment of new local 'community boards' and a new devolution offer to town and parish councils.
  - To improve the quality, cohesiveness and accessibility of services, with local delivery enabled by a network of multi-agency Community Hubs.
11. The draft order also states that the Shadow Authority and Executive must have regard to the June 2018 report from the Children's Commissioner, and advice from Hampshire County Council as improvement advisers for Buckinghamshire Children's Services.