

Agenda

Cabinet

Date: Monday 9 September 2019

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Mezzanine Rooms 1 & 2, County Hall,
Aylesbury

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6	Forward Plan for Cabinet and Cabinet Members For Cabinet to consider the Forward Plan	13 - 24
7	Cabinet Member Decisions To note progress with Cabinet Member Decisions	25 - 32
8	Select Committee Work Programme & Inquiry Work Programme For Cabinet to consider the Select Committee Work Programme	33 - 44
9	Household Recycling Centre (HRCs) service changes financial appraisal Cabinet are asked to AGREE to keep Burnham HRC open and continue to operate it 5 days a week, with closing days being Wednesdays and Thursdays.	45 - 74
10	Thrift Farm Cabinet are asked: 1. To note the findings of the consultation report as set out in Appendix 1. 2. To seek approval for the proposed business plan from Provider A and for Thrift Farm to be transitioned to Provider A for ongoing provision and operation. This includes: a. Adult day care provision b. Use of the property as a farm park open to the public, café, retail shop, agricultural operations and the farmhouse c. All associated land (on a full repair lease basis) d. Additional proposals for use of the land (details of this are part of the confidential appendix)	75 - 132
11	Exclusion of the Press and Public To resolve to exclude the press and public as the following item is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	
12	Confidential Minutes Of the meeting held on 22 July 2019.	133 - 134
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To consider confidential appendix

14 Date of the Next Meeting

30 September 2019.

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Rachel Bennett on 01296 382343

Members: Martin Tett (Leader)

Bill Chapple OBE

Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment

John Chilver

Cabinet Member for Resources

Anita Cranmer

Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

Lin Hazell

Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

Mark Shaw

Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation

Warren Whyte

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Gareth Williams

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Public Health

Minutes

Cabinet

Date: 22 July 2019

Venue: Mezzanine Rooms 1 & 2, County Hall, Aylesbury

Time: 10.30 to 12.10

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr M Tett (in the Chair).

Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Mrs A Cranmer, Ms L Hazell, Mr M Shaw, Mr W Whyte and Mr G Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Ms R Bennett, Mr R Ambrose, Ms H Norman-Thorpe, Ms R Shimmin, Mr R Nash, Mr D Drawmer, Mrs K Jackson and Ms T Ironmonger

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none. Cllr Chapple arrived late to the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2019 were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4 HOT TOPICS

Cabinet Member for Children's Services announced that the Judicial Review on the Early Help review had been dismissed on all grounds. The full press release could be found [here](#). The Honourable Mrs Justice Andrews DBE was satisfied that the Council had carried out a fair Consultation before it had made the Decision; it took the responses properly into account, and it complied with all its relevant statutory duties.

Mr Whyte confirmed that the summer timetable would be released on 22 July for existing centres and the new Family Support Service would be implemented from September 2019. Mr Whyte congratulated the team and legal colleagues on their hard work and stated that the reform of the service would bring better intervention for children.

5 QUESTION TIME

There were none.

6 FORWARD PLAN FOR CABINET AND CABINET MEMBERS

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the report.

7 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the report.

8 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME & INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the report.

9 CHILDREN SERVICES UPDATE

Mr R Nash, Service Director Children's Social Care and Mr G Drawmer, Head of Achievement and Learning attended the meeting in order to answer Member questions.

Mr W Whyte, Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report stating that it was a joint update across Education and Social Care; covering national and local issues. The following points were highlighted:

- Mr Whyte highlighted the Peer Review as part of the South East sector led improvement programme; which had led to meeting with colleagues from around the south east with useful feedback.
- Mrs Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills highlighted some of the good news stories which included teacher recruitment and retention and changes to inspection framework; teaching to the curriculum rather than to test. Mr Tett, Leader highlighted that Cabinet would have a key interest in the development of the framework to ensure best outcomes for children across the county.
- Mr Tett highlighted the data regarding treatment for cannabis and the upward trend from 2007 to 2008 stating that the information was not current. It was confirmed that the data had come from Public Health and was the latest available.
- Mr Whyte drew Cabinet's attention to the Ofsted Monitoring visit letter in appendix 1 of the report pack.

Mr Nash highlighted the following points from the report in relation to social care:

- A recent study into 'Improving safeguarding responses to gang violence and criminal exploitation' which highlighted the number of young people exposed to gang violence. The update report also set out what the children's services partnership had done to ensure a more coordinated approach to tackle the exploitation of children and serious youth violence.
- The national policy 'workforce that works for all children' highlighted the importance of the right people working across children's services and for them to be supported to forge effective relationships.
- The published findings of the National evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2015 to 2020, highlighted where the County Council were in achieving its aims.
- Placements of Looked After Children (LAC) and the strong progress in the area. There had been a cost avoidance of £5m and the placement of children as close to home as possible where appropriate.
- The service had just undergone their third Ofsted visit which ran over two days and focused on the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), assessment teams and child protection processes. Mr Nash stated that Ofsted's findings were fair and accurate and

there was a good commentary on progress to date and further improvement to be made. Mr Nash stated that the feedback reflected the hard work of first and second line managers and social workers and that of those staff spoken to during the visit enjoyed working in Bucks and felt supported by their managers.

- Mr Nash referenced the recent progress report on the improvement in Bucks Children's Services that had been submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) by the Improvement Advisor for Bucks, Mr John Coughlan (Chief Executive, Hampshire County Council). The report noted the new Heads of Services which were of a high calibre and were settling in well. Mr Coughlan stated that progress was as well as could be expected under the circumstances.
- Mr Nash highlighted the high level action plan that was a live document, monitored regularly and was independently scrutinised.
- Recruitment challenges were a national issue in the context of recruiting social workers. There were daily and weekly actions in place to address.

Mr Drawmer highlighted the following points from the report in relation to education:

- It was being reported that recruitment and retention in schools was becoming easier due to the time of year. The Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy were being used to improve progress.
- Changes to the education inspection Framework – the changes will see inspections consider whether schools were teaching a 'broad and rich learning' and not narrowing the curriculum or 'teaching to the test'. It was noted that work was ongoing with head teachers to be able to plan for its implementation in September 2019.
- Elective home education had seen an increase of 19% (640) which was in line with national trends.
- From September 2020 a new subject would be taught 'Health Education'. There would be statutory guidance and officers were working directly with schools to prepare and promote.
- School Inspections – In Bucks 91.5% of pupils attend a 'Good' or 'Outstanding' school, compared to 85% nationally.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability had seen a number of improvements since the new Head of Service had been in place.

Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:

- Mr G Williams had recently visited the new children's home in Aylesbury and commented on how it felt like a home with a real family spirit. The strategy had pay dividends keeping children closer to home.
- It was highlighted that Bucks recruitment turnover in social care was still above average. Mr Nash stated that 25% turnover had been driven by the recent changes made and this would start to reduce. Due to reduction in caseloads and recent publication of monitoring letter would make Bucks a more attractive place to work to the market.
- The monitoring letter had set out that not all interventions were effective and assurances were given that the area was being addressed and would identify opportunities to improve.
- Mr Shaw gave his congratulations to the service on the improvements made and gave an example of a recent good news story.
- Lin Hazel raised the issue of the high number of children that were being home educated and the worry that these children were not monitored closely enough after the initial visit. Mr Drawmer confirmed that visits were followed up on a yearly basis and that moving forward there would be guidance developed to review more closely and consider how that would be resourced. Cabinet had a concern that the service was losing sight of those children home educated and asked for an overview to be shared with them that highlighted the current process of review, how often and percentage of

reviews completed, what was driving the 19% increase and if there were specific characteristics of those children home educated.

ACTION: Mr Drawmer

- Mr Chilver highlighted the issue of communicating the new Early Help model to partners and that it was critical the Council liaised with partners to assist with early intervention. Mr Nash stated that there were ongoing conversations with schools and that the MASH had an open day which invited school staff to attend to understand the various pathways and processes. Mr Whyte highlighted that the Early Help strategy was a partnership document and there would be a busy few months ahead informing key stakeholders. Following a question from Mr Williams, Mr Nash also stated that it was important to get the right partners to the strategy meetings.
- Mr Tett questioned the change in the education inspection framework and what this meant. Mr Drawmer confirmed that inspections would move from 1 day to 2 to allow them to still focus on Maths and English but to allow time for a wider focus of subjects. Outcomes would still be reported in performance tables.
- Recruitment in Wycombe was highlighted as a particular problem in the report and Mr Nash stated that this was due to cost of living, transport and time getting to work and other employees in the locality. Partners within the same area were also experiencing the same problem.
- Mr Tett asked how the Council might improve the number of care leavers that went on to attend university. Mr Whyte stated that the Council had a high ambition for care leavers and that Bucks regularly outperformed its neighbours. However given the complexity of some of those care leavers, university was not always the right setting. Other options to get care leavers into the most appropriate alternative education which would still lead to them creating a future that may not have been on their agenda before should also be considered. The policy had also been changed so that there was now a facility with previous foster carers so that the individual could go home to them in the holidays for familiar support.
- It was asked what work was being done to address the high number of children and young people associated with, or exposed to, gangs. Mr Nash stated that work was ongoing with the Youth Justice Service and the Police to understand the current picture. The Council were actively involved in developing approaches to identify and support those children and young people.
- Mrs Cranmer confirmed that a large number of those home educated were pre GCSE so would suggest stress of exams caused some to withdraw. Mrs Cranmer also confirmed that a yearly visit was now the rule.

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED (a) the national, regional and local developments across Children's Services, and (b) the programme of work taking place to further improve Children's Services in Buckinghamshire.

10 ADULT SERVICES UPDATE

Ms K Jackson, Service Director (ASC Operations) attended the meeting in order to answer Member questions.

Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The report was a six month update which gave an overview of key issues and ongoing work in the service.
- There were still funding issues and the service continued to wait for the publication of the Green Paper which had been delayed for the fifth time.
- The report highlighted the NHS long term plan and how the additional government funding would be used over the next 5 years and the national priorities set.
- There continued to be workforce challenges and issues with recruitment of staff.

- The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) scheme was being replaced by Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS). The DoLS system would run alongside the LPS for up to a year to ensure those people subject to DoLS would be transferred to the new scheme in a managed way.
- Buckinghamshire Health and Social Care System – the Council were in the process of finalising children’s and adult social care data for sharing with health colleagues called My Care Record. This was an integrated system with health colleagues.
- The County Council and Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had restructured their Integrated Commissioning team which would operate in the new Bucks Integrated Care Partnership (ICP).
- It had been confirmed that The Better Care Fund would continue into 2019-20 although the final allocations had not been confirmed by June 2019.

Ms Jackson highlighted the following points from the report:

- Better Care Fund targets had been set and that Buckinghamshire system performed better than the average in their group and second best performing in its CIPFA group.
- There were a large number of issues around the publication of the Green Paper with Buckinghamshire having a large number of self-funders and how the Council would support them when costs come back into the Council. Social Care Directors were looking at the issue across the South East.
- The Better Lives Transformation Programme had had a positive impact on front door services within its first year of the two year programme.
- Community Capacity – an online map of community assets had gone live. This enabled residents to find activities, groups and facilities in their local area.
- Improving the Front Door – launched to improve the experience of those people who contact the Council for advice on care.
- Regaining Independence – part of the Better Lives strategy and worked alongside colleagues in health and children’s.
- A number of consultations had been carried out as part of the transformation programme which included Thrift Farm and Short Breaks Residential Service which were both a key part of the programme and linked into the NHS long term plan.
- The Dignity in Care awards had taken place which celebrated best practice in the county.
- The Safeguarding Adults Board continued to process a number of Safeguarding Adults Reviews, the most recent having had the final report presented and signed off and recommendations from the report to be developed into an action plan.
- Staff were being supported in adopting a strengths-based approach to social care practice.
- The replacement for the current case management system used by adult social care would be awarded by the end of July.

Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:

- Mr Tett highlighted that the service supported some of the most vulnerable sections of the community and the pressures would continue into the new council.
- Mr Williams asked if the new council provided further opportunities to influence more development requirements. Mrs Jackson confirmed that there were three market position statements which provided some real opportunities for the new council.
- Mr Chilver highlighted the digital improvements that had been made to help facilitate online self-help. Digital improvements would deliver a better service for residents while also making savings.
- Mr Chilver asked the capacity and resources needed with the change in DoLS service. Mrs Jackson confirmed that it would be part of the existing process and prioritisation would need to be carried out.

- Mr Williams questioned the level of the issue for the Council of self-funders. Mrs Jackson stated that a lot of self-funders chose to move into care homes. The Council continued to work with providers to bring rates in line with council rates to try to minimise those that had to be moved.
- Mrs Cranmer requested a breakdown of the Prevention Matters budget and the evaluation of spend.

ACTION: Mrs Jackson

- Mr Tett asked what was being done to help achieve the challenging targets set for Buckinghamshire for delayed transfers of care. Mrs Jackson stated that there were a number of initiatives in place to help support the area including a joint approach across health and social care, learning from other parts of the country, work on reablement, extending offers to those returning home and new crisis support.
- Mr Tett asked for clarification as to the delay in the allocation of the Better Care Fund (BCF) and why there had been a reduction. Mr Ambrose, Director of Finance and Procurement stated that the improved BCF was agreed as part of the four year settlement and went down in 2019/20 based on overall funding for authorities. Mr Ambrose also confirmed that the BCF would finish in 2020 but assumptions were being made that it would continue. Before the amount was announced it had been calculated based on previous amount with an inflation increase.
- Cabinet raised their concern in the delay of the Green Paper and hoped that the new government would reconfirm it was imminent.
- Mr Tett asked how well Buckinghamshire young people were prepared for adulthood and how well children's services were worked with adult social care. Mrs Jackson confirmed that there was a huge amount of partnership work taking place. Directors met on a regular basis and they were also currently looking at co-locating some staff.

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED i) The key national legislative changes relating to adult social care is facing and the uncertainty arising from delays of the Green Paper and ii) The latest developments in relation to the adult social care transformation programme.

11 Q1 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Mr Tett, Leader introduced the Q1 Budget Monitoring Report and highlighted the importance of overseeing the budget as they moved into the new unitary authority.

Mr Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources highlighted the following points:

- There was a net underspend of £100k at the end of the year which largely related to the Planning and Environment portfolio and is due to an increase in the agricultural estate rental income following a rent review.
- There was a forecast Capital variance of £1.9m which equated to 2% of annual overall capital budget. This mainly related to two items, Education and Transportation. The Education variance was an underspend rather than slippage and related to good project management of the new St Michael's school in Aylesbury. The Transportation slippage related to contingency costs included in the budget that had not yet been incurred.
- There had been progress on reducing outstanding debt from £18m to £11m and this had happened since the debt task and finish group had been formed.
- Buckinghamshire County Council were in a strong position moving into the new authority.

Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:

- Mr Tett questioned why the rent review in agricultural estate had not been foreseen. Mr Chapple stated that rents were constantly being reviewed and can take time to agree.

- Mr Whyte highlighted the issue of national challenges in recruiting permanent staff resulting in additional costs of agency staff. Mr Whyte stated that they were working closely with HR colleagues to look to increase permanent staff.
- Mr Chilver highlighted the £300k variance on capital in Resources due to an IT project that was put on hold due to moving into the new unitary authority.
- Mr Chilver stated that any underspends would be put back into the corporate budget.
- Mr Tett highlighted the importance of keeping a close eye on budgets as any deviation would impact other services as councils moved into the new authority.

Cabinet thanked all staff involved across all services.

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the current forecast outturn for the 2019/20 financial year.

12 DPHAR (DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT) 2019

Ms Ironmonger, Assistant Director of Public Health attended the meeting on behalf of the Director of Public Health to present the Annual Report which focused on alcoholism.

Mr G Williams, Cabinet Member Community Engagement and Public Health highlighted the following points:

- The Director of Public Health was a joint appointment with the NHS.
- Alcohol was the third leading risk factor behind death and disabilities.
- 1 in 4 adults drank above national guidelines
- The report looked at the impact of this and particular areas that were affected most.
- 1 in 4 of those who had received alcohol treatment had children in the home. 22% of children in need had a parent receiving treatment and Bucks were 25% higher than the national average of accidents relating to alcohol.
- The report set out a series of recommendations that also needed to be shared with partners before an action plan was agreed.

Ms T Ironmonger highlighted the following points:

- People may not realise the wider impacts of alcohol and the resulting physical and mental health problems.
- It was suggested that while most people had a concept of alcohol units it was often difficult to work out.
- The report recognised the wide spectrum of factors that were driving alcohol use.
- The report provided more information for residents should they need it.
- A multi-agency action plan would be developed.

Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:

- Mrs Cranmer asked what the timeframes were for the initiatives. Ms Ironmonger stated that there were points in the year that influenced drinking patterns e.g. Summer and Christmas and that some initiatives would take more time to implement than others.
- Mr Tett questioned the resource implications and if it would be funded from existing budgets and Ms Ironmonger confirmed that it would be.
- Cabinet discussed the development of the action plan with partners and how this would then be monitored to ensure that outcomes had been met. Ms Ironmonger confirmed that the action plan would be development with partners which would come out of a workshop that would be held.
- Mr Tett requested that previous year reports and what they had achieved should be shared with Cabinet to ensure that outcomes were being met, as there was some concern that the action plans were not monitored or reviewed after a year.

After a discussion in a closed session Mr Tett thanked Ms Ironmonger and colleagues across Public Health for the work on the Annual Report.

RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED and ENDORSED the Director of Public Health Annual Report.

13 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

14 DPHAR (DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT) 2019

15 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

9 September 2019.

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

CABINET/CABINET MEMBER FORWARD PLAN

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet 9 September 2019				
Household Recycling Centre (HRCs) service changes financial appraisal	Financial appraisal of the Household Recycling Centres service following changes implemented on 1st April 2019. This decision follows on an earlier one taken on 7th January 2019 - https://democracy.bucksc.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=11180	All Electoral Divisions	Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / Neil Gibson	First notified 4/7/19 May contain confidential appendices
Thrift Farm	Future options for Thrift Farm	All Electoral Divisions	Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Jane Bowie	First notified 27/3/19 Likely to contain confidential appendices
Cabinet 30 September 2019				
Property Acquisition	If required		Cabinet Member for Resources / John Reed	First notified 11/10/18 Likely to include confidential appendices
Q1 2019/20 Performance Report	Quarterly performance report for Cabinet		Leader of the Council / Sarah Ashmead	First notified 20/6/19
Residential Short Breaks (Respite) for Adults	Residential Short Breaks (Respite) for Adults		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Adam Willison	First notified 27/2/19
Smarter Bucks Strategy	To note the six month update		Cabinet Member for Resources / Balvinder Heran	First notified 11/1/19

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2019/20	The purpose of this report is to present the Buckinghamshire Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2019/20. The Plan provides details of progress made against agreed outcomes for Children and Young People. It outlines priorities, alongside potential future challenges for the partnership over the coming year. Following Cabinet, the report will be presented to County Council for approval.		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Tolis Vouyioukas	First notified 22/7/19
Cabinet 28 October 2019				
Cabinet 11 November 2019				
Q2 19/20 Budget Monitoring Report	Budget Monitoring report to 30 September 2019		Cabinet Member for Resources / Jane Parker	First notified 9/7/19
Cabinet 9 December 2019				
Cabinet 13 January 2020				
Q2 2019/20 Performance Report	Q2 Cabinet Performance Report		Leader of the Council / Sarah Ashmead	First notified 28/8/19
Cabinet 10 February 2020				
Q3 19/20 Budget Monitoring Report	Budget Monitoring report to 31 December 2019		Cabinet Member for Resources / Jane Parker	First notified 9/7/19
Cabinet 9 March 2020				

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
August 2019 Cabinet Member Decisions				
<u>Cabinet Member for Children's Services</u>				
Section 75 Agreement - Short Breaks for Children with Disabilities	To agree a new Section 75 agreement for lead commissioning arrangements and a pooled budget for children's short breaks services.		Cabinet Member for Children's Services / Matilda Moss	First notified 12/8/19
<u>Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Payment by Results (Troubled Families) Grant Approval 2018-2019 and future years	Payment by Results Grant Funding Approval for 2018-2019 and future years		Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cabinet Member for Resources / Elizabeth Williams	First notified 11/2/19
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	Statutory duty is to report annually to Members on how we are meeting our duty to secure sufficient childcare in Buckinghamshire and then make the report available to the public.		Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Tolis Vouyioukas	First notified 11/7/19
<u>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</u>				
Care Market Pressures	Annual response to care market pressures from providers		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Jane Bowie	First notified 29/3/18
Commissioning Mental Health Section 117 and Continuing Health Care (CHC)	Update to Section 117 services and proposal to commission Continuing Health Care (CHC) services		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Jane Bowie	First notified 25/6/19
Direct Payment Policy	Cabinet Member to agree the Direct Payment Policy		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Jenny McAteer	First notified 29/3/17

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Short Breaks Policy for Adults	Approval of finalised short breaks policy for ASC post consultation		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Susie Yapp, Susie Yapp	First notified 21/12/18 May include confidential appendices
<u>Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment</u>				
Planning Performance Agreements fee schedule and increase in charges for Pre-Application Advice in relation to Planning development management function	Planning Performance Agreements fee schedule and increase in charges for Pre-Application Advice in relation to development management and BCC's role as County Planning Authority		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 21/9/18
Rights of Way Enforcement Policy	To review and update the existing Rights of Way Enforcement Policy The document will outline the legislative powers available to the authority regarding enforcement, give details of what action our customers may expect the authority to take on illegalities found on the rights of way network.		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 28/3/18
Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2	Key decision seeking approval of Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2		Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment / David Sutherland	First notified 10/1/19

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
<u>Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment and Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Denham Quarry Northern Extension – Summerleaze Limited	The agreed form of Lease appended to the 2010 Option Agreement allows for the continuation of working via the lateral, northern extension which is to be demised for a term of a further 8 years. This arrangement will serve to provide continuity of the revenues payable to the Council under the current tenancy for the same period. With reference to the previous decision of 15/03/2018 approval is sought from Cabinet Members on the decision reached between Summerleaze and BCC on how to regularise the situation	Denham	Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Cabinet Member for Resources / Marion Mayhew	First notified 16/10/18 May contain confidential appendices
<u>Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Budget Adjustments to the Approved Capital Programme	To approve amendments to the approved budgets within the Capital Programme		Cabinet Member for Resources / Sue Palmer	First notified 26/2/19
Old County Offices	Redevelopment proposal for Old County Offices for Cabinet Member approval	Aylesbury North	Cabinet Member for Resources / Sarah Stewart	First notified 20/6/19 May contain confidential appendices
Renewal of Estates and Asset Management Services	Renewal of Estates and Asset Management Services		Cabinet Member for Resources / Marion Mayhew	First notified 21/1/19 May contain confidential appendices
Transfer of Land at Spade Oak, Marlow	The transfer of land held by Buckinghamshire County Council as Trustee of the Thameside Preservation Trust to new Trustees. The land was purchased with monies raised by public subscription and is to be preserved for the benefit and recreation of the public.	Marlow	Cabinet Member for Resources / Jamie Hollis	First notified 6/4/17

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
<u>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation</u>				
A412 Uxbridge Road / Black Park Road junction	Consultation to implement changes to the existing road layout to reduce collisions by a 'No Right Turn' ban from Black Park Road, a 'No U turns' ban for southbound traffic on the A412, a reduction in the existing speed limit for northbound vehicles on A412 from 60mph to 50mph with a reduction to one lane through the Black Park Road junction.	Iver; Stoke Poges & Wexham	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Trevor Bonsor	First notified 28/11/17
A418 Oxford Road Corridor Improvements	Improvement of the A418 Oxford Road corridor between the Coldharbour Way roundabout and the A41/A418 roundabout.	Aylesbury North; Aylesbury North West; Aylesbury South West; Aylesbury West	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Ian McGowan	First notified 30/7/19
Appointments to Outside Bodies 2019/20	To approve the list of outside bodies to which the County Council appoints representatives. They will be detailed in Appendix 1 to the report		Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Claire Hawkes	First notified 6/11/18
Beaconsfield cycleway	Proposed shared cycleway. Upgraded of existing footway, between Grenfell Road and Ledborough Lane.	Beaconsfield	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Adrian Lane	First notified 28/2/17
Berryfields Proposed Waiting Restrictions	Berryfields Proposed Waiting Restrictions at Aylesbury Vale Academy School & The Berryfields Primary Academy School & The Green Ridge Primary Academy School.	Stone and Waddesdon	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Kirk Adams	First notified 22/3/18
Burnham Waiting Restrictions	Burnham waiting restrictions for Hitcham Road, Hag Hill Lane, Hag Hill Rise, Cavendish Close, Windsor Lane & Britwell Road - For Burnham Parish Council	Cliveden	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Shane Thomas	First notified 10/6/19

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Footway Hierarchy 2019	Revisions and additions to the Footway Hierarchy used for maintenance purposes in Buckinghamshire		Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Mark Averill	First notified 22/7/19
George Street & Market Square, Aylesbury Traffic Movement Restriction	The report will cover making the current experimental traffic regulation order into a permanent traffic regulation order.	Aylesbury North	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Kirk Adams	First notified 13/12/18
Hag Hill Lane - Proposed 20 mph Speed Limit	Proposed 20 mph Speed Limit for Hag Hill Lane & Adjacent side roads, for Burnham Parish Council	Cliveden	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Shane Thomas	First notified 10/6/19
HS2 Road Safety Fund	Agreement of criteria for allocation of £3.95m Road Safety Fund		Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Jackie Copcutt	First notified 14/6/19
Proposed Zebra Crossing - The Broadway, Amersham	Planning application number CH/2016/1651/FA with Appeal reference APP/X0415/W/17/3167665 places a condition on the developer to provide a pedestrian crossing adjacent to the application site.	Penn Wood & Old Amersham	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Christine Urry	First notified 11/3/19
Reclassification Order, Bellingdon Road and Townsend Road, Chesham	A short section of Bellingdon Road and Townsend Road in Chesham are classified as B Roads. It seems that this is a historic issue which was not correctly dealt with at the time the A416 St Marys Way was constructed. This order resolves this historic issue	Chesham	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Keith Carpenter	First notified 2/8/17

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Richings Park Parking Restrictions Review	Transport for Buckinghamshire has been commissioned to address some safety and parking concerns along various roads in Richings Park, Iver. The proposals developed include; no waiting at any time restrictions, limited waiting restrictions and residential parking.	Iver	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Ricky Collymore	First notified 18/6/19
Rural Bus Subsidy Review	To review rural bus routes currently subsidised by BCC following MTFP budget reduction; to redesign services according to the level of use and the priorities of local users and communities.	All Electoral Divisions	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Paul Robson	First notified 14/3/19
Winter Service Policy	An overarching Policy setting out the County's approach to providing winter service in Buckinghamshire.	All Electoral Divisions	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Keith Carpenter	First notified 28/11/18
<u>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation and Cabinet Member for Resources</u>				
Budget Amendments to the Approved Capital Programme	To approve changes to the Council's Capital Programme		Cabinet Member for Resources, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Sue Palmer	First notified 25/7/19
2018/19 Developer Funded Infrastructure Programme	Approval of Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Fund programme for the 2018/19 financial year.		Cabinet Member for Resources, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / Jack Mayhew	First notified 24/5/18

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
<u>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transport, Cabinet Member for Resources, & Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment</u>				
Request by HS2 Ltd for temporary possession of land owned by the council to construct temporary works: Buckinghamshire Golf Course/Denham Country Park to enable National Grid access to realign pylons in the Park	<p>HS2 Ltd's Early Works Contractor, Fusion, has been tasked to design and deliver the enabling works to allow National Grid access to realign the ZC line power line which includes relocating a pylon to outside the Denham Country Park.</p> <p>Detailed design by Fusion has identified that the original land take within Act Limits is insufficient for the planned temporary works due to the constrained spatial arrangement.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd has approached BCC to temporarily occupy BCC land to facilitate this works.</p>	Denham	Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment, Deputy Cabinet Member for Resources, Executive Director Resources / Laura Leech	First notified 21/6/19
<u>Leader of the Council</u>				
Request by HS2 Ltd for temporary possession of land owned by the council to construct temporary works: Bottom House Farm Lane (off the A413) to construct the ventilation shaft at Chalfont St Giles	<p>Bottom House Farm Lane (off the A413) is the location for the access to the Chalfont St Giles ventilation shaft.</p> <p>Detailed design by HS2 Ltd's Early Works Contractor, Fusion, has identified that the original land take within Act Limits is insufficient for to create a safe and less disruptive impact for the tenant, his family and other residents along the lane. HS2 Ltd requires adjacent BCC land (the site of a current stable block highlighted in yellow in the attached plan) for the duration of the temporary works (approx. 8 years) in order to create a haul road largely separate from the public highway (Bottom House Farm Lane) to consequently avoid the heavy construction traffic going immediately past the front of the tenant's house and other residents at the top of this lane.</p> <p>HS2 Ltd has approached BCC to temporarily occupy BCC land to facilitate this works.</p>	Chalfont St Giles	Leader of the Council / Laura Leech	First notified 21/6/19

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet Member Decisions October 2019				
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
Proposal by Chartridge School to admit 3 year old children	The governing board of Chartridge Combined School are holding a public consultation from 10 September on a proposal that from September 2019 the school admits 3 year old children into a pre-school class they are proposing to open.	Chiltern Ridges	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Paula Campbell-Balcombe	First notified 10/9/18
<u>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</u>				
Home from Hospital Service	<p>The Home from Hospital is a service provided to patients who are being discharged from hospital back into the community. The service has two elements which are Transport and Settlement at Home. Transport at home is an element that provides patients with a means of getting home following a visit or stay in hospital therefore preventing any unnecessary delays. The Support at Home element of the service provides support to patients once they return home from hospital to support them at home and avoid readmission into hospital.</p> <p>This service is provided to residents who are registered with a GP under Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group and/or are Local Authority residents of Buckinghamshire</p>		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Jane Bowie	First notified 17/7/19

Item	Description	Local Members	Member(s) / Contact Officer	Comments
Cabinet Member Decisions November 2019				
<u>Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing</u>				
Recommissioning of Accommodation Based Homelessness Support Services	A decision from Cabinet member will be required to agree the recommended action in the business case for re-commissioning of the support services for homeless people 16 -55 years within supported living accommodation within Bucks.		Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing / Jane Bowie	First notified 4/7/19 May contain confidential appendices
Cabinet Member Decisions February 2020				
<u>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills</u>				
Determined Admissions Arrangements 2021	Following a six week consultation period with statutory consultees, the final determined admission arrangements are published.		Cabinet Member for Education and Skills / Debbie Munday	First notified 7/3/19
Cabinet Member Decisions March 2020				
<u>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation</u>				
A4157 Douglas Road, Aylesbury - No Right Turn into Stocklake (Urban) Traffic Regulation Order	Buckinghamshire County Council as traffic authority intends to make the above ETRO. This will prohibit any vehicle (other than a vehicle in emergency use for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes) proceeding in a south-easterly direction in A4157 Douglas Road to turn right into Stocklake (Urban)	Aston Clinton & Bierton; Aylesbury East	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation / David Cairney	First notified 8/7/19

Please note the following information since the report included in the previous Cabinet agenda:-

- 5 decisions have been published but not yet taken
- 16 decisions have been taken
- 26 decisions on the forward plan are pending for August

DECISIONS TAKEN

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

19 Jul 2019

CS05.19 - Financial arrangements for Adoption, Special Guardians and Care Arrangement Order Policy (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

APPROVED the updated Adoption, SGO and CAO payment policy, amendments include:

- **Bringing our payments in line with the current fostering rates**

Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

24 Jul 2019

CS06.19 - Integrated Commissioning Personalisation Business Case (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Members:

APPROVED the decision for officers to progress with recommissioning the services outlined in the attached business case recommendation 3

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

22 Jul 2019

CE04.19 - Shared Model for Prevention for Buckinghamshire (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Members:



APPROVED the adoption of the Shared Approach to Prevention by Buckinghamshire County Council

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

26 Jul 2019

ED07.19 - Iver Village Infant School: change of pre-school provision (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

AGREED that, as the Local Authority have followed the Department for Education statutory guidance, permission is granted for the proposed change of age range at the school.

AGREED that the change takes place from 1 September 2019.

15 Aug 2019

ED08.19 - Proposed expansion of Dagnall CE School (Decision taken)

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member AGREED that, as the Local Authority have followed the Department for Education statutory guidance, permission is granted for the proposed change of age range at the school.

The Cabinet Member AGREED that the change takes place from 1 September 2019.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

17 Jul 2019

PE06.19 - Buckinghamshire County Council Culvert Policy (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment:

ENDORSED the policy and AGREED that it can be published on the County Council's website and, from that point onwards, taken into account in the consideration of future applications for Ordinary Watercourse Land Drainage Consents. The policy will be reviewed in the event of a significant change in relevant legislation, national or local policy, or otherwise annually.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment and Cabinet Member for Resources

29 Jul 2019

PE07.19 - Procurement of electricity & gas supplies for 2020-2022 (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Members:

AGREED that Buckinghamshire County Council will use the LASER framework to procure gas and electricity supply contracts for the period October 2020 to

September 2022, with the contract to include two additional 1 year extensions – the future Buckinghamshire Council to decide upon the use of these extensions.

DELEGATED the decision on contractual purchasing approaches to Head of Energy & Resources.

AGREED to permit schools, academies and Town and Parish Councils within Buckinghamshire to access these contracts, subject to the proposed controls.

Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation

14 Aug 2019

R07.19 - Woodlands and Eastern Link Road South (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Members:

APPROVED the release of £350k from the Transport, Economy and Environment Strategic Development reserve as Buckinghamshire County Council's contribution to the £700k cost to progress the design and planning application for the Eastern Link Road South and develop the full business case for the Woodlands development.

Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation and Leader of the Council

16 Jul 2019

L02.19 - South East Aylesbury Link Road and Eastern Link Road (Decision taken)

The Leader and Deputy Leader AUTHORISED:

- **The Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects to enter into NEC4 contracts through the Midlands Highways Alliance Framework for the South East Aylesbury Link Road and Eastern Link Road. This will initially only be for Early Contractor Involvement.**
- **A delegation of authority to the Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects to approve progression from Early Contractor Involvement into full contract subject to performance of the contractor during ECI.**

26 Jul 2019

T18.19 - Marlow Parking Restrictions Review (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

- a. **AUTHORISED the Executive Director for Transport, Economy, Environment to make the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the scheme outlined in this report. Noting that it is different to the one that was advertised as part of the Statutory Consultation process.**
- b. **AGREED that the Traffic Regulation Order be made as advertised at Statutory Consultation but with the following amendment:**
- c. **Reduction from three new parking bays to one new parking bay from the end of the current parking bay towards Portlands Alley (41 West Street), an increase of 2 new parking bays to be added to the end of the parking bay going towards Spittal Street (19-21 West Street).**
- a. **AGREED that responders to the Statutory Consultation be informed of the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation Decision.**

26 Jul 2019

T19.19 - Proposed Waiting restrictions in High Street, Pound Lane, Station Road and The Causeway in Marlow Town Centre (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

- a. **AUTHORISED the Director of Growth, Strategy and Highways to make the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the scheme outlined in this report as advertised during the Statutory Consultation process.**
- b. **AGREED that responders to the Statutory Consultation be informed of the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation Decision**

6 Aug 2019

T20.19 - Princes Risborough Parking Restrictions Review (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

- a. **AUTHORISED the Executive Director for Transport, Economy, Environment to make the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the scheme outlined in this report. Noting that it is different to the one that was advertised as part of the Statutory Consultation process.**
- b. **AGREED that the Traffic Regulation Order be made as advertised at Statutory Consultation but with the following amendments:**
 - The proposed extension of the junction protection measures on the north side of the road on Mill Lane and the addition no waiting restriction on the south side of the road are to be in line with Highway Safety guidelines (Plan R22).
 - The proposed No Waiting at Any Time restrictions on Northmill (Plan O28) are not implemented outside property numbers 1 to 3 on the northbound carriageway.
 - The proposed “No Waiting Mon-Fri 11am-12pm” proposals for Brooke Road (Plans Q25 and Q26) be changed to separate times on each side of the road. North side of the carriageway “No Waiting Mon-Fri 10am-11am” and the south side of the carriageway “No Waiting Mon-Fri 1pm-2pm”.
 - The proposed “No Waiting Mon-Fri 11am-12pm” proposals for Cannon Place (Plans Q25 and Q26) be changed to separate times on each side of the road. North side of the carriageway “No Waiting Mon-Fri 10am-11am” and the south side of the carriageway “No Waiting Mon-Fri 1pm-2pm”.
 - The proposed “No Waiting Mon-Fri 11am-12noon” restrictions for Longwick Road are withdrawn (Plans Q25 and Q26) .
 - The proposed extension of the “No Waiting At Any Time” restrictions at Northfield Road are withdrawn (Plans R26 and S26).
 - The proposed “Permit Holders Only” parking bay on Wellington Avenue are withdrawn (Plan Q25).
 - The proposed “No Waiting Mon-Fri 10am-11am” restriction on the southbound carriageway of Windsor Hill amended to be implemented on the northbound carriageway (Plans R24).
 - The proposed Resident Permit Zone for Chiltern Close and Park Meadow are withdrawn (Plans P28 and Q28).
 - The proposed ‘No Waiting at Any Time’ restrictions on The Avenue at its junction with A4010 to be implemented in line with Highway Safety guidelines.
 - The proposed “No Waiting Mon-Fri 11am-12pm” proposals for The Retreat (Plans Q26 and R26) be changed to separate times on each side of the road. North side of the carriageway “No Waiting Mon-Fri 10am-11am” and the south side of the carriageway “No Waiting Mon-Fri 1pm-2pm”.
 - The proposed extension of “No Waiting at Any Time” restrictions at Culverton Hill’s junction with A4010 are to be implemented in line with Highway Safety guidelines.
- c. **AGREED that responders to the Statutory Consultation be informed of the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation Decision.**

13 Aug 2019

T21.19 - A40 Oxford Road, Stokenchurch - Speed Limits (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

- a. **AUTHORISED** the Director of Growth, Strategy and Highways to make the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the scheme outlined in this report as advertised during the Statutory Consultation process.
- b. **AGREED** that responders to the Statutory Consultation be informed of the Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation Decision

20 Aug 2019

T22.19 - A4010/A4129 HS2 Safety Mitigation Schemes (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

AGREED: To approve the construction of the final designs with the zebra crossings, including amendments made following consultation of A4010 & A4129 Safety Improvement Works so that the project can begin construction as soon as reasonably possible as per Appendix 1.

AGREED: To delegate authority to the Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects (or appointed deputy) to award the construction contract following the consultation and an open tender exercise.

AGREED: To delegate authority to the Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects (or appointed deputy) to revise the programme, risk allocations, descope the project and/or approve additional scope within the available HS2 Ltd funding through to completion of the whole project whilst keeping the Cabinet Member for Transportation, relevant local Member(s) and Petitioner Group informed.

23 Aug 2019

T23.19 - A40 London Road Corridor Improvements (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member:

- **APPROVED** the implementation of the scheme and junction modifications proposed as part of the A40 London Road Corridor Improvement project, subject to final modifications responding to representations from public engagement, as set out in this report.
- **AGREED** to delegate to Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects and A40 Project Board authority to progress the implementation of A40 London Road Corridor Improvement project and award of a contract to Transport for Buckinghamshire.
- **APPROVED** the implementation of Traffic Regulation Orders as set out in Appendix F of this report.

29 Aug 2019

T24.19 - Client Transport - Software Commissioning Project (Decision taken)

The Cabinet Member AGREED:

Business Option:

Option 5: Commission a Client Transport System which is fully integrated with preferred existing systems. Recommended option.

Procurement Option:

Option 2: Recommended Option. Undertake a quotation process. Identify a minimum of 3 suitable providers to quote in accordance with the Councils quotation process. The contract value including any extension option and potential additions must not exceed the EU threshold for goods/services, currently £181,302.

The award of the contract will be a key decision. We recommend at this business case stage the Cabinet Member approved delegation of the award of contract decision to an Officer.

See appendix 1 – Confidential Business Case for additional details

DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

30 Aug 2019

ED09.19 - Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (Decision to be taken)

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member to agree the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2019 (CSA) for Buckinghamshire and to note:

- The progress made against last year's key actions.
- The nature and the extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare within Buckinghamshire.
- The key actions that will be taken in 2019/20 in order to improve the sufficiency of places.

Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

23 Aug 2019

HW06.19 - Care Market Pressures (Decision to be taken)

Recommendation

That the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing approves the following recommendations:-

- in principle adoption of a zero % fee uplift for all commissioned provision outside of the Council's contractual requirements to older people (OP) block care homes
- payment of contractual uplifts on two OP block contracts at a maximum cost of £382.6k (to be adjusted in line with change in Funded Nursing Care (FNC) payment from £158.16 in 2018-19 to £165.56 in 2019-2020 but the total cost be no more than £382.6k)

- to pay up to maximum 2% increase for 2019-2020 for the Council's three preferred domiciliary care providers on receipt of evidence of commercial pressures from changes in law.
- on receipt of sufficient evidence of requirement for uplift and on a case by case basis to pay increases for the cost impact resulting from legislative changes, including 4.9% increase in National Living Wage in 2019-2020 and particularly for existing Direct Payment packages which have not had a routine fee increase in the last two years.

Cabinet Member for Resources

27 Aug 2019

R06.19 - Old County Offices (Decision to be taken)

Recommendations:

Authority to fund & progress RIBA Stages 2-3

1. Authority is given to the Director of Property & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Resources, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources to fund and progress with works to complete RIBA stages 2 – 3 (including surveys, professional fees and further design development) in accordance with the Old County Offices (OCO) Redevelopment Business Case – detailed in the exempt report in Part 2 of this report. The output from RIBA Stage 3 will inform the Final Business Case which will require further approval in due course.

Authority to agree contracts and manage RIBA Stages 2-3

2. Authority is given to the Director of Property & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Resources, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources to tender, agree terms, complete contracts then manage relevant contracts to complete works up to end of RIBA Stage 3 redevelopment (surveys, professional fees and further design development) within the financial parameter listed in the exempt report in Part 2 and as per resourcing parameters as laid out in Part 1 Section C Resources Implications.

Cabinet to note request for finance for RIBA stage 2-3

- 3 This report seeks funding only to progress the project to the end of RIBA Stage 2-3 whereby the project can then be reassessed with costs, design and risks better defined, with a maximum sum provisionally agreed with a Contractor before being formalised in a Design and Build JCT Construction Contract for the Contractor to take the project to full completion. This will be summarised in the Full Business Case and it is only at this stage that BCC will need to commit to the full value of the development.

Currently £727k has been released in the Capital Programme to progress the OCO development. It is now estimated that it will cost a total of £878k to deliver the end of RIBA Stage 3. Therefore this is an additional request for £151k to top up this fund.

The Final Business Case to progress the development will be submitted to the Property Board, in Summer 2020.

Authority to set up Property Management Company

- 4 Authority is given to the Director of Property & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Resources, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources to progress with setting

up a commercial trading company wholly owned by the Council to manage the Council's interests in acquisitions, developments and delivering income from these developments

A Final Business Case highlighting the process and benefits will be submitted to Property Board in Summer 2020.

Authority to market units for sale or rental on completion of redevelopment

- 5 Authority is given to the Director of Property & Assets in consultation with the Executive Director for Resources, Section 151 Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources to tender, agree terms, complete contracts, then manage the relevant contracts to complete the sale or rental of the 51 residential units, taking all appropriate actions on appropriate contract terms, in accordance with the financial parameters and tenure mix determined within the Final Business Case.

Cabinet Member for Resources and Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation

30 Aug 2019

R08.19 - Budget Amendments to the Approved Capital Programme (Decision to be taken)

To vire £100k from the Agricultural Estate Capital Maintenance Budget and £200k from the Council's Capital Contingency Budget to allow the refurbishment of Moorcroft Farm House to be undertaken in the current financial year.

To add to the approved capital programme an expenditure budget of £4.49m for the BUCKS-Aylesbury Garden Town Live Lab Project (ADEPT) which will be financed by grant funding received from the Department of Transport for the trial of various new infrastructure technologies.

Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Transportation

29 Aug 2019

T25.19 - HS2 Road Safety Fund (Decision to be taken)

Recommendation

| To agree the criteria and basis for the launch of the RSF to parish councils.

For further information please contact: Rachel Bennett on 01296 382343

Select Committee Combined Work Programme

About our Select Committees

This work programme sets out all formal meetings of the Council's Select Committees.

The purpose of Select Committees is to carry out the Council's overview and scrutiny function. Their role is to support public accountability and improve outcomes for residents through scrutinising the work of decision-makers.

Select Committees can carry out this function either through an in-depth Inquiry or one-off item at Committee meetings.

A scrutiny Inquiry is an investigation on a topic that will lead to a report and evidence-based recommendations for change to decision-makers. The key difference between one-off committee items that are not part of an inquiry and scrutiny inquiries is that Select Committees normally only make recommendations to Cabinet as a result of an in-depth Inquiry.

Evidence for scrutiny Inquiries may be gathered in different ways depending on the topic, this includes taking evidence at formal Select Committee meetings and/or informal meetings, visits or external research. Prior to any work commencing the Select Committee will agree an Inquiry scoping document which will outline the terms of reference, the methodology and inquiry timeline.

For more details about Select Committee Inquiries and guidance please see <http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/scrutiny/>

[Finance, Performance & Resources Select Committee](#)

[Children's Select Committee](#)

[Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee](#)

[Transport, Environment & Communities Select Committee](#)

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Finance, Performance & Resources Select Committee				
10 Sep 2019	Budget Scrutiny 2019 - 6 month progress report	The Committee will examine a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations from Budget Scrutiny 2019 after 6 months. Members will have the opportunity to question the Cabinet Member and the Director of Finance and Procurement, before discussing and allocating a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status for the progress of each recommendation.	Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance & Procurement	Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources, Mr Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Procurement
10 Sep 2019	Mid-Year Review of Budgets for Children's Services and Adult Social Care	The Committee will receive an overview of the Mid-Year budget position for Children's Services and Adult Social Care. It is important for Members to have an understanding of demand and costs in these business units and implications for the budget. Members will also be updated on the progress of agreed budget savings at the mid-year point.	Neil Haddock, Head of Finance - CHASC, Alistair Rush, Interim Deputy Director of Finance, Elizabeth Williams, Finance Director	Attendees to be confirmed
10 Sep 2019	Work Programme	For Members to review the Committee's Work Programme	Kelly Sutherland, Committee and Governance Manager	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
5 Nov 2019	FPR Select Committee - A retrospective	An opportunity for members of the Committee to consider the work the Committee has undertaken during the last four years and how this has contributed to driving improvements. The Committee will also be able to highlight specific issues that the new Unitary Council might want to monitor going forwards.	Kelly Sutherland, Committee and Governance Manager	
5 Nov 2019	Information Management	The Committee will receive an update on the Council's new centralised Information Management function and gain an insight into how preparatory work for the new Unitary Council is progressing in this area.	Matt Everitt, Interim BI BP (CSC&L & CHASC)	Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources, Mr Matt Everitt, Interim Head of insight and Business Improvement

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Children's Select Committee				
6 Sep 2019	Education Standards	For the Committee to consider an overview of education standards across the County for 2018-19, the National Funding Formula and the side-by-side project.	Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education, Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director Children's Services	Mr M Appleyard - Cabinet Member for Education & Skills
6 Sep 2019	Elective Home Education	For the Committee to review an update on elective home education in Buckinghamshire.	Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education, Vivian Trundell, Exclusions and Reintegration Manager	
6 Sep 2019	Ofsted Monitoring visit update	For the Committee to receive an update about the last Ofsted monitoring visit.	Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director Children's Services	
3 Oct 2019	12 month recommendation monitoring of Permanent Exclusions Inquiry		Gareth Drawmer, Head of Achievement and Learning, Vivian Trundell, Exclusions and Reintegration Manager	
3 Oct 2019	Adoption Annual Report		Nathan Whitley, Head of Corporate Parenting and Children's Commission	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
3 Oct 2019	Fostering Annual Report		Nathan Whitley, Head of Corporate Parenting and Childrens Commission	
3 Oct 2019	Work Programme	For Members to review the Committee's Work Programme	Katie-Louise Collier, Committee and Governance Adviser	
27 Nov 2019	Children's Mental Health Services	A meeting themed around the provision of children's mental health services in Buckinghamshire	Katie-Louise Collier, Committee and Governance Adviser	
27 Nov 2019	Ofsted Monitoring visit update	For the Committee to receive an update about the latest Ofsted visit	Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director Children's Services	
24 Jan 2020	BSCB annual report	For the Committee to receive an update from the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board	Joanne Stephenson, Safeguarding Business Manager	
24 Jan 2020	Improvement Plan update	For the Select Committee to receive an update about the actions and outcomes of the improvement plan	Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director Children's Services	
24 Jan 2020	Retrospective of 2018-19	For the Committee to look at the progress the service has made, where we are now and where we need to be	Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director Children's Services	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
24 Jan 2020	Side by Side Project update	For the Committee to receive an update about the side-by-side project	Tolis Vouyioukas, Executive Director Children's Services	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee				
19 Sep 2019	Adult Social Care Transformation - Tier 3	For Members to examine the progress on Tier 3 Adult Social Care Transformation programme.	Jane Bowie, Director of Integrated Commissioning	Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing Gill Quinton, Executive Director, Communities, Health & Adult Social Care Jane Bowie, Service Director (Integrated Commissioning)
19 Sep 2019	Director of Public Health Annual report	For Members to receive the Director of Public Health's Annual report.	Jane O'Grady, Director of Public Health	

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
14 Nov 2019	Support for Carers - 6 month recommendation implementation monitoring	For Members to receive a 6 month progress update on implementing the recommendations made in the Support for Carers Inquiry.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources Anita Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Education & Skills John Everson, Specialist Commissioning Manager Lisa Truett, Commissioning Manager Mark Green, Children's Services Development Manager Helen Cannon, Organisational Development Consultant
14 Nov 2019	Temporary Closure of Chartridge Ward, Amersham	For Members to hear from Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust representatives on the impact of the temporary closure of Chartridge Ward and the Trust's ongoing plans.	Liz Wheaton, Committee and Governance Adviser	Neil Macdonald, Chief Executive, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Date	Topic	Description and purpose	Lead Service Officer	Attendees
Transport. Environment & Communities Select Committee				
17 Sep 2019	High Speed 2 - Community Engagement and Communications	Members will hear from representatives from High Speed 2 to consider their planned approach to community engagement. In particular, how HS2 is going to communicate with Councillors (in their community leader roles) and residents in Bucks and for Committee Members to have an opportunity to identify further opportunities to ensure effective community engagement.	Edward Barlow, Head of Energy & Resources	Martin Tett, Leader Mark Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation Jackie Copcutt, HS2 Programme Lead Maddelyn Sutton, HS2 Ltd. Other HS2 representatives TBC
17 Sep 2019	The Willow Project Victim Support Service 1 year on	<p>Members will hear directly from the victim support service that was set up following the conclusion of the Committee's Modern Slavery Inquiry. The Committee recommended that Members receive an update on the service once it had been embedded.</p> <p>The Service will have been in operation for a year and Members will consider the impact it has had locally, the number of victims it has supported, how it has been working and the key challenges and opportunities going forward.</p>	Kama Wager, Committee Adviser	Nicola Bell, Manager of the Willow Project
17 Sep 2019	Work Programme		Kama Wager, Committee Adviser	Committee Members

SCRUTINY INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME – OVERVIEW OF SELECT COMMITTEE LIVE INQUIRIES

Inquiry Title	Inquiry Chairman	Lead Officer	Mar 19	Apr 19	May 19	June 19	July 19
Pre-decision Scrutiny – Short Breaks	Steven Lambert	Liz Wheaton					



Scoping



Evidence gathering



Committee Approval Report



Cabinet / NHS

For further information on scrutiny work please contact Kelly Sutherland, Committee & Governance Manager on 01296 382343.
www.buckscc.gov.uk/democracy. Last updated on 25 June 2019

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Report to Cabinet

Title:	A progress update and review of Household Recycling Centre (HRC) service changes and the future operation of Burnham Household Recycling Centre
Date:	9 September 2019
Date can be implemented:	17 September 2019
Author:	Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment
Contact officer:	Neil Gibson, Executive Director, TEE
Local members affected:	All
Portfolio areas affected:	All

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Summary

Changes agreed by Cabinet on 7th January 2019 to Buckinghamshire County Council's (the Council) Household Recycling Centre (HRC) service were introduced on 1st April 2019. One of the decisions made was to agree that a final decision be made on Burnham HRC in September, following a detailed financial appraisal of the other savings implemented on 1st April 2019.

The financial savings of the HRC changes to date are currently below the expected levels, due to lower than anticipated income levels from waste charging. However, income levels and savings are expected to be delivered in the medium to long term and as such are deemed to be low risk.

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to:

- 1. Keep Burnham HRC open and to continue to operate it on 5 days a week, with closing days being Wednesdays and Thursdays.**

This report seeks to:

- summarise the current performance of Buckinghamshire's Household Recycling Centres since the service changes were implemented from 1st April 2019.
- obtain a decision for the future operation of Burnham Household Recycling Centre (HRC) post 30th September 2019 based on the summary of financial performance.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet AGREE to keep Burnham HRC open and continue to operate it 5 days a week, with closing days being Wednesdays and Thursdays.

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

1. The HRC service supports the Council's Strategic Plan to 'Ensure Buckinghamshire is Thriving and Attractive'.
2. The Council's HRC service is provided under s.51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA 1990). Since 1st April 2019 the HRC service consists of nine HRC sites¹.
3. **Since 1st April 2019 the HRC service has been changed to include charging for non-household waste, weekday closures and a permanent site closure.**
 - 3.1. The changes to weekday opening at three sites² and the permanent closure of the site at Bledlow have been implemented (from 1st April 2019) and the associated savings are being realised. Reports from sites show that most residents are aware of the changes and the vast majority of residents are not visiting sites in error when they are closed.
 - 3.2. The introduction of charges for non-household waste has been implemented across all sites. There has been an increase in enquiries and complaints but it has been much less than expected and is being managed effectively. Residents are making

¹ Amersham, Aston Clinton, Aylesbury (Rabans Lane), Beaconsfield, Buckingham, Burnham, Chesham, High Heavens and Langley.

² Aylesbury (Rabans Lane), Burnham and Chesham – closed on Wednesdays and Thursdays

card based payments (no cash is taken). Staff at the HRCs are managing and administering the service changes.

3.3. As a result of the implementation of the charging scheme there has been a slight reduction in the overall recycling performance for the HRCs from 75% to 73%. This reduction was expected as the materials that are now charged for contribute to the recycling performance of the HRC network. The drop in recycling performance is however, less than expected and the current HRC recycling performance is still high being in excess of 70% and the diversion from landfill remains very high, exceeding 99%.

4. **HRC related feedback: (for further details see Appendix 1)**

4.1. During April to July 2019, compared to April to July 2018:

- Complaints rose from 11 to 20 (with the main increase due to quality of service);
- Customer Service Centre waste related calls increased by 11.5%³;
- Freedom of Information requests relating to the HRC service increased from 5 to 17.

During April to July 2019, the Waste Strategy mailbox received a total of 222⁴ HRC specific emails (76 in April, 54 in May, 48 in June and 44 in July) and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment received a total of 34 specific HRC enquiries directly through email during the same period.

5. **Fly tipping (for further details see Appendix 1)**

5.1. During the public consultation and following the Cabinet decision, significant concerns were raised by residents and other stakeholders on possible risks related to an increase in fly tipping.

5.2. Current data on fly tipping incidents in Buckinghamshire shows no correlation and / or impact on fly tipping incidents due to changes at the HRCs.

5.3. This is in line with evidence from other authorities who have previously implemented similar changes. The additional mitigation measures related to prevention and investigation work are continuing to reduce associated fly tipping risks wherever possible. Furthermore, of the fly tipping prosecutions in Buckinghamshire, 64.1% are related to commercial waste and not waste that would normally come to HRCs. This

³ waste related calls accounted for **3.9%** of all calls to the Customer Service Centre in July 2019.

⁴ A total of 261 HRC specific emails were received between January and July 2019.

further demonstrates there are no linkages between HRC changes and the risks associated with an increase in fly tipping.

- Buckinghamshire has a very high success rate in successfully prosecuting fly tippers. In August 2018, the Waste Partnership launched the Hertfordshire campaign, “SCRAP fly tipping” in Buckinghamshire (branding kindly shared without charge by the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership). Fly tipping levels have fallen consistently in Bucks following that launch – a fall in fly tipping of over 11% from 2017/18 data).

5.4. Fly tipping reporting from April to July 2018 compared to April to July 2019:

- Overall there were fewer clearances of fly tipping reported by the District Councils in April-July 2019 (920) than were reported in April-July 2018 (938), 18 fewer compared to the same period the previous year.
- The Council does not believe that this data supports any link between changes introduced at HRCs and increases in fly tipping.

5.5. Nevertheless the situation will continue to be monitored, adjusting any fly tipping enforcement activities as necessary.

5.6. An interim BCC Waste Enforcement Officer has been appointed (as indicated in the Cabinet paper in January 2019), with a particular remit to investigate and monitor the implementation of the HRC service changes and the Council’s Waste Access and Acceptance Policy (WAAP). There is a close working relationship between this Officer and with the Council’s existing fly tipping Enforcement team to enhance and bolster fly tipping enforcement activities.

6. **Other indicators – commercial skip hire companies and skip permit requests (for more detail see Appendix 1)**

6.1. Anecdotal feedback obtained so far from local skip hire companies is that there has been no significant change in the number of skips being hired compared to the previous year. However, one company had noticed an increase in trade vehicle waste since HRC changes were introduced it is therefore reasonable to assume legitimate alternatives routes are being sought by potential commercial users.

6.2. Skip permits issued by Transport for Bucks have increased by 86% during April-July 2019 (52 issued) compared to the same period in April-July 2018, when 28 were issued. It is therefore reasonable to assume legitimate alternatives are being sought for specific waste streams.

7. Financial analysis post HRC changes

- 7.1. The financial analysis considers the changes to HRC service and the impacts associated with these changes, including: less waste being brought to all HRCs; waste displaced to different HRCs across the network (differing transport and specific site operating costs); amount of non-household waste charged for; weekday closures; and permanent site closure.
- 7.2. The financial savings of the HRC changes to date are currently below the anticipated levels.
- 7.3. Table 1 shows initial indicative / projected net savings position using data from the first four months of HRC performance plus projected impact of the changes, including the impact of the additional capital investment.

The capital investment in plant and vehicles in 2019/20, per the Budget Amendments to the Approved Capital Programme decision published 19/03/2019, means that the revenue pressure will decrease. This decrease in revenue pressure is due to reduced operating and maintenance costs related to vehicles and mobile compaction equipment.

- 7.4. Table 1 Financial implications of maintaining a 9 site HRC service

Financial assessment of HRC service changes as implemented on 1 st April 2019	2019/20 Year 1		2020/21 Year 2	
Service model changes including: Charging and avoided costs for Non-household Waste, closure of Bledlow Ridge HRC, reduced opening days for Aylesbury, Burnham and Chesham as well service contract costs.	£1,216k to £1,365k		£1,237k to £1,507k	
Target savings	£1,570k		£1,303k	
Do measures achieve the annual savings needed to enable Burnham HRC to remain open?	Yes	No ✓	Yes ✓	No
Total Opportunity/Risk Range (per annum)	-£354k to -£205k		-£66k to £204k	
Financial risk to the Authority in achieving the necessary savings as a result of waste volumetrics (customer behaviour, market conditions)	LOW		LOW	

The table also shows an increase in charges and avoided costs in future years. It is predicted that the income from charging will increase whilst the avoided costs

decreases, this is in line with evidence from other local authorities who have previously implemented similar changes.

7.5. Income from charging for non-household waste

During the first four months since implementation, income from charging for non-household waste has been lower than projected figures. This is possibly due to a significant increase in the amount of waste entering the network prior to the chargeable scheme being introduced in March⁵ (a 50% increase compared to March 2018). Due to the high increase in waste volumes during March 2019, it is assumed customers have undertaken clearances before the changes came into effect. The communications campaign was highly successful and this increase in March demonstrates that residents were aware of the service changes being implemented from the 1st April.

7.6. Behavioural Change

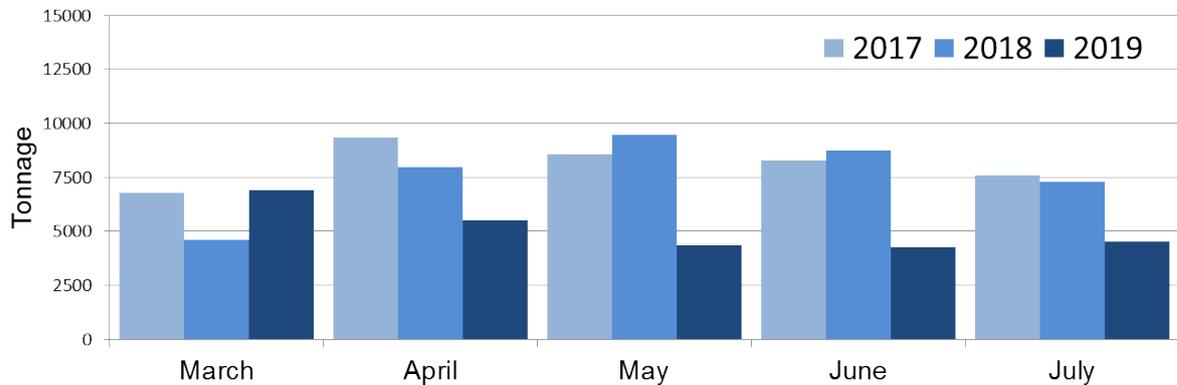
Part of the impact of charging was an expected behavioural change, where a proportion of non-household waste is no longer being presented by users of the HRCs. This includes a reduction in the amount of commercial waste being disposed of at the HRC's, which may have previously been presented illegitimately as household waste. The reduction in waste inputs is showing across nearly all waste streams at all HRCs, with a particularly large drop in the amount of rubble and wood being disposed of. There is no evidence to support the waste has moved into different collection systems waste volumes have decreased and/or within expectations from kerbside collection systems. The savings from this reduction supports the financial savings anticipated by the changes.

⁵ HRC tonnage increased by over 2,300 tonnes to 6,923 tonnes.

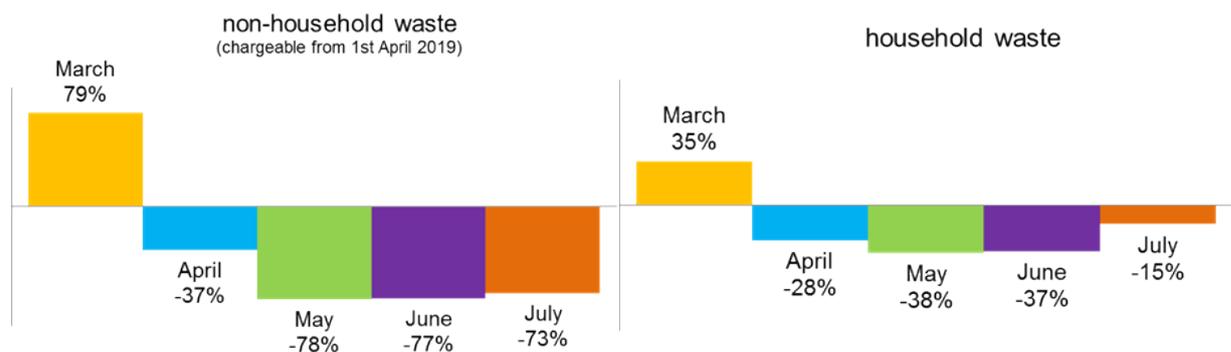
7.7 Waste tonnage across all HRC sites compared to previous years

Please note: In the event of any waste volume data changing these changes will be reported at the Cabinet meeting on 9th September 2019.

Historical total HRC waste tonnage throughput from March, April, May, June and July is shown below:



HRC household and non-household waste tonnage has declined since 1st April 2019. March to July 2018 compared to March to July 2019:



7.8 The financial savings of the HRC changes to date are currently below the anticipated levels, due to lower than anticipated income levels from waste charging. The charging income in the first year is forecast to be lower than expected; total opportunity range is between £550k and £615K. This is partially driven by the higher volume of waste delivered to the HRC's before the charging scheme was implemented. It is therefore anticipated that the income levels will rise in future months and years, meaning this is only a short term pressure. To finance this short term pressure, a ring-fenced waste reserve will be used that was created to cover essential costs of this nature. There is a greater benefit from avoided cost where the waste has not been presented through the HRC network. Income levels and savings

are expected to be delivered in the medium to long term and as such are deemed to be low risk.

- 7.9 The financial savings in the second and subsequent years is expected to increase to close to or exceeding the savings target for the 9 site model (see Table 1 above). This has been analysed using the first 4 months of up to date data.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

8. **Decide to close Burnham permanently** – continue with the decision to close *Burnham HRC* (from 30th September 2019). This option is not recommended, as the financial analysis indicates that the future years' savings target could be met with a 9 site model and Burnham is considered to be a continuing strategic asset to support future performance of the HRC service.
9. **Delay the decision to close Burnham permanently** – the Council could *delay the closure of Burnham HRC until autumn 2020*⁶. This option is not recommended due, in part, to the length of delay which might require a new full public consultation and because of continued uncertainty for residents.

C. Resource implications

10. Based on four months of actual data and the assumed income for the remainder of the year 2019/20, the HRC performance is projected to slightly fall short of the savings target for year one 2019/20. It is, however, too early to assume that current performance will continue, although it would seem prudent to assume that income from the charging scheme is likely to increase as residents become accustomed with the scheme and realise that it provides a costs effective solution for the disposal of small amounts of non-household waste. In addition other local authorities who have implemented similar service changes have seen their waste volumes increase over time
11. With the income anticipated to continue to increase and coupled with savings from the other HRC service changes, including use of capital funds in the capital programme to deliver future revenue savings, the savings targets for subsequent years are on track to be achieved from 2020/21. The savings target for 2020/21 is £1,303k and the current financial analysis indicates there is a low risk that these

⁶ It is recommended that any deferral of the decision to close Burnham HRC permanently be scheduled until at least autumn 2020 in light of the Unitary Council formation.

savings will not be made. This analysis is based on assumptions and will be kept under review as part of normal budget monitoring.

12. Burnham HRC's annual net operational costs are c.£87k – this amount would be covered by the savings expected to be achieved as a result of the overall service changes.
13. Based on April 2019's figures, Burnham HRC would have a projected annual income of c.£31k (c.£56k of net operational costs are not covered by income from Burnham HRC).

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self-Assessment

14. The financial efficiencies achieved following the implementation of the service changes are enabling the Council to meet the identified financial pressures. The recommendation will provide a more acceptable balance between VfM and service provision levels compared with alternative options.

E. Legal implications

15. The Council's HRC service is provided under the EPA 1990. Section 51 requires the Council as a Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) to arrange for places to be provided at which residents may deposit household waste and for the disposal of any waste deposited.
16. The arrangements should secure that each place is:
 - situated within the area or so as to be reasonably accessible to persons resident in its area;
 - available at all reasonable times (including at least one period on the Saturday or following day or each week, except the 25th December or 1st January); and
 - available for the deposit of household waste free of charge by residents.
17. However, the arrangements may restrict the availability of specified places to specified descriptions of waste.
18. The WDA may also include arrangements for the HRCs provided under s.51 to be available for the deposit of household or other controlled waste by other persons on such terms as to payment (if any) as the authority determines.
19. Household waste is defined in the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012. Construction and demolition waste is defined as industrial waste, regardless of whether it is produced from domestic premises or not.

20. The Local Authorities (Prohibition of Charging Residents to Deposit Household Waste) Order 2015 prohibits WDAs from charging its own residents to enter into, or exit from, a HRC or deposit household waste at a HRC.
21. Legal implications have been fully considered in the previous report to Cabinet on 7th January 2019 on the Proposed Household Recycling Centre service changes.
22. There are no further legal implications arising specifically from this report.

F. Property implications

23. The Council's estate is managed through the Corporate Landlord function. Depending on the decision taken regarding the closure of Burnham, there could be an implication for the Council's Estate which will be considered separately. No benefit from the release of assets had been factored into the financial implications above.

G. Other implications/issues

24. The HRC service change implementation Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been reviewed and updated in light of the recommendation being made (see Appendix 2). The assessment concludes that the negative impact identified in the January 2019 report will be reduced if a decision is made to keep Burnham HRC open.

24.1. Positive impact

If Cabinet proceed as planned from the decision taken in January 2019 and close Burnham permanently from 30th September, then there is no change to the March 2019 statements in the January EqIA. However, if the decision by Cabinet on 9th September 2019 is to rescind and keep Burnham open for 5 days a week, then this will be a positive impact and does not require the impact assessment to be reviewed.

H. Feedback from Consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views

25. There has been no specific consultation since the changes were implemented. Information on customer contact since April 1st 2019 is set out in Appendix 1. The full consultation results were reported in the January 2019 report. The local member for Farnham Common and Burnham Beeches is supportive of the recommendation.

I. Communication issues

26. If a decision is made to keep Burnham HRC open there will be a communication campaign involving the following stakeholders:
 - Residents

- Parish, Town, District & County Councils and elected Members
- BCC Teams – Waste, Customer Services, Business Support, Communications, Libraries
- FCC Environment
- Local Media
- Bucks Business First
- Neighbouring Local Authorities

J. Progress Monitoring

27. If it is agreed that Burnham HRC should remain open after 30th September 2019 then the service will continue to monitor the entire HRC service and report progress through the Council's internal governance processes.

K. Review

28. The WAAP policy is in place and prices for the disposal of non-household waste will be reviewed annually and in line with legislation changes. The prices will be published on BCC website and available at all the HRC sites.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – HRC related feedback and performance

Appendix 2 – Household Recycling Centre Service Change Implementation – Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) – updated August 2019

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5pm on 6th September 2019. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343 or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

Appendix 1 – Performance and feedback of the HRC service

Every aspect of performance and feedback relating to the HRC service changes has been lower than expected and compared to other local authorities who had implemented similar changes at HRCs. At present all indications are that these are either back to business as usual or moving towards business as usual.



1. HRC related compliments and complaints Apr-Jul 2018 compared to Apr-Jul 2019

Complaints

20 total (**UP 9** from 11)

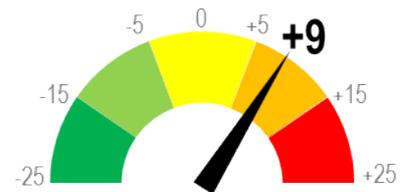
Quality of Service: UP 7

Staff behaviour: UP 2

Compliments

3 total (no change from 3)

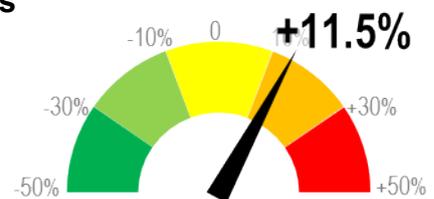
Staff behaviour: 3



2. Customer Service Centre: Waste related calls Apr-Jul 2018 compared to Apr-Jul 2019

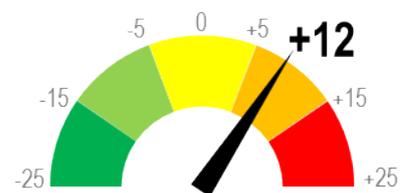
UP 11.5%

Note: all waste related calls accounted for 3.9% of all calls to the Customer Service Centre in July 2019



3. Freedom of Information requests Apr-Jul 2018 compared to Apr-Jul 2019

17 total (**UP 12** from 5)





4. Emails to: Waste Strategy mailbox

Apr-Jul 2019

HRC specific emails received: **222**

76 in April
54 in May
48 in June
44 in July

Top 3 themes during Apr-Jul 2019:

1. Charging – policy
2. Fly tipping concerns
3. Charging – item query



5. Emails to: Cabinet Member

Apr-Jul 2019

The number of HRC service change enquiries direct to Cabinet Member: **34**



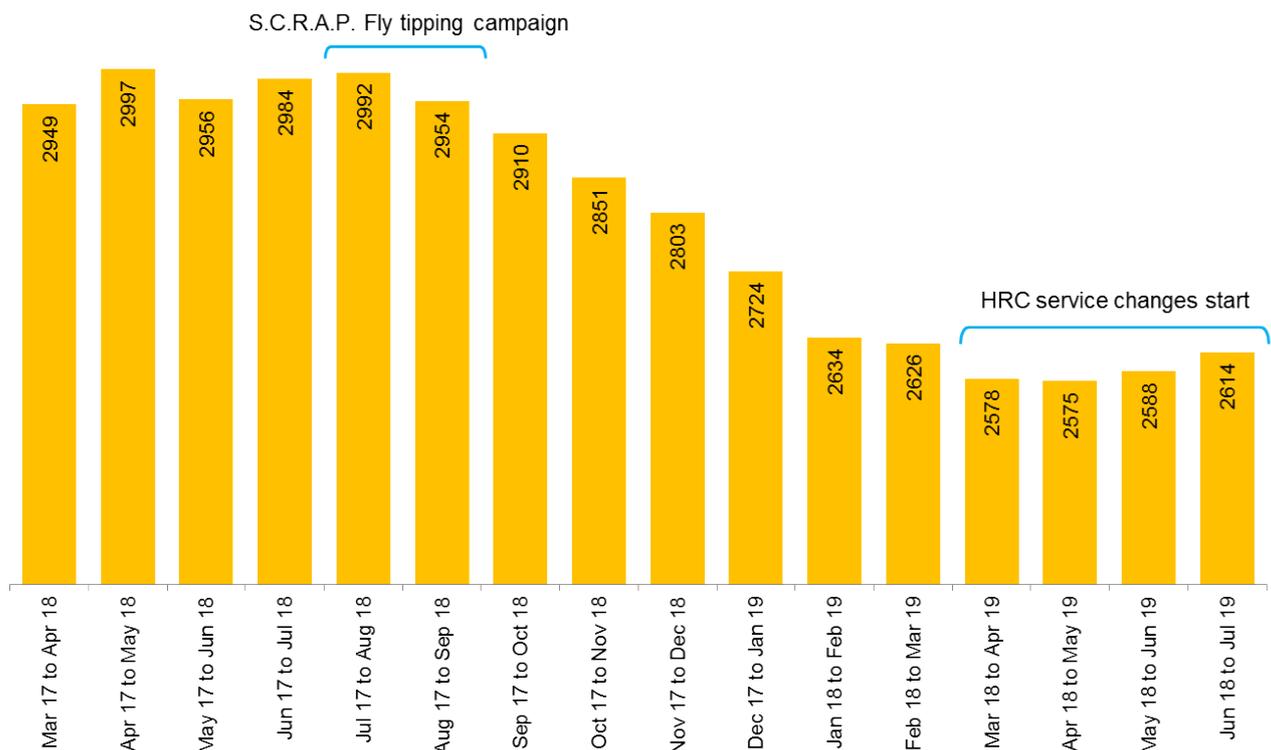
6. Fly tipping clearances

Apr-Jul 2019

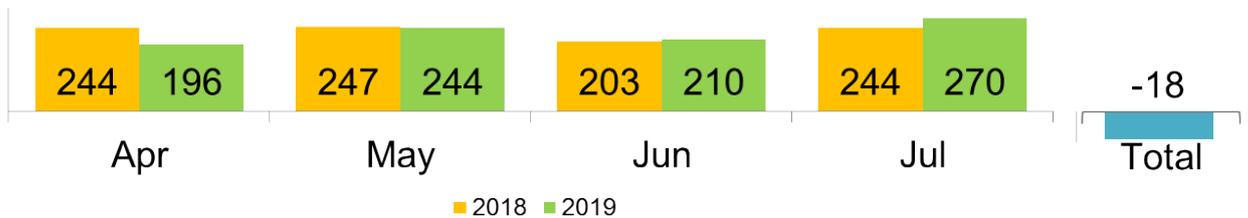
In August 2018, the Waste Partnership launched the Hertfordshire campaign, “SCRAP fly-tipping” in Buckinghamshire (branding kindly shared without charge by the Herts Waste Partnership). Fly-tipping levels have fallen in Bucks following that launch – a fall in fly-tipping of over 11% from 2017/18 data. The campaign impact reduces over time and as such it will be relaunched in September 2019

Annual Fly tipping clearances from public land (Data provided by all four District Councils)

The graph below shows the annual number of fly tip clearances on a rolling basis, each bar represents 12months data. This allows the wider trend to be analysed. Individual monthly data is provided in the later in the document.



Fly tipping clearances by District Councils – 2018 compared to 2019. Overall there were fewer clearances of fly-tipping reported by the District Councils in April-July 2019 (920) than were reported in April-July 2018 (938)



Enforcement performance

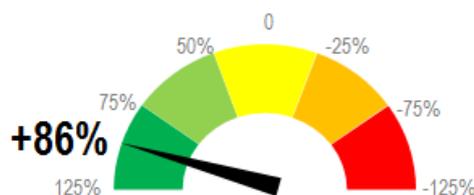
- Twenty nine fly-tipping convictions have been achieved county-wide in Bucks so far in 2019 – with a total fines, costs and compensation amounting to in excess of £57,000.
- Lower level cases (where admissions have been made by offenders) have been dealt with by a simple caution issued by BCC rather than being submitted for prosecution at court – 23 in total so far in 2019.



7. Skip hire company feedback & skip permits issued by Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB)

Verbal feedback obtained to date from local skip hire companies is that there has been no significant change in the number of skips being hired compared to the previous year. Anecdotally, one company had noticed an increase in trader vehicle waste since HRC changes were introduced.

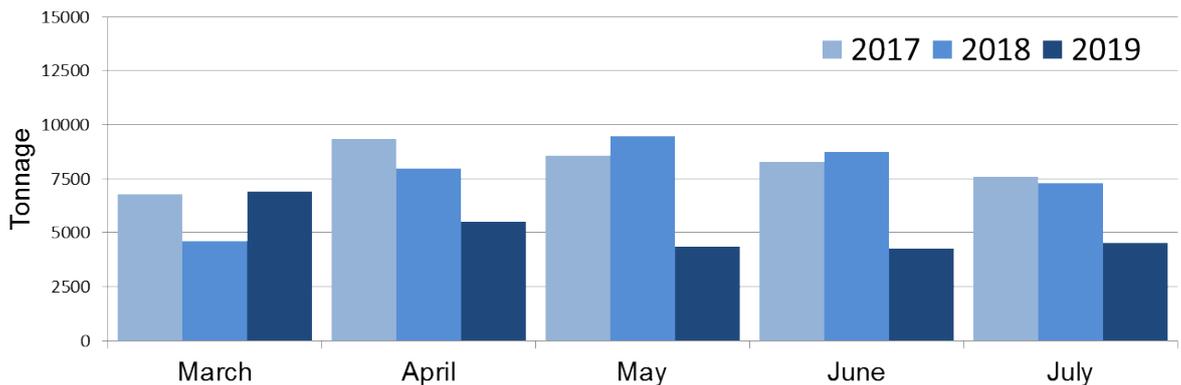
Skip permits issued by TfB increased by **86%**. During Apr-July 2019 52 skip permits were issued compared with 28 in Apr-July 2018.



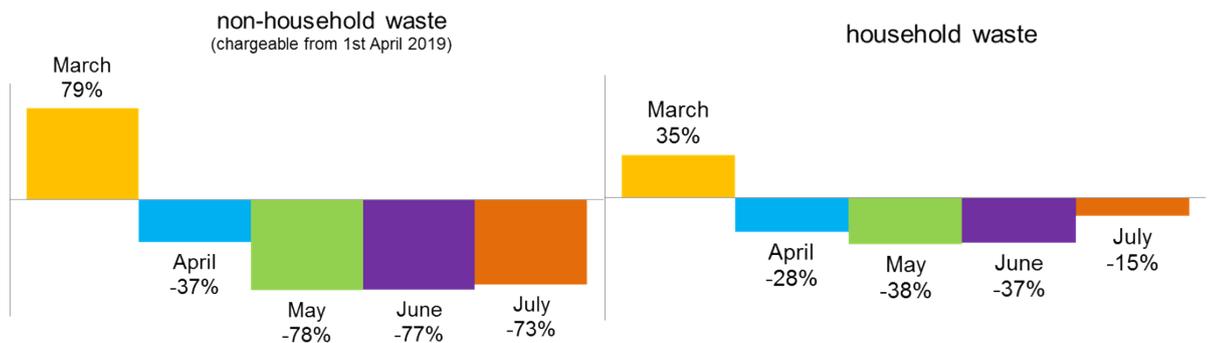


8. Tonnage variation across all HRC sites compared to previous years

Compared to previous year's total HRC tonnage has reduced. The reduction was higher than expected and experienced by other local authorities. Waste fluctuates and changes depending on several variables including (but not limited to) consumer choices, economic growth and seasonal changes including weather patterns. Waste volumes are expected to increase over future years as experienced by other authorities.



HRC household and non-household waste tonnage has declined since 1st April 2019 [March to July 2018 compared to March to July 2019]:



As a result of a very successful communications campaign advising residents of the changes there was a significant increase in waste deposited at HRCs in March. This means there is less waste being delivered through the HRC network, therefore reducing costs.

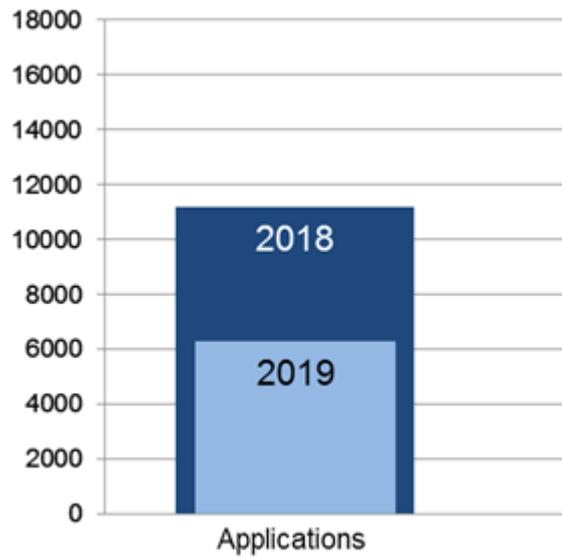


9. e-permits (for resident using commercial vehicles, trailer or asbestos)

Apr-Jul 2018 compared to Apr-Jul 2019

e-permit applications have **reduced** from 11,200 (Apr-Jul 2018) to 6,300 (Apr-Jul 2019)

Overall there is a reduction in e-permits– which are used for visitors using commercial type vehicles declaring they are bringing household waste. This is further evidence that there is a reduction in waste at HRCs and commercial vehicles entering the network, as charges are being applied for non-household waste. .



General, recyclable and DIY permits are a single vehicle permit. 31 days for first permit, 90 days for renewals.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Part 1: Project details

Project title	Household Recycling Centre Service change implementation
Is this a new or existing document/service?	Existing service
Responsible officer	Gurbaksh Badhan
Job title	Head of Waste Management
Contact phone number	01296 387678
Email	gbadhan@buckscc.gov.uk
Team	Waste Management
Service	Environment
Business Unit	Transport Economy Environment (TEE)
Date started	Initial assessment date – June 2018
Date completed & reviewed	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>Cabinet decision taken 07/01/19. Service changes implemented from 01/04/19.</p> <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>Review undertaken and assessment updated where appropriate. Cabinet decision due on 09/09/19.</p>

Part 2: Purpose and Objectives

2.1	What is the purpose of the project or change?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>The purpose of this project was to review the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) service and propose changes to help meet £1.25million savings target whilst minimising a reduction in the satisfaction rates experienced by residents.</p> <p>The review into the HRC incorporated options modelling, benchmarking and a consultation report.</p> <p>The EIA has been reviewed and updated to reflect the</p>
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Equality Impact Assessment

		<p>decisions taken by Cabinet on 7th January 2019, with implementation starting on 1st April 2019.</p> <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>This EIA has been reviewed in light of the recommendation being proposed to Cabinet on 9th September 2019 – namely to rescind the permanent closure of Burnham HRC, with the Burnham HRC continuing to operate on 5 days a week with closing days being Wednesdays and Thursdays.</p>
<p>2.2</p>	<p>What are the key objectives of the project or change?</p>	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>Service changes, as a result of the work completed on the HRC service review and subsequent Cabinet decision, were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charging for some types of waste (non household waste) at all sites (Buckinghamshire and non-Buckinghamshire residents) • Reduction from 7 to 5 days opening for initially 3 and then potentially 2 HRCs (with the closure of Burnham) • 2 HRC site closures (with Burnham closure deferred until September 2019 following a detailed financial appraisal of the other savings implemented from 1st April 2019) <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>The above HRC service changes were implemented from the 1st April 2019. The recommendation being proposed to Cabinet on 9th September 2019 is to rescind the permanent closure of Burnham HRC. The Burnham HRC will continue to operate on 5 days a week with closing days being Wednesdays and Thursdays. No other HRC service changes are being proposed.</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Which other functions, services or policies may be impacted?</p>	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Access and Acceptance Policy (WAAP) – The current policy sets out the guidelines for the Council and users of the service. It includes details of the permit system, restricted vehicles, and acceptable/non-acceptable waste types. WAAP has been updated as part of this service change. • The Customer Contact Centre and other contact channels into the Council will be impacted, as any changes to the HRC service could result in an increase of contact made with the Council. • The fly tipping enforcement team could be impacted if

Equality Impact Assessment

		<p>fly tipping incidents were to increase.</p> <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>Remains current in relation to all the HRC service changes. No update required.</p>
2.4	Who are the main stakeholders impacted by this project or change?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckinghamshire residents • FCC Environment (current service provider) • Buckinghamshire District Councils as Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs) <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>Remains current in relation to all HRC service changes. No update required.</p>
2.5	Which other stakeholders may be affected by this project or change?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-Buckinghamshire residents <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>Remains current in relation to all HRC service changes. No update required.</p>

Part 3: Data and Research

3.1	What data and research has been used to inform this assessment?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council undertakes annual HRC satisfaction surveys, which compiles data regarding 2,000 users each year. Key information includes the demographics of residents who use the HRCs, as well as their patterns of usage. • Traffic counter data helps identify the pattern of usage of HRCs, including the busiest hours and days. In advance of HRC service changes, approved by Cabinet on 7th January 2019, the following was carried out: • Options appraisal – technical summary and modelling methods. Spatial analysis of households and their nearest HRCs was also completed, using road network drive times to estimate journey time and postcodes to identify distance to nearest site. • HRC benchmarking data was compiled by APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence). Technical options modelling work was undertaken by Resource Futures and the project team, including consideration of HRC site capacity and infrastructure limitations. • Pre-engagement work prior to a full public consultation
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Equality Impact Assessment

was completed by Ipsos MORI to understand residents' thoughts and ideas about possible future options. The work comprised of four discussion groups led by Ipsos MORI, an independent research company. Three groups were with residents who have used an HRC in the past 6 months and one group was with residents who have not used an HRC in the past 6 months. All groups contained a combination of residents from different district areas, with a mix of demographics including age, gender, ethnicity, disability and social grade.

- A formal public consultation commenced on 28th August 2018 and finished on 22nd October 2018, which sought resident's views on key options. It received over 6,000 responses and clearly recorded resident's opinions on likely impacts on any possible changes.
- **Consultation** – high level of engagement (see the Consultation Report – Appendix 1 of Cabinet Report).
Summary of findings:

1. **Site Closures and user/demographic analysis** – The most popular frequency of visits was monthly (37.8%); with 54.4% of respondents said they visited the sites monthly or less.

The map below shows the geographical spread of responses to the consultation. There were a significant amount of responses in the areas surrounding Bledlow and Burnham, highlighting the strength of feeling in those areas, shown in Figure 1 below

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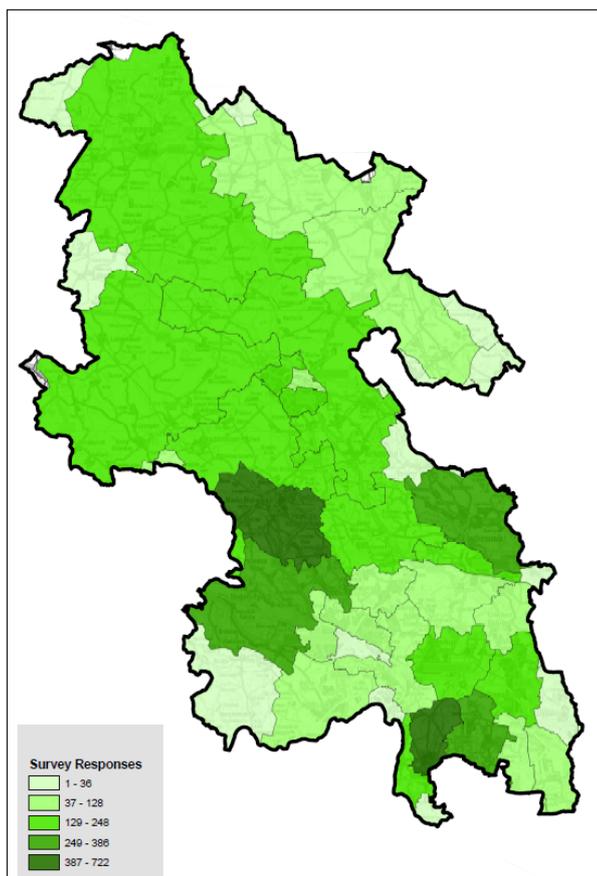


Figure 1 Geographical spread of consultation responses

2. **Week day site closures (up to three HRCs)** – No obvious weekday preference emerged, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday all registering between 5-6% of responses. The significant majority said that they did not mind which day (83%). Those selecting Tuesday or Thursday have chosen an option that would mean consecutive days for closure (Tuesday and Wednesday or Wednesday and Thursday). 10.4% selected either Tuesday or Thursday, compared to 6.1% of those selecting Wednesday. When analysing the comments of those who had selected a day, it was typically because it was the most convenient day for that individual (54.3%). There is some evidence that closing on consecutive days may be more supported.

- **Charging non-Buckinghamshire residents for using HRCs** - mixed views, some support that the Council should charge, whilst others feel HRCs are a universal service irrespective of administrative boundaries.

August 2019

The Council has prepared an HRC performance and financial appraisal of the implemented service changes to allow Cabinet to make its decision regarding Burnham HRC. Please

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		refer to the link to relevant documents at the end of this paper
3.2	Have any complaints on the grounds of discrimination been made in relation to this project?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>No. The public consultation received over 6,000 responses, which have been collated and were considered by decision makers.</p> <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>No. Since implementation in April 2019 no complaints on the grounds of discrimination have been made.</p>
3.3	Please provide evidence of these.	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>n/a</p> <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>n/a</p>
3.4	What <u>positive</u> impacts have been established through research findings, consultation and data analysis?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>Benchmarking data shows the current HRC service is cost effective.</p> <p>The service changes plan to deliver savings in a cost effective way that will benefit Buckinghamshire tax payers.</p> <p><u>August 2019</u></p> <p>If Cabinet proceed as planned from the decision taken in January 2019 and close Burnham permanently from 30th September, then there is no change to the March 2019 statements above. However, if the decision by Cabinet on 9th September 2019 is to rescind and keep Burnham open for 5 days a week, then this will be a positive impact and does not require the impact assessment to be reviewed</p>
3.5	What <u>negative</u> impacts have been established through research findings, consultation and data analysis?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly tipping perception - remains a key concern for residents. There is a strong belief that any changes to the HRC service will lead to an increase in fly tipping. Residents made clear that any increase in fly tipping is unacceptable and would be detrimental to both individuals and the wider environment. • Site Closures - Some residents will have to drive further to use their nearest HRC due the site closures. The Council estimates 10.8% of Buckinghamshire households are nearest to Bledlow and Burnham. This data is provided by measuring the distances from each postcode in Bucks to the nearest HRC. The data is not actual visits, but homes potentially impacted by site closures. A map detailing the drive times is given in the Cabinet Report.

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Number of visits to each site per annum by Buckinghamshire residents is estimated at c.66,000 at Bledlow and c.94,000 at Burnham (the sites at which closures are occurring).

Bledlow and Burnham travel times considered – The actual increase in travel times is individual to each visitor and visit, so cannot be realistically modelled. However, the travel times from Bledlow and Burnham HRCs to their nearest alternative have been estimated.

Travel time* from Bledlow HRC to the nearest alternative site (High Heavens) is 16-20 mins. Residents in Princes Risborough could travel to Aston Clinton which is an estimated travel time of 10-14 mins.

Travel time* from Burnham HRC to alternative sites, if Burnham was to close, Beaconsfield is 10-14 mins and Langley is 16-22 mins.

* Typical times – Average of Google estimated times, taken each day of the week at 10am and 2pm.

- **Week day site closures up to three HRCs** - Residents who use Rabans Lane (Aylesbury), Burnham and Chesham HRCs will not be able to visit during Wednesdays and Thursdays from the 1st April 2019. They will need to visit the nearest alternative site, or visit on another day.
- **Charging for some types of waste** – for all users of the HRC network. There will be an additional cost to residents disposing of certain types of waste. Waste types, such as plasterboard, rubble, soil, asbestos and car tyres will incur a cost to dispose of.
The annual surveys and public consultation show that most residents don't often bring the wastes that will be charged for. Around 60% only bring these items once or twice a year, and a further 25% never bring these items. Despite this, most residents see any charges as likely to lead to more fly tipping and a disincentive to "doing the right thing". Residents who were supportive of charges often cited charges as a way to reduce closures at HRCs, as closures were seen as the least favourable option.
The system for charging requires a system for electronic payments on site, which will help to minimise delays on site at the busiest periods.

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If Cabinet chooses to make the decision to keep nine sites open then there is a less negative impact due to Burnham HRC not being closed permanently.

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3.6	What additional information is needed to fill any gaps in knowledge about the potential impact of the project?	<p><u>March 2019</u></p> <p>The extensive annual survey data and the public consultation data shows that the largest group of HRC users are aged over 65 (28% of users), which is higher than the Buckinghamshire population (23% of residents aged over 65¹). The service offered is universal and as such the changes impact all users, but based on the level of usage, it appears that those over 65 are impacted more than other age groups. It is expected that users over 65 are more likely to visit during the week, than other age groups, and may be more affected by weekday closures. It must be noted that, responses in the consultation did highlight the perceived impact of site closures on older residents who may not feel comfortable travelling the extra distance. All changes are being proactively communicated and possible alternative options given, such as location of alternative sites.</p> <p>The Council already operates an electronic permit system for some vehicles (introduced in Autumn 2016). The Equalities Impact Assessment for e-permit implementation highlighted that it may negatively impact older residents.</p> <p>Since the introduction however, there is no evidence of the e-permit system impacting on any protected factor. Permit details and application are based on the Bucks CC website, with the Browse Aloud function, enabling universal access to the site. The Customer service team are also able to issue permits if needed (currently this is around 5 permits per month).</p> <p>On site electronic payment systems will require compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and additional signage.</p> <p>Implementation</p> <p>The Waste Access and Acceptance Policy has been revised and updated following the Cabinet decision. The Council's HRC Service provision is set out in the Council's HRC Waste Access and Acceptance Policy (WAAP). WAAP was introduced in 2006, revision undertaken in 2016 and revised in 2019.</p> <p>The policy details the following: opening days and hours;</p>
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¹ Figure created by discounting residents aged 0-15, who did not complete the consultation, to give an accurate comparison. Data used: <https://bbf.uk.com/news/buckinghamshires-demography-2016>

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Buckinghamshire HRC users; District, Town and Parish Councils; charity and other voluntary/non-registered organisations; non-Buckinghamshire households; traders/commercial users; access criteria; banned vehicles; waste electronic-permits (e-permits); types of e-permit waste; acceptance criteria; declaration and records.

The **policy's appendixes** include details relating to: re-use waste at BCC HRCs; general household waste at BCC HRCs; construction and demolition waste (non-household waste) at BCC HRCs; recycling waste at BCC HRCs; hazardous waste at BCC HRCs; customer feedback; complaints and complements at BCC HRCs; health and safety at BCC HRCs; charities and other voluntary/non-registered organisations at BCC HRCs; and access to sites on foot at BCC.

Policy updates to reflect the options of the HRC Service review changes which the Council will be taking forward:

- **Control of vehicles accessing HRCs** – remains
- **District Councils use of designated HRCs** –remains
- **Charging for some types of waste (*waste outside definition of household waste*) entering HRCs** – new
- **Controls and charging out-of-county** – updated
To be managed part through direct administrative arrangements with neighbouring local authorities and part through the charging of non-household waste.
- **Charities / Parish Council restrictions** – updated
- **Planned weekday closures for some sites** – new

Detailed communications plan has been devised as part of implementation delivery.

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Remains current in relation to all HRC service changes. No update required.

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Part 4: Testing the impact

Within this table, please indicate (✓) whether the project will have a positive, negative or neutral impact across the following nine protected factors and provide relevant comments. Both positive and negative impacts should be specified where this applies.

Note 1: Listing a negative outcome does not mean the project cannot continue.

Note 2: This is an opportunity to identify and address issues for improvement

		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	What evidence do you have for this?	Improvement Actions Required
4.1	Age		✓		<p>March 2019 There is some evidence from the results of the consultation that persons over 65 years are more likely to use the HRCs than other age groups and are more concerned about increased travel times compared to other respondents.</p> <p>August 2019 If the decision is made by Cabinet to keep Burnham open 5 days a week then this decision will have a positive impact</p>	Communications plan, including details of alternative sites (ongoing)
4.2	Disability			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.3	Gender			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.4	Marriage & Civil Partnership			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.5	Pregnancy, Maternity & Paternity			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.6	Race			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.7	Religion & Belief			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.8	Sexual Orientation			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.9	Transgender			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	
4.10	Carers*			✓	No evidence of impacts on this protected factor	

**someone who provides unpaid care for a family member or friend who is unable to cope without their support. This may be due to illness, disability, frailty, mental health problems or addiction*

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Part 5: Ongoing improvement monitoring

From the improvement actions identified in section 4, this table can be used for monitoring the progress made

5.1	Improvement Actions Required	Detail of progress made against the required improvements
	Communications Plan update – August 2019	<p>The EIA highlighted that the demographics of residents that use the HRCs is older than the Buckinghamshire average. As such, the HRC communications plan addresses the concern that older residents would need to drive to alternative sites. In addition to the wider, ongoing communication actions planned the following actions addressed the possible concerns raised in the EIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailored information was provided to Local Parish Councils, with specific details of alternative sites. Parish Councils are seen as a strong community link and “go to” point for local residents. • HRC site staff handed out business cards at the affected sites which listed the alternative site addresses. Around 40,000 cards were given out, before and after the 1st April implementation launch. • Radio adverts were produced and aired in the affected areas, highlighting the changes. • Adverts in eight popular shopping areas promoted the changes and alternative sites. • Eight local newspaper adverts were also used to promote the changes. <p>The overall communications used to promote the changes used more than 15 different methods of traditional and new media. The actions above are most likely to reach the affected audience, but, other actions must not be discounted as avenues that affected residents may access information.</p> <p>Delivery of the HRC service change communications plan remains ongoing and will be reviewed and adjusted accordingly by the service.</p>

Equality Impact Assessment

Part 5: Director Statement

I am fully aware of the duties required of Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) under the Equality Act 2010 and I have read our Equality Strategy. I am satisfied that this Equality Impact Assessment shows that we have made every possible effort to address any actual or potential unlawful discrimination.	Name Martin Dickman
	Signature 
	Date 21st March 2019 Reviewed Date 13th August 2019

Link to relevant documents:

- Revision of the Council's Waste Access and Acceptance Policy and Equalities Impact Assessment relating to the Household Recycling Centre service (March 2019) - can be found [here](#)

Report to Cabinet

Title:	Future of Thrift Farm
Date:	9 September 2019
Date can be implemented:	17 September 2018
Author:	Jane Bowie (Director of Integrated Commissioning)
Contact officer:	Susie Yapp (Programme Manager, Direct Care and Support Services)
Local members affected:	All
Portfolio areas affected:	Health and Wellbeing

For press enquiries concerning this report, please contact the media office on 01296 382444

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with: -

1. The findings from the consultation on the future options for Thrift Farm
2. The outcome of the evaluation of the business plans received from providers for future provision of the farm.

The details to support this paper are set out in Appendices 1-3 and as listed below:

- Appendix 1 – Consultation Findings Report
- Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix 3 – **Confidential** Evaluation Report

Recommendations

1. **To note the findings of the consultation report as set out in Appendix 1.**
2. **To seek approval for the proposed business plan from Provider A and for Thrift Farm to be transitioned to Provider A for ongoing provision and operation. This includes:**
 - a. **Adult day care provision**

- b. Use of the property as a farm park open to the public, café, retail shop, agricultural operations and the farmhouse**
- c. All associated land (on a full repair lease basis)**
- d. Additional proposals for use of the land (details of this are part of the confidential appendix)**

A. Narrative setting out the reasons for the decision

Background

1. Thrift Farm is a 52 acre farm owned and run by Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC). It sits close to the border of Milton Keynes in North Buckinghamshire.
2. Thrift Farm has been operating as a supported employment and day opportunities care farm for the past 40 years. It has predominantly supported adults with learning disabilities during this time.
3. Thrift Farm was transferred into Buckinghamshire Care Ltd (BCL) in 2013 along with various other BCC services e.g. day services; however, these were brought back in house in January 2017. The future direction and commissioning plans for these services, including Thrift Farm, were outlined in a Cabinet paper entitled 'Direct Care and Support Services' dated 23rd April 2018.
4. Like a number of existing County Council Adult Social Care services, Thrift Farm is a provision which is much cherished by those who attend it and the local community around it, however, there are a number of issues facing continued operation of the farm:
 - The current model of care does not always facilitate the level of move on to greater independence for people using the service
 - The farm requires considerable investment in order to meet ongoing health and safety requirements and to make it into a viable commercial venture
 - The service is operating in a difficult financial climate and is costing the Council more than it can afford
 - Most other local authorities have either closed this type of provision or transferred it out to be run by the voluntary/commercial sector that are better placed to provide the growth and investment to secure a strong future for the service.
5. Commissioners went to the market to identify a suitable alternative provider for the farm, including holding discussions with neighbouring authority Milton Keynes Council (MKC), on two previous occasions. Unfortunately, this did not result in any substantive alternative options for the farm. Following this a paper was presented to Cabinet in February 2019 outlining the following options:
 - Do nothing
 - Identify an alternative provider or providers to take over the adult social care operations and functions of the farm in a financially viable and sustainable way.
 - Decommission the adult social care service
6. Having considered all the options, officers asked Cabinet to agree to a six week consultation on the future of Thrift Farm, to include the options of decommissioning of the service and seeking views on any other viable and sustainable proposals.
7. This was approved by Cabinet with an amendment that the consultation is held for a minimum of eight weeks and final decision be brought back to Cabinet. Cabinet urged

officers to look at what other opportunities could be explored to ensure the farm was kept open whilst relieving the financial pressure on the County Council.

The Consultation Process

8. Consultation took place between 13 February 2019 and 9 April 2019.
9. A series of pre-engagement events took place from 21 – 24 January 2019 to inform service users, parents and carers of the upcoming paper.
10. The purpose of the consultation was to give people the opportunity to:
 - Share their views on the options for the farm
 - Suggest other ways the farm could continue to operate that the Council may not have considered
 - Help the Council to better understand what any changes could mean to those who use services at the farm
11. There were 10,416 engagements as part of the consultation process. These included:
 - 10,111 signatures across three petitions (6,889; 2,677; 545)
 - 152 survey responses received from customers (85), service users and their families (50) and others (17)
 - 37 attendees at service user focus groups
 - 17 video diary responses from service users
 - 37 attendees at the engagement meetings
 - 57 additional written responses
 - 5 phone calls
12. As part of the consultation, six public engagement meetings were held at Thrift Farm in addition to service user focus groups delivered on our behalf by the learning disability charity Talkback.
13. Promotion of the consultation and survey included:
 - Direct mail – letters sent directly to parents and carers affected.
 - Six public meetings held at Thrift Farm.
 - Five service user focus group meetings held by Talkback
 - Video feedback session for service users
 - Dedicated web pages and url – www.buckscouncil.gov.uk/thriftfarm (with direct link from the home page)
 - Links from the Thrift Farm website to the consultation webpages
 - Posters in Thrift Farm café
 - Press releases – distribution included members, partners and Parish Councils
 - Social media – Facebook, Twitter (including posting on online communities and on 'Save Thrift Farm')
 - Communications to all internal Council staff via the Council's newsletter
 - MP and Member briefings

Consultation Findings and Council Response

14. There was a constructive response to consultation, with many detailed comments and thoughts received. The Council has carefully considered all consultation feedback. Full detail can be found in the end of consultation report in Appendix 1. A summary of the key findings can be found below:

Consultation Finding	Response
<p>The majority of respondents would prefer Thrift Farm to continue under Buckinghamshire County Council.</p>	<p>The options appraisal identified that this is not a viable option for the Council to consider because of the costs to the council and therefore an alternative solution must be found.</p>
<p>Respondents were not opposed to an alternative provider if the option was between this and decommissioning the farm.</p>	<p>This is the Council's preferred position. A formal process was run between February and April 2019 to identify a provider simultaneously with the consultation. The business plan evaluation process analysed the submitted business plans against evaluation criteria of finance and quality. At the end of the business plan evaluation process, a preferred alternative provider was identified.</p>
<p>If Thrift Farm was to be run by a new provider, respondents were most concerned about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The future (82%) • The farm changing or feeling different (81%) • Changes to types of activities or work experience available (80%) • Changes to routine (98% in the service user group) 	<p>The new provider will be required to deliver a service to support all current as well as future service users (there will be no reduction in numbers of places). The process of the business plan evaluation has been robust and is designed to ensure that an appointed provider will continue to deliver quality adult social care services at the farm, in a sustainable financial environment, as well as developing new commercial opportunities in order to secure its long term future. The implication of any change will be considered in the context of each Buckinghamshire service user and a plan will be agreed with the service user and carer to manage their concerns as far as is practicable.</p>
<p>If Thrift Farm was to close, respondents were most concerned about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having nowhere else to go/'running out' of places (81%) • Finding activities (work experience) like those at Thrift Farm (73%) • Feeling unsure about the future (72%). 	<p>Buckinghamshire County Council has undertaken a rigorous process to ensure that the alternative provider will be able to meet the eligible needs of service users for care and support. All clients will be reviewed to ensure that the provision continues to meet their eligible needs. Commissioners continue to work with the voluntary and community sector across Buckinghamshire to develop the market and create a wider scope of alternative provision for service users to choose from should they wish.</p> <p>Non County Council clients would be supported by their own council to be assessed and seek alternative provision.</p>

15. There were several key points that were made during the consultation. A summary can be found below:

Point	Comment
Wellbeing	Thrift Farm has a significant impact on the overall wellbeing of its users giving them a feeling of self-worth and sense of belonging that they may not have previously had. It is feared that there will be regression in skills should the farm close or there be no suitable alternative. The loss of Thrift Farm for service users was likened to the feeling of bereavement.
Alternative Provision	<p>There was a strong feeling that alternative services to Thrift Farm had not been properly investigated and a concern that alternative provision would mean 'going back' to traditional day centre services.</p> <p>During the course of the consultation Halton Borough Council was cited as an example of good practice. The small unitary authority with approximately 120,000 population is quite different to Buckinghamshire but does provide a range of interesting and exciting day opportunities. Officers have made contact to understand more about the model.</p>
Service Model	Service users and carers did not agree that Thrift Farm uses an outdated care model. The current service does not consider how it supports the service users to gain employability skills and integrate with wider community.
Moving on	It was highlighted that the limited moving on from the service was not a result of not wanting to but, of there being limited alternative opportunities or willingness from employers to take on people with learning disabilities.
Location and transport	Thrift Farm does not offer the opportunity for service users to travel independently due to its rural location. However, it was felt other suitable alternatives were too far away or also not on public transport routes, therefore closing the farm would have little impact on transport costs.
Sustainable future at Thrift Farm	A number of potential providers or experts relating to different areas of work relevant to the farm highlighted that they would be willing to explore the possibility of submitting business plans for future operation of the farm.

16. Service user video – as part of the consultation process service users we able to take part in a video feedback session. 17 service users took part. This feedback has been consolidated into a video shared with Cabinet Members.

Business Plan Invitation

17. Alongside the consultation on the future of Thrift Farm an advert was placed on the Buckinghamshire Business Portal (www.supplybucksbusiness.org.uk) inviting interested providers to submit a business plan for future operation of the farm. Any organisation that came forward with suggestions or proposals prior to the advert going live was directed to the Portal to formally register interest if they wished to.
18. There was a positive response to this invitation and a number of viable proposals were received. The business plans submitted went through a rigorous formal evaluation process by a multi-disciplinary panel and a preferred provider, Provider A was identified. The feedback from the consultation has been taken into consideration when making the final recommendation to Cabinet.

Transferring the current service to Provider A is the preferred option.

B. Other options available, and their pros and cons

19. **Do nothing** – The consultation feedback highlights the strong preference for Buckinghamshire County Council to continue operation of Thrift Farm. The paper taken to Cabinet on 4 February highlighted this as an option but went on to explain the cost to the Council of continuing to operate the service and the lack of significant financial investment required to enable the service to generate sufficient income to make it a cost effective service. The feedback has been given careful consideration but, it remains the case that this would not be the recommended option for the future of Thrift Farm.
20. **Decommission adult social care services at Thrift Farm** – should the recommendation to transfer the operations at Thrift Farm to an alternative provider not be accepted by Cabinet, the remaining option is to decommission Thrift Farm. Feedback from the consultation clearly highlights the strong feeling against this option. Whilst this would cause disruption and considerable upset to service users, carers and the public, each service user would be entitled to a review or a comprehensive assessment of their needs, if these had changed and an alternative source of provision would be identified to meet their needs. This may not be in the same form as the provision currently received at Thrift Farm, but would have to meet their eligible care needs.

C. Resource implications

21. The Council believes that TUPE will apply if Thrift Farm is transferred to another provider. If decommissioning is the agreed option, a redundancy consultation would take place and the Council may incur costs associated with redundancy.
22. The part year 2019/20 savings outlined in the 4 February Cabinet report were anticipated to be £141,000 based on five month operation of the current service and took account of the cost of alternative provision for the Thrift service users who are funded by the County Council. However there have been some delays in the commissioning process, including extending the consultation and allowing time for the business plan evaluation to take place. This has meant that if implementation progresses as anticipated, this saving is now estimated to be in the region of £40,000 based on costs of operating the current service for 10 months. If the implementation of next steps is completed before the end of 2019/20, an annual saving of £270K can be expected for future years.
23. There will continue to be a cost per client for their service provision, either at Thrift Farm or an alternative provider.

D. Value for Money (VfM) Self-Assessment

24. Prior to the consultation the Council considered the value for money of the options as part of an options evaluation. There is a considerable operational cost to service delivery in addition to the cost of typical day care provision. The Thrift Farm offer represents an expensive day opportunity provision. Considering the comments raised in the consultation feedback, it is still considered to be the case that there are alternative services available for service users which offer better value for money.

E. Legal implications

25. There are statutory duties and principles that are relevant to this decision and those relevant are highlighted below:

26. **Care Act 2014** – provision of community care services for adults is governed by the Care Act 2014 and its associated guidance. The Care Act creates a single, consistent route to establishing an entitlement to public care and support for all adults with needs for care and support. It focuses on the needs of people rather than who is responsible for providing particular services. The Care Act 2014 puts the person at the centre of care planning. This works for all groups of people in all circumstances. It means people are to be dealt with consistently, irrespective of the type of service they need or where they receive it.

The County Council has a legal duty to meet an adult's 'eligible needs', subject to their financial circumstances. Their eligible needs are those that are determined during the assessment.

The local authority must determine whether the person is eligible for care and support. This is set out in regulations that set the national minimum threshold for eligibility, which will be consistent across England. The person will have eligible needs if they meet all of the following:

- they have care and support needs as a result of a physical or a mental condition
- because of those needs, they cannot achieve two or more of the outcomes – these are set out in full in the regulations but include peoples day to day outcomes such as being able to dress or wash themselves or maintaining personal relationships,
- as a result, there is a significant impact on their wellbeing

Where eligible needs are identified, the necessary provision to meet those needs must be set out in a care and support plan. Care plans should be kept under review and changes to the plan should follow a review of needs in most cases, and ensure that the care plan meets current need. Any changes to services currently identified as provision to meet eligible need should be considered in a review of the supported person's needs and be reflected in a revised care plan.

27. **Gunning principles** – When considering consultation, the Council should be aware of the principles set out in relevant case law:

R v Brent London Borough Council, ex parte Gunning, (1985) 84 LGR 168 identified what are known as the Gunning principles; these are that:

- Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage;
- The proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response;
- Adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and

- The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any statutory proposals.

These were specifically endorsed by Lord Wilson in *R (Moseley) v London Borough of Haringey* [2014] UKSC 56 and noted as a 'prescription for fairness'.

Gunning 1 - Consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage

The consultation posed three options are being considered for the future of Thrift Farm. These were;

- to continue under the council,
- to close
- to be run by another provider.

During the consultation consultees were asked a number of questions about the impact of proposals on them and the feedback has been reflected in the End of Consultation report which is an appendix to this paper.

No decisions have yet been made and the feedback from the consultation and feedback from the pre-consultation phase has been considered throughout. Indeed when Cabinet considered the paper on 4 February, they determined that Commissioners should run a consultation for a minimum of eight weeks, in the context of the level of public interest evident before the Cabinet had met on 4 February.

Gunning 2 - Sufficient information to allow for intelligent consideration and response must be provided

Service users, their parents and carers were alerted to the publication of the Cabinet paper on 4 February. They were invited by letter to two pre-consultation events on 21 and 23 January 2019, to advise them that Cabinet was being asked to agree to a formal consultation on the future of the farm. Officers attended to answer questions about the process.

Following Cabinet approval to progress to consultation, five, two hour engagement meetings were held, the proposals were discussed and stakeholders were invited to share their views and raise concerns.

Gunning 3 - Adequate time must be given for consideration and response

The consultation was run from 13 February to 9 April eight weeks. This was to ensure that enough time was given for the chosen methodology (survey) to be completed.

Gunning 4 - The product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account

This End of Consultation report has reflected back the messages obtained during the consultation and has been presented to Cabinet. During the course of the consultation, service users, supported by their families and carers, voiced anxiety that they may not be able to adequately reflect their views through the written word. This was addressed by making a film to capture their feedback with them, to ensure they could participate fully in the consultation process. This has been made to inform members who are making the decision and is not for publication.

The feedback from the pre-consultation and consultation has been carefully considered and has shaped the final recommendations captured within this paper.

28. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) legislation – As TUPE applies anyone who works at Thrift Farm, and whose sole or main purpose is to work on this service, they would be eligible to TUPE across to any new provider. The employees of the outgoing employer automatically become employees of the incoming employer at the point of transfer, carrying with them their continuous service from the outgoing employer, and should continue to enjoy the same terms and conditions of employment with the incoming employer. Neither provider can select who they TUPE across.

If an employee is dismissed either before or after a transfer and the sole or principal reason for the dismissal is the transfer, it will be automatically unfair. Employees who believe that their terms and conditions have been substantially changed to their detriment before or after a transfer have the right to terminate their employment and claim constructive unfair dismissal at a tribunal. TUPE classifies these types of resignations as dismissals.

The liabilities that lie with the Council (the Transferor) include:

- a) Disclosure of Employee Liability Information (referred to as ELI) and this includes:
 - the identity and age of the employees who will transfer
 - information contained in the written statement of those employees
 - details of any disciplinary action taken against an employee in the last two years
 - details of grievances raised by an employee in the last two years
 - instances of legal actions taken by employees against the outgoing employer in the last two years (any court or employment tribunal claims)
 - information regarding any collective agreements

This must be provided at least 28 days before the date of transfer.

- b) To consult with the employees, involving the trade unions, for a minimum of the five weeks, as agreed with UNISON.

The Transferee (whoever is successfully appointed) is obliged to advise the Transferor prior to the consultation meeting, of the measures they may be required to take in terms. These may be in terms of a change to payroll date for example.

The costs associated with any voluntary redundancy offers would usually fall to the County Council in this respect, unless this is otherwise negotiated with the supplier.

The County Council has a duty to divulge any legal action, disciplinaries or similar as part of the Employee Liability Information and as such the provider would want to indemnify themselves against any future costs on anything disclosed as part of this. However it would be very unusual to agree to any future liabilities post transfer that may be to do with the actions of the new provider.

29. A legal representative was present for the evaluation and modification of the business plans received to support a fair and legal process.

F. Property implications

30. As Thrift Farm is a Council owned property, it has been imperative that we work closely with colleagues in Property Services to work through the details and implications of the potential outcome for Thrift Farm.
31. Carter Jonas is the property consultant providing specialist advice on land and assets belonging to Buckinghamshire County Council. Representatives from Carter Jonas have been present in the evaluation of business plans to ensure there are no obvious implications which would impact any proposals being put forward.
32. A paper will be taken to Property Board with the outcome of this decision highlighting any implications for the Thrift Farm site.

G. Unitary Council

33. Thrift Farm sits within the geographical boundary of Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC). As AVDC does not provide Adult Social Care Services there was no option for joint working with the authority. AVDC would at present set the business rates for any future provider of Thrift Farm and/or provide any rate relief. They would also approve any future planning applications for use on the land.
34. Key personnel and Members with AVDC were notified of the intention to consult on the future of Thrift Farm.

H. Other implications/issues

35. Due to its proximity with the border of Milton Keynes, a large proportion of Thrift Farm service users are funded by Milton Keynes Council (MKC) (36%). Several discussions have been held with MKC since late 2017 regarding future options for Thrift Farm, including the potential for MKC to work jointly with Buckinghamshire County Council to secure a sustainable future for the farm. These conversations did not lead to a proposal from MKC to take over the running of Thrift Farm. Regular communications continue with MKC to ensure they are fully briefed on the progress being made and any impact it may have on their service users.
36. A review of Direct Care and Support Services including Thrift Farm, approved on 23 April 2018, is part of the wider Transformation Programme for adult social care. One element of the programme is to focus on reducing the number of people who are living with long term support needs by remodelling our services to ensure service users are enabled to achieve the maximum independence possible for them. It is key then that any future provision at Thrift Farm facilitates this.
37. S149 of the Equality Act (2010) requires public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to:
 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
38. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is set out in Appendix 2. Potential positive and negative impacts have been identified in regard to the protected characteristics. Key mitigations include ensuring the market is developed enough to

provide suitable alternative services to meet individual needs and to support service users to access other supported employment services. The needs of the carers supporting Thrift Farm service users must be considered as part of this.

39. Following a Cabinet decision, a staffing consultation will be required to take place with all staff affected.

I. Feedback from consultation, Local Area Forums and Local Member views

40. The feedback from the public consultation has been summarised earlier in this report.

41. Consideration has been given to three petitions relating to this decision:

- A petition signed by 6,889 residents, (at 15 May), entitled “*Save Thrift Farm*”
- A hardy copy version of the above petition signed by 545 residents entitled “*Thrift farm petition against closure: Thrift Farm at Whaddon needs your help*”
- A petition signed by 2,677 residents (at 15 May), entitled “*Save Thrift Farm - a vital community that helps so many people with additional needs*”

42. Members have been engaged and kept updated through briefings sent prior to and during the consultation. This includes a briefing sent to the Deputy Leader of MKC who is also the Cabinet member for Healthier and Stronger Communities and a letter sent to a local MP.

43. The Health and Social Care Select Committee has been kept informed.

44. As part of the consultation process all Members have had the opportunity to raise any issues directly with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing or officer team. This is in addition to the other engagement opportunities at Thrift Farm and through the opportunity to submit formal responses to the consultation survey.

45. Outside of Buckinghamshire County Council, responses were received from one Town Councillor and a local Parish Council.

46. In addition to the Member involvement to date, further involvement will follow a Cabinet decision and include:

- A written communication to all Members to inform them of the outcome of the Cabinet decision
- Ongoing updates to all Members about the service through the Cabinet Member’s Blue Book update to full Council.

J. Communication issues

47. As there are multiple services and stakeholders involved, communication will be tailored accordingly. A robust and thorough communications plan will be refreshed jointly with the Council’s communications team, commissioning team and Direct Care Services Operations Team.

K. Progress Monitoring

48. Depending on the Cabinet decision, the transition of Thrift Farm whether that be to another provider or for service decommissioning, will be monitored by Commissioners. The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing will receive regular updates on progress the Health and Social Care Select Committee as required.

49. Regular progress reports will also be produced as part of the wider Adult Social Care Transformation Programme.

L. Review

N/A

Background Papers

4 February 2019 – Decision taken to go out to consultation on the future of Thrift Farm
<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=11208>

Your questions and views

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.

If you have any views on this paper that you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Democratic Services Team by 5.00pm on 6 September 2019. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382343), or e-mail to democracy@buckscc.gov.uk

FUTURE OF THRIFT FARM

Consultation evaluation
report May 2019



Future of Thrift Farm: summary

The Council is delivering a significant adult social care transformation programme called Better Lives. It aims to promote independence and support service users to achieve identified outcomes. Better Lives also aims to use best practice and give value for money. In this context the Council is considering the future of Thrift Farm.

About Thrift Farm

Thrift Farm is a day opportunity and supported employment service for adults with a learning disability. It is also a popular visitor attraction. It has been operating for over 40 years.

Currently 66 service users attend the farm. More than half of the service users (39) come from Buckinghamshire. At times, almost half come from other authorities; most of these are from Milton Keynes Council.

Current length of provision ranges from eight months to 40 years. Most services users (48%) have been coming to the farm for 10 years or more.

Why we are consulting

Providing day opportunities and supported employment at Thrift Farm is more expensive than commissioning these services from other providers in the community. Even taking into account the cost of providing alternative provisions for Buckinghamshire service users currently using Thrift Farm (39), an annual saving of £270K could be expected.

The Council does not have the expertise and the level of capital investment that would be required to make Thrift Farm commercially viable. Other challenges for the Council include the location, the risks of working with machinery and animals and the risks of operating a visitor attraction within a farm environment.

Service users who could potentially move on and be more independent do not appear to be doing so. The Council wants to understand why this is.

The consultation

The Cabinet agreed to an eight week consultation on 4 February 2019. The consultation ran from the 13 February to 9 April. Three options have been proposed as part of the consultation. These are:

- Continue under the council.
- Decommission adult social care services at the farm.
- Be run by another provider.

During the consultation we asked:

- Do you have a viable proposal for services to continue at Thrift Farm?
- How might closure of the service affect you personally?
- How can we lessen any negative affect on you?
- What else do you think we should consider when taking the decision about the future of Thrift Farm?

Consultation responses

Engagement with the consultation was high in relation to the number of service users affected. The target number of responses for the questionnaire was exceeded. The number of people that took part is as follows:

- Questionnaire – 152
- Talkback service user focus groups – 37
- Engagement events – 37
- Correspondence – 62
- Video feedback – 17
- Petitions (signatures) – 10,111

A target was set that half of all questionnaire responses would be from service users and their families. This was not met, however was off-set by the high levels of engagement with Talkback focus groups and video feedback.

Conclusion

Running a thriving farm and visitor attraction requires special knowledge the Council does not have. Capital investment would be required to maintain and develop the farm to be commercially viable. It costs the Council much more to provide services at Thrift Farm than it would to buy them from providers. This means money saved could be used in other services where it is needed. People are firmly opposed to decommissioning services at Thrift Farm. They value the services they receive and fear a future without it. They have strong emotional feelings about the farm. Losing the farm or moving on could trigger bereavement like feelings. People using other services as well as Thrift Farm and would cope better with change.

People would prefer for the Council to continue running services at the farm. However, they feel an alternative provider is better than closing the farm.

There is concern that there is not enough alternative provision. Some people feel that there are no suitable alternatives. This is given as a reason why service users who may be able to, have not moved on. Location is both a barrier to accessing the service and developing greater independence. It prevents some service users from using public transport.

The Council believes that other charitable or commercial providers would be better placed to access improvement funds. The Council has actively sought to seek an alternative provider. Business plans have been submitted via the Buckinghamshire Business Portal. A report detailing these will be provided for the Cabinet to consider.

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Future of Thrift Farm consultation report

1.0 Purpose of this report



This report is a record of the Future of Thrift Farm consultation.

Its purpose is to:

- Describe the process used and what happened.
- Outline what people said and what this could mean.
- Reassure participants their views have been heard.
- Help with decision making*.

****It will be attached to the Cabinet report summarising this consultation along with the outcome of the invitation for providers to submit business plans for the future operation of Thrift Farm.***

This report contains information gathered during the consultation. This includes:

- A summary of questionnaire responses.
- An overview of themes that emerged during engagement events.
- Talkback focus groups and video feedback from service users.

The report is also a chance to recognise the effort made by everyone who took part in the consultation. Their feedback has given us valuable insight into the importance Thrift Farm holds for them. Thank you.

2.0 Background

2.1 About Thrift Farm

Thrift Farm is a day opportunity and supported employment service for adults with a learning disability. Owned by the Council, it sits in 52 acres close to our border with Milton Keynes. The farm has been providing services since the early 1980s and is also a popular visitor attraction. There are three main areas:

- Horticulture.
- Farm park and gift shop.
- Café.

Thrift Farm offers work-based and day opportunities. Service users can work across all areas of the farm to build their skills and independence. They are supported by skilled and specialist staff, helping them to learn about their chosen areas.



2.2 Management

Between April 2013 and December 2016, Thrift Farm was managed by Buckinghamshire Care Ltd* (BCL). During this time, work took place to improve its viability as a commercial visitor attraction. This involved considerable investment in the catering facilities and in marketing the farm.

The Council ended its contract with BCL and all BCL services, including Thrift Farm, were brought back into the Council in January 2017.

The budget for Thrift is £432,000 (2018/19). To be able to develop the farm into a viable commercial venture and

continue to support its service users, significant capital investment would be required. This would include:

- Further development to enable visitor growth e.g. indoor/bad weather spaces, larger car park and café.
- Increasing staff numbers to manage new ventures, as well as growth in service users and visitors.
- Capital improvements needed to maintain viability of the existing service e.g. additional handwashing facilities, maintenance of footbridges and walk ways.

Running a farm and visitor attraction requires specialist knowledge the Council does not have. There are no known bordering authorities with provisions combining adult social care services and Council owned farms locally.

****BCL was a Local Authority Trading Company***

2.3 Service user profile

Thrift Farm has 66 service users (February 2019). Of these:

- Nearly all (97%) are being supported because of a learning disability.
- 40% are from bordering local authority areas (see Figure 1).
- Most are male (74%).
- 52% are aged 18-35 14% are aged 55 or over.
- 86% are White British.

Figure 1: Thrift Farm service users (Feb 2019)

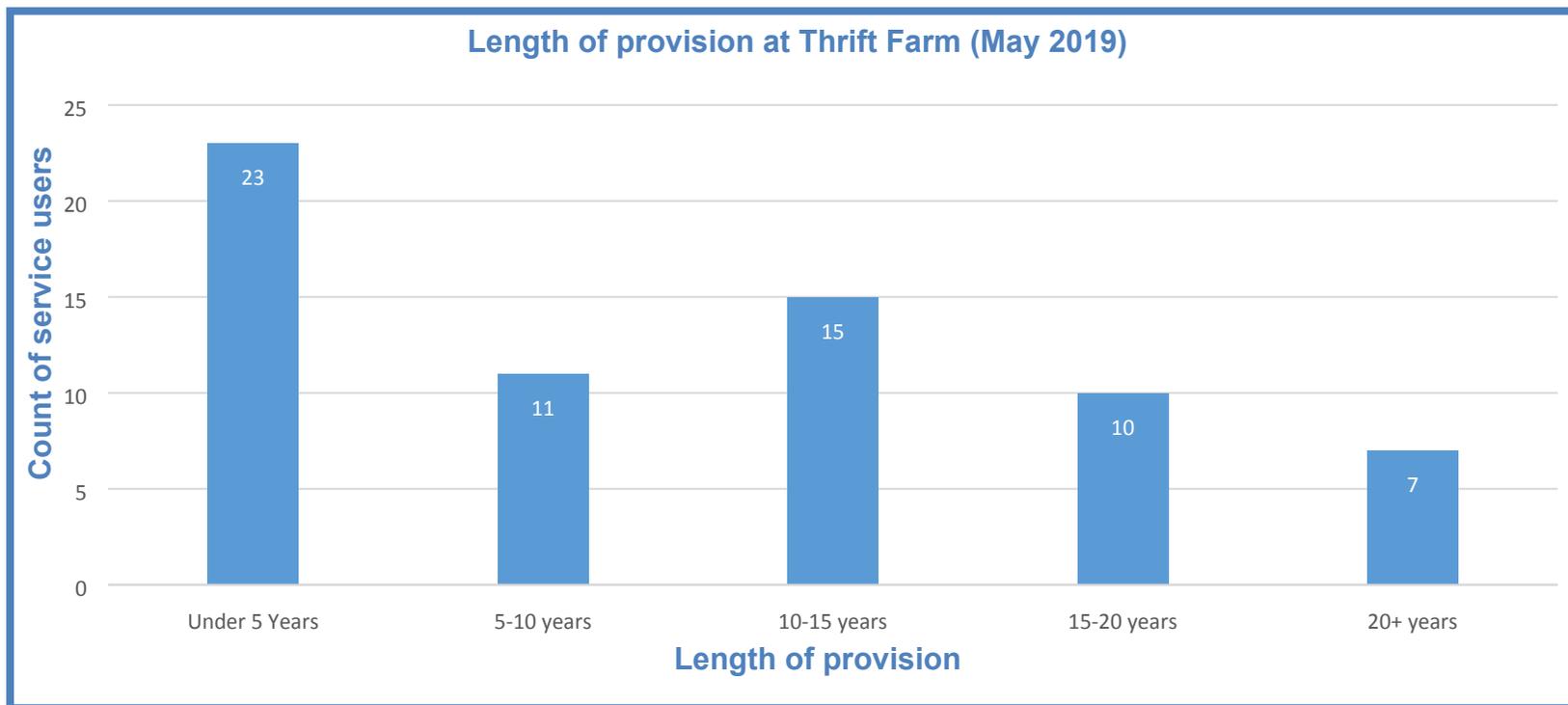
Local authority area	Number (%) of service users
Buckinghamshire	39 (60%)
Milton Keynes	24 (36%)
Bedfordshire	2 (3%)
Hertfordshire	1 (1%)
Total	66

2.4 How long people stay at Thrift Farm

The current length of provision per service user ranges from eight months to 40 years. Figure 2 shows:

- Most (48%) service users have been attending for 10 years or more.
- 35% have been attending for less than 5 years.
- 10% have been attending for more than 20 years.
- The average current length of provision is 13 years.

Figure 2: Current length of provision by number of service users



2.5 Cost of provision

Providing day opportunities and supported employment at Thrift Farm is more expensive than the other day opportunities and supported employment the Council currently commissions. This is because the Council has to pay all of the costs associated with running the provision, rather than the individual cost of commissioning provision for each service user.

Even taking into account the cost of providing alternative provisions for all Buckinghamshire Council service users currently using Thrift Farm (39), an annual saving of £270K could be expected.

2.6 The proposal for Thrift Farm

The Council is delivering a significant transformation programme, Better Lives, in adult social care. This aims to promote independence and ensure that services support users to achieve their identified outcomes, uses best practice and demonstrate best value for money. In this context the Council is considering the future of Thrift farm.

There are a number of challenges in relation to Thrift Farm including location, the risks of working with machinery and animals and the risks of operating a visitor attraction within a farm environment and financial viability. As such the Council has proposed three options for the future of services at Thrift Farm. These are to:

- Continue under the council.
- Decommission adult social care services at the farm.
- Be run by another provider.



The purpose of the consultation was to give people the opportunity to:

- Share their views on these options.
- Suggest others ideas the Council may not have considered.
- Help the Council to better understand what any changes could mean to those who use services at the farm.

It also provided the opportunity for people to put forward ideas about how the service can be sustainably shaped to meet the care and support needs of its service users. During the consultation we asked:

- If anyone has a viable proposal for services to continue at Thrift Farm. (These would be in the form of a business plan and submitted through the Buckinghamshire Business Portal).
- How might closure of the service affect you personally?
- How can we lessen any negative affect on you?
- What else do you think we should consider when taking the decision about the future of Thrift Farm?

3.0 Consultation process

Officers followed the Council's consultation guidance. This outlines clear processes and follows the 'Gunning principles'. The process used in this consultation had four stages:

1. Pre-consultation engagement and research.
2. Planning.
3. Consultation period (this part had two distinct, but connected parts):
 - Consultation on future of the farm.
 - An invitation to the market for business plans.
4. Evaluation and reporting.

Each stage was managed by the lead Commissioning Officer. The Consultation & Engagement Lead and a Senior Communications Officer supported the consultation process.

Regular meetings took place to plan activities and monitor progress. The Service Director for Integrated Commissioning liaised with Executive Director for Communities Health & Adult Social Care and the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Pre-consultation engagement and research

Request for Information (RFI)

After the transfer of BCL services to the Council, work began on looking at options for future operation of Thrift Farm. In late 2017 the County Council undertook a Request for Information (RFI) process. This asked the market for ideas and proposals on how Thrift Farm might be able to be run in the future. It was to see if there was a level of provider interest and what information or assurances they would require to submit a business plan.

Milton Keynes Council (MKC)

More than half of the service users come from Buckinghamshire but at times almost half come from other authorities with most coming from MKC. The County Council contacted MKC about the options for the future for Thrift Farm. Discussion took place with them between late 2017 and January 2019. This included emails, phone calls and meetings. MKC showed some initial interest in running the farm, but this did not develop into any substantive proposal.

Further invitation for business plans

Due to the nature of the services offered at Thrift Farm, it is critical that any future provider is able to operate a viable and sustainable model in the long term. The Council's previous approach to the market had not indicated a clear way forward. As a result, the recommendation was to advertise the opportunity on the Buckinghamshire Business Portal, (www.supplybucksbusiness.org.uk) to try to identify potential providers.

- **July 2018** - providers interested in taking over the farm and services were asked to submit a business plan. Some providers submitted business plans, however the proposals were not considered viable.

- **October 2018** – the process was repeated. This included officers following up on leads received from members. This too failed to find a suitable provider.

Political stakeholders

A briefing was sent to all members of Buckinghamshire County Council and other political stakeholder. Briefings included an invitation for further dialogue.

A letter was sent by the Cabinet Member for Communities Health and Adult Social Care to the Deputy Leader of Milton Keynes Council, who is also the Cabinet Member for Healthier and Stronger Communities. The purpose of the letter was to ensure MKC was aware of the proposal to consult on the future of Thrift Farm ahead of the publication of the Cabinet papers, and offer the opportunity for a dialogue.

Service users, parents, families, service users and staff

Meetings took place with parents, carers and staff of Thrift Farm between 21 and 24 January 2019. This was to tell them that a proposal to consult on the Future of Thrift Farm was going to Cabinet. The aim was two-fold:

- To give them advanced notice of when the Cabinet papers would be published, as well as how to raise any concerns with the County Council's Democratic Services Team, ahead of the meeting, in line with County Council process.
- To broadly discuss the proposed process and options before going to consultation (if agreed). In this way the consultation (if agreed) could be fine-tuned in line with the feedback received. For example feedback around communications meant the website was active prior to the consultation decision/start and links added to the Thrift Farm website.

As a result of these meetings, a number of stakeholders raised concerns with officers and members. Members were aware of the anxiety being voiced by stakeholders about the future of the farm. Consequently the proposed

consultation period was increased to eight weeks and a clear position stated that the Council would prefer an alternative provider to decommissioning.

4.2 Planning

In line with Council guidance a Consultation and Engagement Plan for the Future of Thrift Farm was developed. The plan set out:

- What was required from the consultation.
- Who we needed to consult with.
- How we would consult.
- Officer's responsibilities.

The aim of the plan was to find out what people thought about the proposal for the future of Thrift Farm and understand how they may be affected. We did this by:

- Identifying and making timely, appropriate contact with key stakeholders.
- Providing clear accessible information on the proposed plans.
- Putting suitable mechanisms in place for people to give their views and ask questions.

4.3 Consultation period: consultation on Thrift Farm

The eight week consultation started on 13 February 2019 and ended on 9 April 2019.

A six week period was originally proposed. However, Cabinet extended this to eight weeks at the time the decision to consult was made, to make sure as many people as possible had a chance to express their views.

What we asked

Throughout the consultation we asked people:

- Do you have a viable proposal for services to continue at Thrift Farm? (also see section 4.4)
- How might closure of the service affect you personally?
- How can we lessen any negative affect on you?
- What else do you think we should consider when taking the decision about the future of Thrift Farm?

How people gave their views

People could formally give their views as follows:

- **Questionnaire**

People were invited to give their views using an online questionnaire. This was made available on the Council's consultation portal, on www.buckscc.gov.uk/thrifffarm and the link publicised in all communications. Hard copies were made available (including copies in the Thrift Farm cafe). This method was chosen because of the anticipated large volume of responses, geographical reach of interested parties and nature of the questions being asked.

- **Engagement events**

Six drop-in sessions were held at Thrift Farm (see Figure 3). These were open to service users, their parents carers, family and friends, as well as customers (shop, café, farm park) and those who live close to the farm. These were held at various times of the day to maximise engagement. Officers from the Council were present at each engagement event to speak with the people attending the sessions. A printed fact sheet and hard copies of the questionnaire were available at drop-in sessions.

Figure 3: Drop-in session dates and times

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday 20 February	6pm-8pm	Thrift Farm
Friday 1 March 2019	2pm-4pm	Thrift Farm
Wednesday 13 March 2019	5pm-7pm	Thrift Farm
Wednesday 20 March 2019	4pm-6pm	Thrift Farm
Tuesday 2 April 2019*	10am-12pm	Thrift Farm

**This session was added at a later date to reflect the extended consultation period from six weeks to eight.*

- **Talkback focus groups**

Talkback, a local charity that specialises in supporting individuals with learning disabilities to communicate, held a series of focus groups. These provided service users with the opportunity to fully participate in the consultation process and to gain a better understanding of the proposed changes. Staff members were present to support clients to take part. Talkback’s overall objective was to ensure that the service user’s perspective on the future of Thrift Farm was recorded and heard.

- **Video feedback**

This was not part of the original engagement plan. It was evident in the engagement events and speaking to the service users that they were very passionate about Thrift Farm. They wanted ‘the Cabinet’ to come and hear their views. As it was not possible to bring the Cabinet to every meeting we offered them the opportunity to give their personal views on video.

- **Other**

All service users attending Thrift Farm were encouraged and helped to give their views. Some were supported by their parents/carers and staff to participate in the consultation process and this included signing the petitions, attending the engagement events, completing the survey and many other avenues to enable them to give their views.

Everyone had the opportunity to give their views by email, phone message or letter directly to the Adult Social Care team.

4.4 Consultation period: invitation to submit a business plan

The consultation provided another chance to invite people to submit a business plan to secure the future of Thrift Farm. This was the third time invitations had been offered. The consultation process not only opened up the invitation to a wider audience, but increased awareness of the invitation to submit business plans.

Business plans and any related questions could be submitted via the Buckinghamshire Business Portal (www.supplybucksbusiness.org.uk). Answers to non-confidential questions were visible to anyone who registered an interest in the invitation, regardless of whether they submitted a business plan.

The advert remained open from 13 February 2019 to 23 April 2019. The original closing date (12 April) was extended to allow time for a meeting with potential providers and any consequent clarification. The outcome of the invitation will be reported in the paper to be taken to Cabinet alongside this report.

4.5 Evaluation and reporting

Analysis and evaluation

When the consultation period ended (9 April 2019) all responses were reviewed and analysed. Analysis of survey responses was undertaken by the Council's Business Intelligence team. Feedback captured the feelings, views and thoughts of all the respondents and has enabled the Council to capture the recurring themes in this report.

Reporting and decisions

This report and the business plan evaluation are currently scheduled to be taken to Cabinet in September 2019. Cabinet will make a decision on the future of Thrift Farm. The papers* will be available on our website and the meeting is open to the public. When published the [papers will be available here](#).

**Please note some papers may be exempt from publication due to commercial or other sensitivity.*

5.0 Communications

The Council wanted to hear from farm service users, their parents, carers and families, as well as people who visit or live close to the farm. The aim was to ensure:

- Those affected were aware of the consultation
- People knew the process and how to give their views (or submit a business plan)
- People knew where to get further help and information

In order to reach as wide an audience as possible, a range of communications methods were used. Experienced officers were available to provide all stakeholders with the appropriate level of information. The key communication methods are outlined below:

- Direct mail – letters directly to parents and carers distributed.
- Dedicated web pages and url – www.buckscc.gov.uk/thriftfarm (with direct link from the home page)

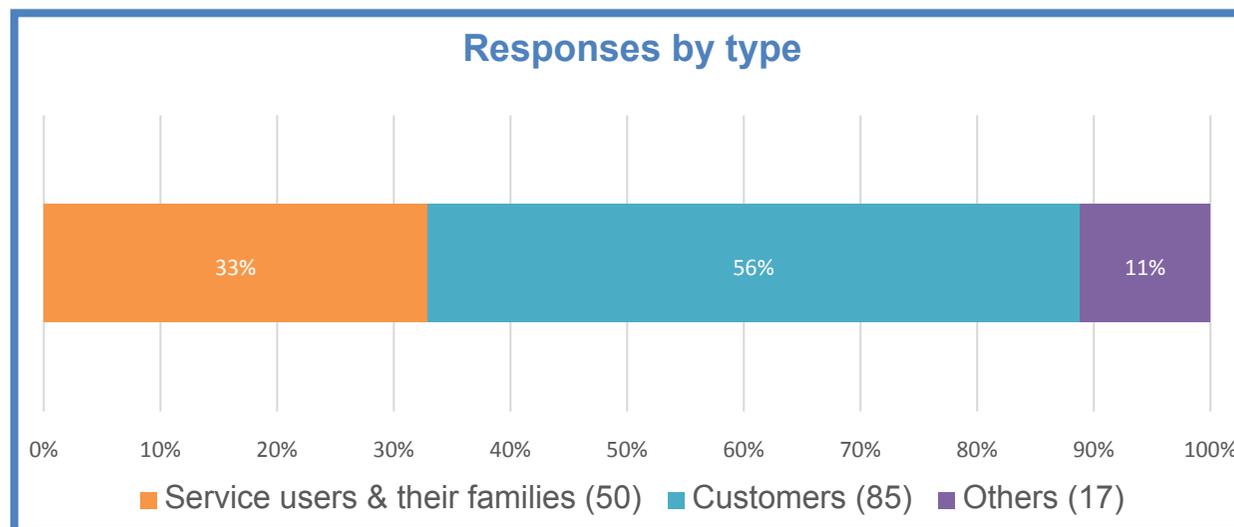
- Links from the Thrift Farm website to the consultation webpages
- Posters in Thrift Farm café.
- Press releases – distribution includes members, partners and Parish Councils.
- Social media – Facebook, Twitter (including posting on online communities and on ‘Save Thrift Farm’).
- MyBucks – newsletter
- MP and Member briefings

6.0 Summary of consultation response

6.1 Questionnaire responses

Overall 152 people completed the questionnaire. This was against a minimum target of 100 responses, of which 50% would be from service users and their families.

Figure47: Survey responders by type



Of the 152 respondents:

- 85 (56%) were from the 'customer' respondent group
- 50 (33%) were from the 'service user and their families' group
- 17 (11%) were from the 'other' group of respondents.

The target of 50% of all responses to be from the 'service user and their families' group was not achieved. However there are potential explanations for this:

- There were 17 video diary responses given by farm service users. This was in addition to 37 service users taking part in sessions held by Talkback. Some may have taken part in both.
- It is also possible that as a high number of parents/carers attended drop-in sessions and/or wrote detailed responses to the council via email or letter, that they did not then complete the survey in addition.
- Response rates increased following social media bursts, these by definition had a much wider and general reach which could explain the higher number of 'customers' or 'other'.

Where people live

Most respondents, 89 (59%), said that they lived in Buckinghamshire authority areas.

- 68 (45%) respondents lived within Aylesbury Vale
- 41 (27%) respondents lived in Milton Keynes.

Options for the Future of Thrift Farm

Of the three options proposed most people 121 (80%) would prefer the Council to continue to run Thrift Farm.

- 26 (17%) would prefer the farm to be run by a new provider
- 4 (3%) would prefer for the farm to close.

Of the 85 'service users and their families' who responded feelings were slightly different:

- 65 (76%) would prefer for Thrift Farm to be run by the Council.
- 20 (24%) would prefer an alternate provider.

Concerns about a new provider option

If Thrift Farm was run by a new provider, respondents were most concerned about:

- The future (82%)
- The farm changing or feeling different (81%)
- Changes to types of activities or work experience available (80%)

Nearly all (98%) of 'service users and their families' were concerned about changes to routine (98%), compared to all respondents (71%).

Concerns about the closure option

If Thrift Farm was to close, respondents were most concerned about:

- Having nowhere else to go/'running out' of places (81%)
- Finding activities (work experience) like those at Thrift Farm (73%)
- Feeling unsure about the future (72%).

Respondents were also asked what's most important to them:

- Finding a good home for the animals (94%)
- The location of alternative services (86%)
- Finding similar service/types of day activities (82%)

Free text comments

Respondents were invited to give additional comments in their own words on the future of Thrift Farm:

- 88 (58%) gave additional comments.
- 65 (74%) of these preferred not to see Thrift Farm close.

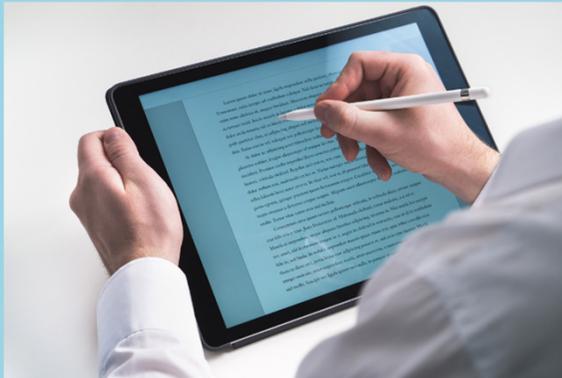
A common theme among respondents was that they felt Thrift Farm was unique with no comparable alternatives at this present time. This is reflected in the comments below:



"Thrift Farm has always been that rare thing, a place where people with a learning disability are genuinely usefully engaged in meaningful activities ... For it to close it feel like an insult to all those (staff and service users) who have been a part of it over the years."



"Thrift Farm is one of the few places I know that provides meaningful, real work, in a safe supported environment ... It is an important way of allowing the general public to appreciate just what people with learning difficulties can achieve."



"I cannot stress how beneficial Thrift farm has been for my nephew and what a good effect it has had on his sense of worth and wellbeing ... especially when he sees his siblings succeeding in their studying and working lives."



"Thrift Farm is a hugely valuable place where he gets real work experience that cannot currently be replicated anywhere else. Far from being old fashioned in its care model as the Councils report suggested - it is very forward thinking in the service it provides... Bucks should be proud of Thrift, cherish and maintain it."

How the Council can help

We asked how the Council could help if Thrift Farm was to close or be run by a new provider. Of the 152 respondents, 89 (59%) gave an answer. Of these:

- 43 (48%) felt there was currently no comparable work opportunities in the county.
- 29 (33%) felt the council could help by ensuring that the farm continues to run as it is.
- 21 (24%) felt Thrift Farm is unique because it provides invaluable opportunities and educates people.
- 18 (20%) felt the Council should make sure any new provider will be able to continue to support service users with the current and diverse range of activities.

6.2 Talkback focus groups

Talkback helps people with a learning disability and/or autism to speak up and have a voice. In total 37 (56%) of Thrift Farm service users took part in focus groups hosted by Talkback. One service user had an individual session. Views expressed included that the service users love working at Thrift Farm, that it provides them with emotional support and is a 'pillar' that supports their overall wellbeing. Service users were unhappy with the idea the farm might close. Key findings include:

- Half of the participants had been attending Thrift Farm for more than 10 years.
- All the service users said they loved working at the farm. Many said working at the farm boosts their self-esteem and happiness.
- A third of the clients stated that working at Thrift Farm is one of the 'pillars' that supports their overall wellbeing.
- 31 (85%) feel happy attending Thrift Farm, 14% excited, 11% in love with the farm and 3% are contented.
- Being at the farm is key to their overall happiness as the farm supports their needs, they take pride in the work they do and they feel safe at the farm.

The Talkback report shows that the idea of the loss of the farm triggered only negative feelings. Stating it would generate feelings akin to bereavement. Talkback felt that those attending at least one other day service will cope better, as they are more able to see a world beyond Thrift Farm. Findings include:

- Service users chose **'unhappy'** 21 (57%), **'angry'** 9 (24%), **'anxious'** 5 (14%), **'sad'** 5 (14%), **'disappointed'** 3 (8%), **'frightened'** 1 (3%) and **'bored'** 1 (3%) to describe their feelings about closure.
- Service users were concerned that they would lose contact with their Thrift Farm family. This included their social groups, staff and the animals. They felt the 'family' provides them with emotional support.
- They feared that if they can no longer attend Thrift Farm they will be bored, lonely and isolated. They felt they will have great difficulty in finding alternative work.

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6.3 Video feedback



The idea for service users to make a video came from feedback during the consultation, and was to further enable the service user voice to be heard. Thrift Farm service users were given support and the opportunity to give their views on the closure of Thrift Farm by video.

Filming took place at the farm on 2 April 2019. In total 17 service users took part. The filming was informal and on a one-to-one basis. In addition to their name service users were asked:

- How long have you worked at Thrift Farm?
- What do you do at Thrift Farm?

- What would you like to say to the Council?

This feedback has been edited into a short video for Cabinet members to view. To protect the confidentiality of service users it was agreed this would not be made public. However, feedback reflects findings from the Talkback focus groups, expressed in their own words. For example:

- All 17 service users were against Thrift Farm closing. They expressed positive feelings for the farm and staff.
- Service users felt they did real and meaningful work. Some had paid jobs at the farm.
- They felt that they would not get work or the same type of support elsewhere.
- Working outdoors was very important to some service users.
- They described a wide range of skills and experiences.
- They were concerned about the impact on themselves, their families and farm staff.

It is worth noting that although they may seem composed on screen, many became emotional during filming or afterwards. However no one wished to withdraw or stop filming. They felt pleased to have taken part.

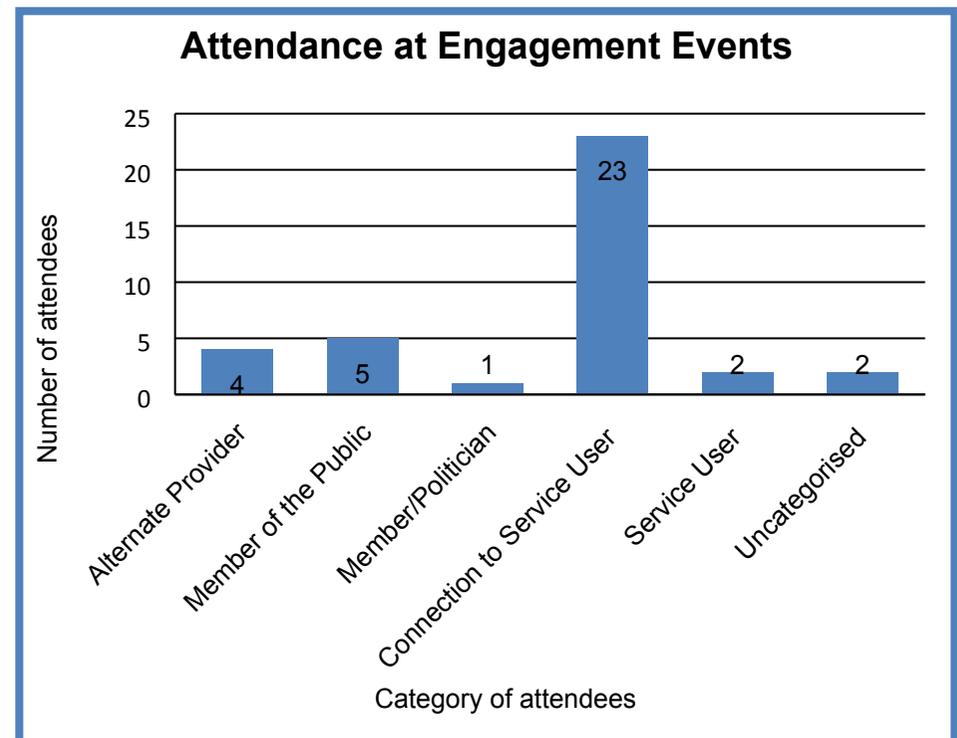
112

6.4 Engagement events

Figure 5: Attendance by type at engagement events

Five drop-in sessions were held at Thrift Farm between 20 February 2019 and 2 April 2019. In total 37 people attended these sessions. Most, 23 (62%) were connected to the service user e.g. parent or other family member (see Figure 5). Some people attended more than one session.

The feedback at each session was broadly similar. Many people used this opportunity to express the impact the



proposed options offered as part of the consultation were having on them. They were anxious about what the outcome of the consultation would be. Although they understood the financial challenges for the Council they were strongly against the closure of Thrift Farm.

Service users explained how they had been attending the farm for a long time. Many service users, carers and family members wanted assurance that Cabinet Members would learn about the level of distress and angst that they were experiencing at the possible closure of Thrift Farm.

Parents and carers expressed doubt that similar provision could be found. This was in terms of:

- **Availability** – would there be enough places.
- **Accessibility** – in terms of location and transport.
- **Market** – disbelief that the market actually contained similar supported work opportunities e.g. outdoor physical work.

6.5 Email, phone and letter responses

In total there were 62 individual responses via email, phone or letter (see Figure 6). The most frequently used method was email. A significant amount (74%) of communication was received before the start of the consultation. This can be attributed to pre-consultation engagement activity and related media coverage. Of these 18 (29%) from people were connected to a service user, while 14 (23%) came from potential providers. Once live, they were signposted to the Buckinghamshire Business Portal to formally register and submit a business plan if they wished.

Figure 7 shows how correspondents are connected to Thrift Farm. The low number of responses received during the actual consultation period can be explained by the correlating higher number of people using the methods detailed above.

Figure 6: Consultation correspondence by type.

Correspondence type	Pre-consultation (15 Jan – 12 Feb)	Consultation (13 Feb – 9 April)	Total
Email	37	12	49
Letter	4	4	8
Phone	5	0	5
Total	46	16	62

Figure 7: Consultation feedback by responder type.

Category of Response	Pre-consultation (15 Jan - 12 Feb)	Consultation (13 Feb – 9 April)	Total (62)
Connection to Service User	18	7	25
Alternate Provider	14	3	17
Uncategorised	6	3	9
Non-Service User	3	1	4
Internal	1	1	2

Other Council	1	1	2
Member/Politician	1	0	1
Press	1	0	1
Service User	1	0	1

6.6 Other responses

Petitions

Overall 10,111 signatures were received from three petitions – all were against any proposal to close Thrift Farm.

- The first was entitled **‘Save Thrift Farm’** was hosted on Avaaz. It was formally presented to the council on 21 February 2019 with 6,789 signatures. As the petition was presented prior to the closure of the consultation, signatures added after this date have been included. This petition raised 6,889 signatures (15 May 2019).
- A hard copy version of the above petition entitled **‘Thrift farm petition against closure: Thrift Farm at Whaddon needs your help’** was made available at Thrift Farm. In total 545 signatures were received, 344 from Thrift Farm, and the remainder from other community locations. This captured postcodes and most of the 545 signatures were from people living in Milton Keynes.
- A third petition hosted on Change.org asked people to sign up to: **“Save Thrift Farm – a vital community that helps so many people with additional needs.”** This collected a total of 2,677 signatures.

Letter from Buckinghamshire Disability Service (BuDS)

The Council received an official response to the consultation from BuDs, a user-led pan-disability charity. The

excerpt below is their own and summarises the views and perceptions expressed in the letter:

“BuDS feels it is premature and unambitious for the Council to be considering closure of Thrift Farm. There are many positive opportunities to both develop the service and diversify its funding which have not been explored. BuDS feels it would be a terrible disservice to learning-disabled people and their families and a catastrophic failure of service-provision to allow this service to disappear. More needs to be done to see how the Farm can be developed and changed, and we urge BCC to postpone any talk of closure until this has been tested.”

A formal response was issued, reiterating the purpose of consultation and that no decisions had yet been taken.

7.0 Common points

7.1 Overview

Regardless of their connection to Thrift Farm, people who responded to the consultation are mostly opposed to the closure of Thrift Farm. However, the consultation is not a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ vote, but about getting views or ideas on proposed options. Response show that there are strong, positive and often emotional views associated with the Thrift Farm. The reasons for this are varied. Several common themes have emerged from feedback which may help us to better understand why people feel this way.

7.2 Impact on wellbeing

Service users felt that Thrift Farm was critical to supporting their overall wellbeing. They linked this to feelings of happiness, sense of belonging and self-worth.

Carers saw many practical benefits that contributed to wellbeing, these were:

- Routine, stability and purpose.

- Learning new skills and sense of achievement
- Interaction with others
- Opportunity to be independent.

Some carers reported a marked improvement in their loved ones since attending Thrift Farm. They specifically mentioned improvements in mental health and confidence after getting a place at the farm.

Some carers fear regression in the skills that their loved ones have gained if Thrift Farm is closed and no comparable provision made available.

There are concerns that if no alternative service is provided service users will become bored, lonely and isolated.

Uncertainty about the future of their loved ones impacts on the wellbeing of carers and other family members.

7.3 Finding alternative provision

Carers and service users were concerned about what alternative provision was available. They felt the alternative services listed in the report have not been sufficiently investigated. They were concerned that alternative provision would mean 'going back' to traditional day centre services. Other concerns included finding provision where people could still work in the open air. For most people it is very important that any alternatives offer real work experience and opportunities to build support networks.

There was also some anxiety about the number of places that would be available and 'running' out of these.

If the farm was decommissioned, transition to alternative provision would need careful and sensitive handling.

7.4 Service model

Carers and services users and other stakeholders did not agree that Thrift Farm was operating an 'outdated' model as stated in the Cabinet report. They felt Thrift Farm was 'leading edge' and forward looking.

They felt that that the alternatives mentioned in the Cabinet report were 'outdated care models', making service users the passive recipients of 'leisure programmes'. They felt these had nothing to do with the world of work, improving employability skills or the integration of people with a learning disability with the wider community.

7.5 Moving on

Respondents felt that the Cabinet report was wrong in suggesting that Thrift Farm does not support service users to move on to increased independence. They also felt that this did not recognise that some service users would be unable to do so.

Service users and carers stated that they had gained skills and experience as a key part of moving into employment. However, they believe the problem of not moving on stems from a lack of suitable opportunities available from local employers.

A contributing factor is the degree of apprehension and distrust regarding services provided in the sector, particularly following events with BCL. This presents a barrier to service users moving on to other provision.

Some people accept that the Council does not have the expertise to run such a facility like Thrift Farm. Some people were also accepting that an organisation specialised in this may bring about long term security for the farm.

7.6 Location and transport

People felt that the other suitable alternatives are too far away for them or not on public transport routes.

Service users and carers felt that closing the farm would have little impact on transport costs as these would most likely be incurred accessing alternative provisions.

Until the individual's choice of alternative provision is known, savings on travel costs are unknown. However, because of its location, using Thrift Farm does not offer any opportunity to reduce travel costs. It also does not offer the opportunity for service users to travel independently. Moreover Thrift Farm is not reasonably accessible to Buckinghamshire County Council's service users living in areas south of Aylesbury Vale.

7.7 Sustainable future at Thrift Farm

One reason people were opposed to the option of closing Thrift Farm was because they feel a sustainable future could be secured. Some felt that the Council should be investing in it as a 'state of the art facility' that is copied across the country, rather than considering closure. Others discussed setting up a new entity to run Thrift Farm.

A number of potential providers advised that they would be willing to explore submitting business case proposals to take over the running of Thrift Farm.

Potential providers requested further information which included; health and safety of the farm, financial information and any other business related information. This would be used to make an informed decision about submitting a business plan.

8.0 Lessons learned

Timings

People felt that the invitation to the pre-consultation meeting was too short notice. The timing of this was linked to the Cabinet decision making process. The intention was to give people advance notice of when Cabinet papers would be published. As well as start a dialogue about the future of Thrift Farm. From the questions asked at the meeting and language used it was clear that many did not understand that:

- A decision to consult had not yet been taken.

- Options put forward were subject to consultation (if agreed).
- Officers genuinely wanted to engage with them.

This was vocalised by expressions of mistrust and that it was already a 'done deal'. This was also evidence through the number of enquires received before the decision to consult had been taken and the setting up of petitions to 'Save Thrift Farm'.

Pre-consultation engagement is an important part of the consultation process. It allows time for people to be involved in the full process, shaping the actual consultation. More work needs to be done in terms of ensuring stakeholders fully understand this and what to expect at each stage of the process.

Service users and their families are eager to know the outcome. A letter was sent to service users and their families on 17 May 2019, explaining the next steps. However, it is accepted this could have been sent closer to the end of the consultation period.

Milton Keynes Council (MKC)

Although there were several conversations held between the two Councils it would have been helpful to have worked more collaboratively on the consultation. A joint approach would have been reassuring for service users and their families, as well as potentially providing greater insight. In future steps will be taken to encourage more collaborative working.

Language used

Feedback from the consultation highlighted stakeholders felt the way Thrift Farm was represented within the Cabinet report did not reflect their understanding. This was particularly in relation to saying that service users do not 'move on' from the service. The report did not recognise clearly enough that the ability to 'move on' may be limited for some service users. It also did not explore other the reasons why people service users may not move on. This was

raised during pre-consultation and explored as part of the consultation and forms. It forms a significant part of this report and is evidence of the value of consultation.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 Consultation process

The consultation process and methods used have been successful in reaching a wide range of different stakeholders. This is evidenced by the number and type of responses received in each category (see Section 6).

Likewise the consultation process and methods used have been successful in engaging with the market and encouraging submission of business plans to run services at Thrift Farm.

The consultation process and methods used were flexible enough to respond to stakeholder needs, acknowledging where things could be improved in the future (see Section 8).

9.2 Preferred option

The consultation process has highlighted the strength of feeling against the potential decommissioning of day services at Thrift Farm. Responses via questionnaire, petition and events as well as correspondence received, shows high levels of support for retaining Thrift Farm.

The majority of respondents to the consultation would prefer that Thrift Farm continues to be operated by Buckinghamshire County Council. They feel that it is a unique facility that could be developed further. They also feel that it can play a role in encouraging local businesses to employ people with a learning disability.

9.3 New provider

There is recognition that if an alternative provider can be sought, this would be preferable to decommissioning services. If Thrift Farm is operated by a new provider, the main concerns are around ensuring that the service

continues to meet the needs of the current service users.

The Council has received responses to its invitation for business plans from providers wishing to run services at Thrift Farm. A separate report detailing this will go to Cabinet alongside this report.

9.4 Decommissioning

Feedback from the consultation demonstrates there is no support for the option to decommission day opportunity and supported employment services at Thrift Farm. Focus groups with service users concluded that the impact of this would elicit feelings akin to bereavement in them. Findings showed that those attending at least one other day service will cope better, as they are more able to see a world beyond Thrift Farm. If services were decommissioned service users would require time and support to transition to alternatives.

9.5 Alternative provision

There is a level of scepticism around the availability and suitability of alternative provision. This is compounded by previous experiences and the belief that 'alternative' means going back to traditional day centres. Some people believe that if alternatives were widely available, those able to do so, would have already been able to access services other than Thrift Farm.

There is a belief that not enough local employers are willing or able to support people with a learning disability or autism.

Appendix 2

Equality Impact Assessment

Part 1: Basic details

Project title	Direct Care and Support day services – approval to progress to public consultation in the future of Thrift Farm
Is this a new or existing document/service?	Review of previous EIA
Responsible officer	Adam Willison
Job title	Specialist Commissioning Manager
Contact no.	01296 387691 / 07766 697828
Team	Integrated Commissioning
Service	Integrated Commissioning
Business Unit	CHASC
Date started	April 2018, review January 2019
Date completed	January 2019 - updates will continue through development of scheme – Adam Willison Updated 29 th May 2019 – Susie Yapp Updated 24 th June 2019 – Susie Yapp Updated 31 st July 2019 – Susie Yapp

Part 2: Purpose and Objectives

2.1	What is the purpose of the project or change?	<p>The Adult Social Care Transformation Programme contains the work stream relating to the review of Direct Care and Support services. The purpose of this work stream is to review or re-model in-house services to ensure these are effective, outcomes-focussed and support people to maintain or achieve the greatest degree of independence of which they are capable in the context of the County Council's duty to fulfil its obligation under the Care Act 2014. The remodelled services must represent value for money and be financially sustainable.</p> <p>Across adult social care we want to support people to live well at home, maintaining or recovering their independence, and to fulfil their potential, partaking in meaningful day opportunities and supported employment. We want any services we commission to help achieve these aims, to reflect local need now and in the future and to draw on best practice models emerging across the country that offer best value for money. This means our service models need re-thinking.</p> <p>Thrift Farm has been a Council owned farm based day opportunities and supported employment service for service users with a learning disability since the early 1980s.</p>
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The service is not financially sustainable. It costs the Council a lot of money to operate Thrift Farm and when modelling the cost of re-providing alternative services for all the County Council service users who currently use the farm, savings could be made on the existing budget.

In addition, running a farm requires specialist knowledge, which appears to have led to a number of other local authorities with this type of service to de-commission, or re-provide in a different way. There are no local authorities close to Buckinghamshire who are operating adult social care services through Council owned farms. There are some care farms operating across the country. Commissioners spoke to one authority that operates a small care farm and their representative was clear that the basis of operating their care farm was that it was cost neutral to the authority. Others are operated as charities and fundraising is an important aspect of many of their operations.

Whilst there is a market for leisure farms in the local private sector, they do not appear to combine supported employment as part of their business model. Service users attend sessions at Thrift Farm on a daily basis. Placements are also provided for students from Special Schools and other local care establishments. Service users work alongside staff on the farm and acquire skills and experience with the help and guidance of a small, experienced staff team.

There are a number of alternative community based care charities, independent and for profit organisations that provide support services that operate or are keen to operate in the field of horticulture and animal care in Buckinghamshire. The market is developing and now includes Green Dragon Eco Farm (Quinton), Equicate & Thomley (Worminghall), Lindengate (Wendover), Road Farm Country Ways & Missenden Walled Garden (Great Missenden), Horse Wise (Aylesbury), Animal Antiks (North Marston) Cliveden National Trust offering volunteer opportunities (Taplow). All providers go through an internal council registration process. Commissioners must monitor the providers to ensure quality, financial probity and make routine checks to ensure the service is satisfactory. This must be completed before clients are placed by the authority. Some services have capacity and are keen to offer services to people with learning disabilities. However until service users have been reviewed and their care needs clarified, a placement would not be discussed with any potential provider.

A consultation on the future of Thrift Farm was approved by Cabinet on 4 February and the consultation commenced on 13 February and concluded on 9 April.

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Milton Keynes Council, a local authority neighbouring the farm, places approximately 24 clients at Thrift Farm and we continue to maintain regular contact with the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) and Director of Commissioning to appraise them of the position in respect of the future of the farm.

In 2017 we requested information from the market about the potential to run such a concern with limited response. The subsequent recommendation from procurement colleagues was to invite submission of business plans for the continued operation of the service via the Buckinghamshire Business Portal.

Two such rounds of invitation were held and the first attracted providers, however this process did not result in an award. A second invitation followed which also failed to result in an award. As a result commissioners felt that the opportunity had been exhausted. However the awareness generated by the Cabinet paper in February resulted in significant interest from a much wider cohort of potential providers and Cabinet resolved to undertake further exploration of the market which commenced on 13 February and ran for almost 10 weeks.

If the decision to close the adult social care provision at the farm or transfer to another provider is taken, formal consultation with staff would be required.

Thrift Farm is a 52 acre Council owned farm in North Buckinghamshire, very close to the border with Milton Keynes. It has functioned as a rural supported employment and day opportunity service for adults with learning difficulties since the early 1980's. It is also a popular visitor attraction, including an Animal farm park and picnic area and a Café.

The site contains a house, a number of outbuildings, animal paddocks and meadow.

Between April 2013 and December 2016, Thrift Farm was managed by Buckinghamshire Care Limited (BCL). During this time, significant investment was made in order to improve the Farm as a commercial visitor attraction e.g. building a new café. When the Council took the decision to close BCL, staff and services at Thrift Farm were transferred back in house in order to continue operating.

Thrift Farm has operated as a traditional type of social care service. Some service users have been accessing services at the farm for a considerable period of time, some having attended for over 30 years. For some this is a safe place

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		<p>which gives them an experience of working at a farm whilst staying within a safe environment. It has helped people to develop their skills across a range of opportunities. What it hasn't been able to do is create a stepping stone for many people into the working world or enable greater independence. For some this is not a reality and the farm operates more as a day opportunity for many clients rather than supported employment.</p> <p>The location of the farm creates transport difficulties for many Buckinghamshire service users, as it is not accessible by public transport, and is only accessible by car or client transport. Most service users are taken by client transport and being located in the far north east of the county creates a barrier for service users from the south who may wish to access it.</p> <p>Thrift Farm as a visitor attraction does have income generation potential. The greater the income, the lower the cost to the council of operating the service. However this is unlikely to be realised without significant capital investment which has not been identified. The Council has not been hugely successful in operating a visitor attraction to generate income to offset the running costs. Despite significant investment by BCL between 2013 and 2016 in the catering facilities, the commercial income and out-of-county placement income are such that the running costs for Thrift Farm borne by the county council remain very high and it is possible to commission from other providers similar care at a much lower outlay for the council. Consequently, providing care and support at Thrift Farm does not represent value for money to the County Council. To develop Thrift Farm into a viable commercial venture the Council would need to invest significant capital. Making Thrift Farm a commercially viable proposition does not sit within the Council's current area of expertise.</p>
2.2	<p>What are the key objectives of the project or change?</p>	<p>The objective of this project is to achieve ongoing adult social care provision at Thrift Farm whilst reducing the financial pressure of operating adult social services at the farm from the adult social care budget, either through decommissioning or by identifying an alternative provider who has a viable and sustainable proposal. Ultimately we want to ensure that service users are able to access suitable services to meet their identified needs, whilst promoting independence and engagement in meaningful activities.</p> <p>The objectives of this project are aligned with those of the wider Direct Care & Support Services Transformation Programme which aims to supports people to access the most appropriate type of support to meet their needs within sustainable and value for money services.</p>

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		Transferring the operations at Thrift Farm to an alternative provider or decommissioning the service will contribute to sustaining adult social care provision in Buckinghamshire within defined budget.
2.3	Which other functions, services or policies may be impacted?	Staff and resource required from Communications, HR, Finance, Direct Care & Support, Operations, Property and Transport.
2.4	Who are the main stakeholders impacted by this project or change?	Existing clients of Thrift Farm, potential service users, including those funded by other local authorities (mainly Milton Keynes Council), members of staff (this will be subject to a separate consultation and EIA), service users' carers and families, Talkback, Carers Bucks, members of the public who visit the farm, volunteers and community alternative providers.
2.5	Which other stakeholders may be affected by this project or change?	Local Members

Part 3: Data and Research

3.1	What data and research has been used to inform this assessment?	<p>There are no local authorities in the area known to commissioners operating care farms, combining adult social care services and Council owned farms, although some exist further afield e.g. Nottinghamshire Special Schools and other local care establishments. There are however care farms that are operated by alternative providers e.g. Church Farm Ardely (Stevenage) operates as a not for profit organisation, Mares (Amersham) is a charity. Service users work on the farm with the help and guidance of a small, experienced staff team. There are different models and we are aware of one local authority, operating in the north west which provides a range of supported employment opportunities across many different venues and businesses, people have the opportunity to work in a variety of active businesses including catering outlets, a brewery, a hair salon, a goat farm and shop mobility. This will help inform future work in relation to supported employment in Buckinghamshire. A visit has been arranged to understand their operational model to inform future day opportunities developments.</p> <p>There are alternative community services in Buckinghamshire which provide outdoor day opportunities, volunteering and work experience. The market is developing and the range of opportunities is increasing. New and existing providers are positioned to offer similar types of service and there are now a number of providers across the county who may be able to offer people who currently use Thrift Farm opportunities which they would find fulfilling, meaningful and enjoyable. Services are developing their offer to improve quality and accessibility, for example Road Farm Great Missenden is installing hoisting</p>
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		<p>equipment for people with more complex needs.</p> <p>The service has been running at a significant cost to the council and this is not sustainable.</p> <p>Many of the clients who attend Thrift Farm have been attending to service for many years. The cohort is generally static and move on is not possible for many of the service users. Some current service users may have become entrenched in the service, remaining at Thrift Farm for a long time and finding the prospect of moving into a different service offer very distressing.</p> <p>This proposal is part of the Direct Care and Support Transformation Programme, which does not have targeted or intentional impact on any single or specific group of service users.</p> <p>Thrift Farm provides services to people predominantly with learning disabilities and some with mental health difficulties. As of February (2019), there were 66 people attending the service, 39 (60%) are Bucks clients, 24 clients (36%) are from Milton Keynes and the remaining 3 clients are from other local authorities. The numbers do fluctuate slightly, but are broadly at this level.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire service users are predominantly male (74%) Most service users live in Aylesbury or the north of the county although there are a small number who do travel from the south of Aylesbury.</p> <p>In February 2019, the age range was considerable. The breakdown was as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="596 1429 1481 1697"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age range</th> <th>Numbers</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>18-24</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25-34</td> <td>26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>35-44</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>45-54</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>55-64</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>65+</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The cohort who access services at Thrift Farm is generally static, with few people moving out of the service and no capacity to take on new clients. Some people have been at the farm for many years.</p>	Age range	Numbers	18-24	8	25-34	26	35-44	13	45-54	10	55-64	5	65+	4
Age range	Numbers															
18-24	8															
25-34	26															
35-44	13															
45-54	10															
55-64	5															
65+	4															
3.2	<p>Have any complaints on the grounds of discrimination been made in relation to this</p>	<p>No</p>														

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	project?	
3.3	Please provide evidence of these.	N/A
3.4	What <u>positive</u> impacts have been established through research findings, consultation and data analysis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other similar services are available within the county that will be able to provide similar and stimulating opportunities and the numbers of services working in the area of horticulture and with animals has expanded in the last 12 months • Some other services are more accessible using public transport • Adult social care will be able to support people in accessing suitable services, which offer better value for money, whilst reducing the cost to adult social care • There will be more opportunity to address the potential for move on for individuals who have remained in traditional services such as Thrift Farm for very long periods of time. Service users will have the opportunity for new and meaningful experiences
3.5	What <u>negative</u> impacts have been established through research findings, consultation and data analysis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thrift Farm is not easily accessible by public transport and is generally only accessible via car or client transport • Many service users have been at Thrift Farm for many years and they and their carers are extremely anxious and upset about the possibility of Thrift Farm closing and a maybe having to move. If the decision is to close the farm, all clients will be reviewed. Transition plans would be developed for every client and any transition would be managed safely and the support we provide will be very important. • Carers are anxious about moving their cared for person who is accustomed to the farm experience and may be unsettled by change and any transition would be planned carefully with their input listened to and reflected as appropriate • The service is well regarded and used by service users and the wider community and if Thrift Farm is decommissioned it will reduce the extent of choice for that location however extensive market development over recent months has considerably broadened the options available • If the farm should be decommissioned, the travel implications of the proposed move cannot be fully understood until clients have been reviewed and suitable placements found. • Some service users may elect to access placements which are more expensive than those which social care can source to meet identified need and the service user may be required to pay the difference.
3.6	What additional	If the decision is taken to decommission adult social care

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<p>information is needed to fill any gaps in knowledge about the potential impact of the project?</p>	<p>provision at the farm, clients will be reviewed and alternative provision which considers home location, needs and likely interests of existing clients will be undertaken; and as necessary further work with providers of potential alternative services to look at how needs can be met in a way which supports people to develop their independence.</p> <p>If the decision is taken to decommission adult social care provision at the farm, detailed travel planning will need to take place as part of the transition planning for both services and for individuals.</p>
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Part 4: Testing the impact

<p>Within this table, please indicate (✓) whether the project will have a positive, negative or neutral impact across the following nine protected factors and provide relevant comments.</p> <p><i>Note 1: Listing a negative outcome does not mean the project cannot continue.</i></p> <p><i>Note 2: This is an opportunity to identify and address issues for improvement</i></p>						
		Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	What evidence do you have for this?	Improvement Actions Required
4.1	Age			✓	There are service users across the age range using this service	Ensure market place is developed to be able to provide suitable alternatives to meet individual needs.
4.2	Disability		✓		Potential reduction of day support and supported employment choices for clients with a learning disability or autism	Ensure market place is developed to be able to provide suitable alternatives to meet individual need. Refer individuals through to supported employment where appropriate
4.3	Gender			✓		
4.4	Marriage / Civil Partnership			✓		
4.5	Pregnancy / Maternity/			✓		

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	Paternity					
4.6	Race			✓		
4.7	Religion/ Belief			✓		
4.8	Sexual Orientation			✓		
4.9	Transgender			✓		
4.10	Carers		✓		Potential reduction in day support and supported employment could lead to more pressure on carers with potential for difficulty accessing the new service location	The project will need to ensure people's needs are appropriately met and that carers needs are considered as part of the assessment process.

Part 5: Director / Head of Service Statement

<p>I am fully aware of the duties required of Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) under the Equality Act 2010 and I have read our Equality Strategy.</p> <p>I am satisfied that this Equality Impact Assessment shows that we have made every possible effort to address any actual or potential unlawful discrimination.</p>	<p>Name</p> <p>Jane Bowie</p>
	<p>Signature</p> <p><i>J. Bowie</i></p>
	<p>Date</p> <p>19/08/19</p>

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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