

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council convened and held on Thursday 14 July 2016 in The Oculus, AVDC Offices, Gatehouse Way, Aylesbury, commencing at 9.30 am and concluding at 11.57 am.

PRESENT

Mrs V Letheren in the Chair;

Mr B Adams, Mr C Adams, Mr M Appleyard, Mrs M Aston, Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mrs P Birchley, Ms J Blake, Mr N Brown, Mr A Busby, Mr T Butcher, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mrs A Davies, Mr D Dhillon, Mr C Ditta, Mr T Egleton, Ms N Glover, Mr P Gomm, Mr D Hayday, Lin Hazell, Mr A Huxley, Mr P Irwin, Mr R Khan, Mr S Lambert, Ms A Macpherson, Mrs W Mallen, Mr D Martin, Mr Z Mohammed, Mr M Phillips, Mr R Reed, Mr B Roberts, Mr R Scott, Mr D Shakespeare OBE, Mr A Stevens, Mr R Stuchbury, Mrs J Teesdale, Mr M Tett, Ms R Vigor-Hedderly, Julia Wassell, Mr D Watson, Mr W Whyte and Ms K Wood

DIGNITARIES AND OTHERS PRESENT

Mrs G Miscampbell OBE DL and Mr R Pushman

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D Carroll, Mr C Etholen, Mr P Hardy, Mr D Schofield, Mr M Shaw, Mrs M Soames DL, Sir H Aubrey-Fletcher, Mrs M Clayton, Mr M Colston, Mr T Fowler, Mr P Lawrence, Mr D Polhill and Mr K Ross MBE DL

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the County Council meeting held on 26 May were agreed as a correct record.

2 PETITIONS

No petitions were presented.

3 COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies were received from Councillors Mr Carroll, Mr Etholen, Mr Hardy, Mr Schofield, Mr Shaw; Dignitaries Sir Aubrey-Fletcher, Mrs Soames; and Aldermen Mrs Clayton, Mr Colston, Mr Fowler, Mr Lawrence, Mr Polhill and Mr Ross.

The Chairman reported on events attended during the first 7 weeks of office, highlighting:

- an EU debate with prisoners at HMP Springhill
- visits to local RAF and US Airforce Bases; Pinewood Studios; and the Aylesbury Motor Company

- a service in Aylesbury market square commemorating the anniversary of the Battle of the Somme
- meetings regarding the Youth Olympics, and with the Mayor of London
- Buckingham's Civic Day
- Opening a new brook in Aston Clinton

Mrs P Birchley was welcomed as the Council's Vice Chairman. Mrs Birchley thanked Members of the Council for their support and reported on a forthcoming event to commemorate the World War 1 Battle of Fromelle on 19th July.

The Chairman reminded Members of a family event for staff on 16th July.

(Mr N Brown joined the meeting during this item)

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ms J Wassell declared a new interest in relation to the lease of land at the junction of London Road A40 and Micklefield Road in High Wycombe.

5 ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Mr M Tett in his role as Chairman of the Senior Appointments and Bucks Pay Award Committee (SABPAC) presented the report to Council. Mr Tett reminded Members that the Council was required by Central Government to make a Pay Policy Statement on an annual basis.

In response to Members' comments, Mr Tett confirmed that the use of zero hours contracts by the Council and inclusion of such information in future Pay Policy Statements would be discussed at the next SABPAC meeting.

RESOLVED

Council AGREED the Council's Annual Pay Policy Statement 2015/16, as recommended by the Senior Appointments and Bucks Pay Award Committee.

6 SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Chairmen of the Select Committees presented their report to Council.

Mr B Chapple reported that the Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee had considered how the Council's shift to digital platforms would result in savings, and was now investigating how well income generation was embedded across the organisation. Mr Chapple reported that the work would include an interview with the Council's new Chief Executive in September.

In response to a question about the potential impact of leaving the EU on the Council's multi-national workforce, Mr Chapple welcomed a discussion with the Member to understand his concerns.

Mr D Dhillon, Chairman of the Children's Social Care & Learning Select Committee, reported that the Committee would be undertaking an Inquiry into the Voice of the Child, and that Members had been visiting Children's Centres across the County.

Mr Dhillon was congratulated on his appointment and asked about the methodology for the Voice of the Child Inquiry. Mr Dhillon explained that the Committee would be seeking the views of all groups of children involved with the Council's services and welcomed the interest of any Councillors who would like to be involved in the Inquiry.

The Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee Vice Chairman Mrs J Teesdale, deputising for Mr D Carroll, highlighted recent work on libraries and modern slavery.

In relation to a Member's previous correspondence regarding Transport for Bucks contracts, Mrs Teesdale agreed to follow this up with the Chairman of the Committee. Cabinet was complimented on its acceptance of the Committee's previous recommendations and new Members of the Committee, Mr B Roberts and Mrs A Macpherson were welcomed.

Mr B Roberts, Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee, explained that he would be chairing his first meeting on 26 July at which the Committee would be considering vascular services and maternity services.

In response to a question about proposed changes for NHS services affecting residents in the north of the County, Mr Roberts explained that meetings had been sought with the relevant organisations who would be attending the Select Committee in October.

A request was made for the rotation of Committee meetings around the County and the issues of the closure of Ward 5b and possible closure of the midwife-led unit in High Wycombe were raised. Mr Roberts confirmed that much work was ongoing.

7 CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

7a. Leader of the Council

Mr Tett stated that he would be writing to the new Prime Minister, Theresa May, to offer the Council's congratulations and support.

In questions to the Leader, the following points were made:

- Congratulations to Mrs Clarke for her work on behalf of the Council and the Women's Local Government Society in relation the suffragist project.
- The Strategic Alliance was formed as a result of a willingness across a number of Councils to work together on infrastructure. Work was taking place to establish a sub-national transport body, to ensure the area remained prosperous and continued to have a voice nationally.
- The 'blue sail' report on tourism in Buckinghamshire had a number of proposals including a single web portal and a single brochure for the County. An update would be provided to the Member.
- In developing unitary options, Milton Keynes had not been included as it was already a unitary over which the County Council had no jurisdiction.
- As Buckinghamshire received very little money from the EU and bids were predominantly made through the Local Enterprise Partnership, the benefit of the Council developing a report on risks and opportunities arising from the exit of

- Britain from the EU would be minimal.
- Clarification on the 'local area' (p.26) for broadband in the BDUK project would be sought and shared with all Members.

7b. Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

Mr M Appleyard, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing, agreed with a Member's comments congratulating the work of Paulette Hunn in relation to her work on autism and the value of all towns becoming autism-friendly.

In relation to opening hours for GP surgeries, Mr Appleyard agreed to talk with Clinical Commissioning Groups in the area and with the Member to explore any further action that could be taken.

7c. Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

In response to Members' questions, Mr Z Mohammed made the following points:

- The Council report contained a summary of a more detailed report on educational achievement and that all Members were encouraged to read the full document.
- That the percentage of non-selective schools rated good or outstanding had risen from 48% to 61% which was a significant improvement and compared favourably with the national averages. Mr Mohammed confirmed that work would continue to improve standards in Buckinghamshire.
- In relation to concerns raised about the potential need for additional school transport as a result of proposed changes, Mr Mohammed confirmed that the consultation was still open and all comments would be taken into account. Mr Mohammed informed Members that date for implementation of any changes was September 2017.
- The issue of the affordability of housing for key workers in Buckinghamshire was acknowledged.
- Officers were working closely with District Council colleagues in relation to school place planning and Local Plans & development applications, to ensure local alignment of housing with schools. The Member would be provided with specific information in relation to Aston Clinton and Wendover.
- Regarding statistics on the non-attendance of parents at education appeals, Mr Mohammed agreed to report back to the Member, but commented that it would be unlikely that parents could be charged.
- A list of non-selective schools would be provided to Members to enable them to provide support to those schools. John Collet, Buckingham Upper, Highcrest and Amersham Schools had achieved a 'good' rating. The achievement of Shena Moynihan with Highcrest School was acknowledged.

7d. Cabinet Member for Children's Services

In response to Members' questions, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Ms L Hazell made the following points:

- The retention and recruitment of social workers remained a concern for the service and exit interviews were sought with those leaving the authority. Ms Hazell confirmed that much work continued to be done in the area and a more

detailed report both in relation to workforce and the wider Ofsted improvement journey could be provided.

- The importance of stability of settings and continuity of social work support for Looked After Children was recognised.
- In relation to educational attainment for Looked After Children, the Cabinet Member reported that approximately 12-13 Looked After Children were now at university and that the Council's virtual school supported and encouraged all children so they were able to undertake further education.
- In response to the interest expressed, the possibility of an all-Member Briefing was suggested to enable Members to explore in more detail the facts and figures in relation to recruitment.

(Mr R Khan and Mr N Brown left the meeting during this item)

7e. Cabinet Member for Transportation

Mr P Irwin, Deputy Cabinet Member for Transportation informed Members that the 'Maintain My Street' software app would be launched during the week of 18th July and that changes to the Local Area Technician structure would mean an improved frontline service in local areas. Mr Irwin made the following comments in response to questions asked by Members:

- The undertaking of highways works by utilities could cause significant issues for road users and that better ways of working continued to be sought.
- The issue of the removal of the Milton Keynes to Gatwick rail service would be investigated.
- The problems with bollards in Fairford Leys Way were recognised and would be further followed up.
- An officer would be asked to contact the Member to help with securing a meeting regarding the Aylesbury Vale Local Plan and the bypass into Coldharbour Way.
- Thanks would be passed on to the team that undertook work on Stewkley Road in Wing as it was undertaken with very little disruption
- Regarding the issue of weeds on road verges and how to respond to residents, Mr Irwin agreed to ensure a briefing was sent to all Members. The potential for co-ordination with District Council road sweeping would be explored.
- A meeting would be arranged with the Member and the relevant officer to discuss concerns regarding the Stoke Hammond bypass.
- The LAT restructure was a 3-month trial.
- In relation to the lack of consultation and consideration of Local Member views regarding the High Wycombe Town Centre Masterplan, Mr Irwin confirmed that he would work to ensure Members were always involved in issues that affected their areas.
- The Town Parish Council to which weed spraying had been devolved would be expected to put right any problems arising such as the accidental killing of grass verges.
- The considerable work undertaken by the Council to ensure infrastructure needs were adequately considered in Local Plans was acknowledged, including quarterly meetings with County and District Councillors.
- The new cycleway between Buckingham and Winslow, funded by Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (BTVLEP) was

welcomed.

- The use of funding from Arla originally earmarked for a towpath in Aylesbury would be investigated and reported back to the Member.
- A site visit would be arranged with the relevant officer and Local Member to understand the issue of parking in laybys on the A41 Gatehouse Road in Aylesbury.
- The cutting of visibility splays was being undertaken although not all areas had yet been covered.
- An outstanding issue relating to Oxford Road/Churchill Avenue/Fowler Road in Aylesbury would be investigated.

In relation to a question raised about the delay to HS2 and the potential effect on East-West rail, Mr Tett informed Members that he would continue to press for the appropriate planning to be undertaken, particularly in relation to the technical issues around the East-West Rail/HS2 juncture.

7f. Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources

Mr J Chilver, Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources made the following points in response to Members' questions:

- Clarification would be provided on any EU funding to the Council.
- In relation to the review being undertaken by Carter Jonas on the Council's property portfolio, Mr Chilver confirmed that a report on the agricultural estate had been received in January 2016 and a report on the remainder of the Council's property was expected within the next two months. The report would include the Quarrendon School site and would be made available to all Members.
- The financial investigation in relation to Bucks Sports & Social Club had been followed up with action taken.
- The Referendum decision had resulted in movements in the stock market and currencies. Mr Chilver assured Council that the diversification of pension fund assets minimised the exposure risk and the Council's cash holdings were in sterling which were therefore not exposed to the currency market.
- It was too soon to understand any changes in employment law following Britain's exit from the EU.

7g. Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Public Health

Mr M Phillips, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement & Public Health, confirmed that there had been no incidents of race or hate crimes reported to the police in Buckinghamshire following the Referendum,

In response to Members' questions, Mr Phillips made the following comments:

- In relation to concerns about hate crime and a sense by one Member of an increase in community tension, that a new report from Area Commanders was expected shortly.
- The Active Bucks programme responded to choices made by Local Members and that Members were encouraged to promote the opportunities within their local areas.
- In relation to the need for the new Sustainability and Transformation Plans to

include supported accommodation for people with mental health problems with community treatment orders, Mr Phillips agreed to discuss the issues with the Member.

- That information would be provided to the Member on the current position in relation to community health care for the Under 5s.

7h. Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment

Mr W Whyte, Cabinet Member for Planning & Environment highlighted key information from his report including:

- Enforcement on p.47.
- The Council was doing well in relation to greenhouse gas emissions.
- There was still time for people to comment on the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.
- The Energy from Waste plant would be handed to the operators, FCC in the afternoon following Council. Thanks were extended to the team involved in the project.
- The work with District Councils on local plans was complex and involved a number of portfolios.
- There was a new car park extension at Black Park and a café was due to open on 1 August at Langley Park.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Whyte made the following points:

- At least 70% of enforcement fines were collected, over 50% of which were trade related.
- More information on air quality would be provided to the Member.
- The potential of heating homes from the Energy from Waste plant continued to be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Members were recommended to visit the Council's country parks and the Quarrendon site in Aylesbury.
- Mr Whyte agreed with comments on the benefits of the upgrade to Denham Park, which was identified as a good model of collaborative working and income generation.
- A number of key environmental attractions in the County were mentioned and Mr Whyte informed Members that the Council was involved with the current review of the Green Infrastructure Plan through the Natural Environment Partnership (NEP).
- The lack of disruption to the local area arising from the British Grand Prix held at Silverstone recently.
- Thanks were extended to local communities, landowners and parishes in relation to flooding events which happened in the spring.

In relation a number of questions raised relating to the Energy from Waste plant, Mr Whyte informed Members that the electricity generated equated to the average use of approximated 36,000 homes. Mr Whyte explained that the contract with operators FCC included a profit-share element but that due to recent low energy prices the Council had not received the expected revenue. Mr Whyte confirmed that although this put pressure on the portfolio's budget, it was being managed, and that the business case assumptions for the plant would be reviewed by the Project Board. It

was noted that the plant was fully booked for the foreseeable future and residents were encouraged to recycle where possible. Mr Whyte agreed to organise a site visit for Members later in the year, and to provide further information for Members on the specific amount of electricity expected in 2016/17 & the timing of the expected VAT return.

Members were reminded of a forthcoming Briefing on the Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

(Ms J Wassell and Mr C Ditta left the meeting during this item)

8 NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr B Chapple proposed the Motion reminding Members of the presentation by young people at Council in 2015. Mr M Appleyard seconded the Motion, commenting that the Motion was to formalise the views of Council resulting from the previous visit.

Members expressed support for the Motion, commenting on who should attend; the value of listening to local people; the relevance of the current voting age; and the importance of engaging young people as future voters.

RESOLVED

Council AGREED that representatives of Youth Voice be invited annually in November of each year to address full Council.

Youth Voice representatives would be invited to speak and represent the views of Buckinghamshire young people in relation to Council issues.

9 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN - INFORMATION ONLY

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 22nd September at 9.30am in the Oculus, Aylesbury Vale District Council.

CHAIRMAN