

County Council



Cabinet Member Reports

9A REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Local Government Review

We are encouraging local residents and organisations to send their views to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government about the proposal to implement a single unitary council to replace the five existing county and district councils across Buckinghamshire (email sajid.javid@communities.gsi.gov.uk by 25 May).

We have continued discussions with local communities on this important issue – including hosting a series of meetings with town and parish councils across the county, who will be key partners within a new unitary model; as well as providing information through our existing communications and engagement channels.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to improve services, focusing on the needs of residents and local communities, and combining best practice from across our existing councils. All local councils are agreed that no change is not an option. Further information and updates can be found at <http://futurebucks.co.uk> or by following @futurebucks1 on twitter.

England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance

On behalf of England's Economic Heartland's Strategic Transport Forum, I am writing to the Secretary of State for Transport highlighting our growing concerns over Highways England's approach to engagement on the Oxford to Cambridge expressway. There is frustration over the lack of evidence available to make an informed response on the choice of corridor, and in particular no understanding of what the strategic objectives are for the expressway. We have not been told what the 'weightings' are between the various criteria for the expressway. I am also very concerned at the lack of public consultation about the expressway which will have a big impact on local communities.

Work continues on the scope of our connectivity study, commissioned by Government, which will examine how communities not 'on' the expressway can still benefit from it; this work is a key input into our emerging Transport Strategy.

Part of the evidence base for the Transport Strategy will be a ground-breaking policy scenario modelling tool for the transport system in the corridor, which we have recently commissioned. It will enable Heartland partners to look at 'what if' scenarios stretching out to 2050, and to explore their relative impacts.

Wider strategic infrastructure is of paramount importance. Therefore, England's Economic Heartland has commissioned Bircham Dyson Bell to identify opportunities to improve the delivery of utility infrastructure.

The Leaders' Board has also been looking at digital infrastructure across the Heartland area, the need for utilities upfront investment and the need to accelerate the Economic Strategy for the Heartlands to help provide a framework for other decisions.

East West Rail

Following a third consultation on the Western Section Phase Two (from Bicester to Bedford, and Milton Keynes to Aylesbury), a Transport and Works Act Order will be submitted in the summer, giving powers to build the scheme. A public inquiry is likely to be held later in the year, with construction work due to commence in 2019. A number of enabling works (such as environmental mitigation ponds) will be delivered ahead of the main works commencing.

The Consortium continues to work with the Alliance to ensure that the impact of construction on local communities is minimised wherever possible. Network Rail is currently considering a preferred route for the Central Section, which the Government is aiming to deliver by the 'mid 2020s'.

In addition, the Consortium is working with partners to understand how the Eastern Section, east of Cambridge, can be enhanced. A preliminary study commissioned by the Consortium found this would provide widespread benefits across the entire East West Rail scheme.

Heathrow

Heathrow's first consultation on their design options for a third runway, an expanded airport and mitigation proposals ended on 28 March. Our response highlighted the impact of multiple projects on the Iver area and the need for an Iver Relief Road, calling for Heathrow to invest in enabling more passengers to access the airport by rail and sustainable transport in order to meet Heathrow's own pledge not to increase traffic and to comply with air quality limits.

Heathrow also consulted on airspace principles and guidelines for how future flight paths could be designed. Our response reiterated the first principle must be to minimise the need to impact on communities not currently overflown. Aircraft noise, when introduced into an area that is currently tranquil, such as the Chiltern AONB, can have a significant impact on the health of residents, the well-being value of outdoor recreation and affect the learning environment for schools.

The next step for Heathrow will be the publication of a final draft of the Aviation National Policy Statement ahead of a vote in Parliament before the summer recess. Heathrow will further develop plans for the third runway, mitigation including river diversions and ecology work in southern Buckinghamshire before a second consultation early in 2019. A Development Consent Order (DCO) application would then be made for the Secretary of State to determine, with a decision in about 2021.

Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLTH)

Network Rail's plans for a link from the Western Mainline into Heathrow have taken a step forward with the decision by Government not to relocate the Heathrow Express depot to land in Langley. Network Rail will now undertake a second consultation on their design and mitigation in May and June including several local exhibitions in the Iver area.

The County Council is supportive of the WRLTH scheme subject to securing mitigation for Iver as the WRLTH link to Reading can provide direct rail access into Heathrow when the East West Rail link opens. This would provide services through Winslow, Bicester and Oxford to Reading. The principle local concern is the closure of Hollow Hill Lane. Although WRLTH is proposed as a scheme to support train access from the south west and Wales to the existing two runways Heathrow, the Transport Secretary has stated he sees it as a central foundation, enabling more passengers and freight to travel to the expanded airport from the mid-2020s. Network Rail's DCO application would be submitted to the Secretary of State to make a decision by late 2020.

HS2 Update

Heathrow Express Depot relocation - We have now received notification from Department for Transport that the new Heathrow Express Depot at Langley will no longer be required and it will remain in its current location at Old Oak Common in London. This is good news in terms of not adding to HGV traffic in and around the area.

Community and Environment Fund and the Business and Local Economy Fund - Steeple Claydon Methodist Church has been awarded £12,000 from the HS2 CEF for refurbishments. Richings Park Sports Club Ltd has been awarded £39,960 towards a children's play area. £74,000 has been awarded to Wendover Swimming Pool towards refurbishment. £450,000 has been awarded to Wendover Woods to develop recreation. Groundwork, who administers the funds, has published their report on the first year of the HS2 community grants scheme. You can read it [here](#).

High Speed 2 new website - HS2 Ltd has now been given permission by the government to develop its own branded website, separate to the .Gov website, which can be difficult to navigate. The new website is now live: <https://www.hs2.org.uk/> HS2 Ltd has also developed a Commonplace type pages for Buckinghamshire/Oxfordshire with local information. They have also developed some Community Engagement Plans. Where available, you can find them here: <https://hs2inbucksandoxfordshire.commonplace.is/>

Colne Valley Viaduct Public Engagement Events - Align Joint Venture are the contractors designing and building the Colne Valley Viaduct. They held 4 engagement events in and around the area throughout March and a councillor event in February to share their initial design proposals. They also requested feedback via a questionnaire. There will be a further 2 rounds of engagement and planning permission will be sought later in 2018. Construction is expected to start in the first quarter of 2019 with target completion at the end of 2023. Please contact hs2blueprint@buckscc.gov.uk if you wish to see a copy of the public engagement materials.

Health and Wellbeing Board update (January and March meetings)

At the January meeting the Board received a comprehensive update from Neil MacDonald, Interim Chief Executive of Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust on winter pressures and how the system had coped with unprecedented demand over the Christmas and New Year period. BHT has been working with partners for some time to prepare for the impact of winter months on its services and has already implemented a number of measures to improve patient flow. BHT is due to carry out a review with partners and patients on lessons learned from 2018/19 and will report back on the Board can support in preparations for next winter.

The Board welcomed presentations from public health on the Prevention at Scale programme and the new Physical Activity Strategy 2018 – 2023 – making physical activity a priority and committed to endorse the recommendations in the report. The board has also received progress updates on the Integrated Care System, the Better Care Fund and a detailed look at delayed transfers of care, which occur when a patient is ready to leave hospital but is still occupying a bed – the presentation helped to provide the board with assurances around current working, ensuring health and social care are working together to make sure patients only stay in hospital for as long as they need to.

In March the board approved publication of the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA). Health and Wellbeing Boards have a legal duty to produce, consult and publish a PNA for their area every three years. It is a comprehensive assessment of the current and future pharmaceutical needs of the local population and considers whether there are any gaps to service delivery. The 2018 assessment concludes community pharmacies are well distributed, accessible and offer a convenient service to patients and members of the public in the county. It also acknowledged there are opportunities available to maximise the various pharmaceutical services on offer and the potential to utilise the skills of community pharmacists, which could have a significant impact on health improvements and reducing health inequalities. The PNA is now available <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/pharmaceutical-needs-assessment/>

Brexit

The Council continues to proactively prepare for Brexit and over the past few months has engaged in a thorough analysis of potential impacts of Brexit in Buckinghamshire. Working in partnership with BBF and BTVLEP, we have identified those sectors in which EEA nationals are most prevalent and have mapped trade activity by sector and geography, thereby identifying those companies most potentially impacted by changes to customs and trade regimes post-Brexit.

Working with partners as part of England's Economic Heartland Strategic Alliance, we have undertaken analysis of workforce statistics and trade flows at a regional level and are working towards a major regional event in autumn 2018 to showcase our preparations and work with government to ensure England's Economic Heartland is ready to harness opportunities for growth post-Brexit. We will continue working with local and regional partners, as well as government, to ensure the very best Brexit outcome for Buckinghamshire.

National representation

As part of my role of Chair of LGA's Economy, Environment, Housing and Transport Board, I have contributed to national lobbying on issues that are prevalent not only across the country but pertinent to Buckinghamshire. Following a particularly harsh winter, our roads have suffered the consequences, and I have lobbied the Department for Transport heavily on behalf of all councils for extra funding. On 26th March government announced an extra £100 million in funding to tackle potholes, and we welcome the total of £900,000 funding for roads in Buckinghamshire but know this represents just a fraction of what is needed to tackle, what is a national problem with the state of local roads and their repair backlog.

On plastic waste, as Chairman of the Environment Board of the LGA I have lobbied for a reduction in plastic packaging and unrecyclable waste, which are not only a blight on our environment, but cost significant amounts of money and energy to process. It is encouraging that government has recognised the LGA's previous calls and the responsibility that producers have in mitigating the impact of plastic on the environment. We have welcomed the government's deposit scheme for plastic bottles and wider ambitions to reduce unnecessary plastic waste included in the 25-year Environment Plan.

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

9B DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORTATION

Freight

We are consulting on Buckinghamshire's Draft Freight Strategy (2018 -2036) – this opened on 25th Feb and closes on Monday 9th April 2018. As of 27/3 there had been 452 responses. These are now being analysed, and a consultation response paper is being prepared. Mostly the responses affirm the proposal to look at the efficiency of freight, the environmental impact and the need for engagement.

Specific references to particular issues or locations are being logged and will feed into the priority programme for an action plan currently being developed to achieve the aims of the Freight Strategy.

Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB)

The main operational achievements and challenges of the TfB business are listed below in sections 2 to 5. The main managerial achievements in the first quarter of 2018 are summarised here as follows:

- **Health and Safety** – Ringway Jacobs have been successfully assessed to a new European Standard accreditation (ISO45001), replacing OHSAS18001, thereby becoming one of the first companies in Europe to successfully gain this revised accreditation, demonstrating a forward thinking and market leading approach to Health and Safety, reflected in excellent statistics.
- **Members Working Group** - is seen to be paying dividends with a good focus enabling enhanced communication and understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing TfB.
- **ISO55001 (Asset Management Systems)** - Stage 1 assessment found no non-conformances. Successful stage 2 assessment in April 2018 will result in TfB achieving ISO55001, a major step in demonstrating BCC's mature approach to highway management to DfT and thereby protecting central funding. As a result of this and other good work, Band 3 has been able to be successfully demonstrated to DfT.
- **Members Portal** - has been developed and is now 'live', jointly developed with the Members Working Group. Information available through this portal will increase throughout the year.
- **EFQM Audit Review** - shows continuing improvement in most business areas.

Capital Programme

2017/2018 Carriageway & Footway Surfacing Programme Overview

Following the completion of the three main headline treatments (surface dressing, micro surfacing and conventional resurfacing) associated with the 2017/18 carriageway programme by the beginning of December, focus turned to the completion of the plane & patch, DfT pothole fund, joint sealing & footway structural repair programmes during the last quarter of the year.

With actual spend across all programmes up to the end of March 2018 exceeding £18.7M, the following summarises the year-end position against each of the individual programmes of work:

- **Conventional Resurfacing (including National Productivity Fund Schemes)** - programme of works successfully completed with a total of 42 schemes finished in the financial year. 2 schemes were deferred from the initial programme, until 2018/19 due to conflicting utilities works. In addition to this a further 5 schemes were

added to the programme and completed within the year, making use of savings against budget on other schemes.

- **Surface Dressing** – Programme of works successfully completed with a total of 26 schemes finished in year, with only 1 scheme was deferred until 2018/19, due to circumstances out of the control of TfB. The reinstatements of solar powered road studs at two sites along the A413 at Adstock and the A4128 Valley Road, Hughenden were also completed before the end of March.
- **Micro-surfacing** – Programme of works successfully completed with a total of 33 schemes (some including multiple roads) finished in year. 2 schemes deferred due to conflicting utility works.
- **Plane and Patch/DfT Pothole Fund** - The original programme of works was successfully completed with a total of 38 plane and patch schemes and a further 50 targeted patching schemes completed in year.
- **Joint Sealing** – Programme of works successfully completed with a total of 21 schemes finished in year.
- Preparation for 2018/19 Programme – 6 preparatory patching schemes were completed ahead of the 2018/19 programme, again making use of savings made against other schemes within the 2017/18 programme.
- **Footway Structural Repairs** – Programme of works successfully completed with a total of 36 countywide schemes finished in year.

2018/2019 Carriageway & Footway Surfacing Programme Overview

The Asset Team commenced Member meetings in December 2017 and these were concluded in February.

With the detailed design surveys well under way, we expect the lists of schemes associated with the three main headline treatments; conventional resurfacing, surface dressing & micro-surfacing to be formally announced later this month.

Availability of resources has enable us to commence the conventional resurfacing and joint sealing programmes of work from the beginning of April, with preparatory patching associated with both the surface dressing & micro-surfacing programmes to commence before the end of the month.

2017/18 Capital Delivery Programme – Other Budget Headings

Elsewhere actual spend up to the end of March 2018 exceeded £5.3M, following further countywide capital investment associated with street lighting, safety fencing, drainage, network safety, parking, bridges and traffic signals. The following summarises the year end position against each of the individual programmes of work:

- **Street Lighting** – Programme of works successfully completed with over 430 structurally defective columns replaced and over 3,000 street lights replaced with LED lanterns, as part of a countywide Salix funded 'Investment to Save' initiative to reduce future energy consumption and reduce maintenance costs.
- **Safety Fencing** – Small programme of works successfully completed with a total of 6 countywide schemes finished in year.
- **Drainage** – Programme of works successfully completed with a total of 25 countywide schemes finished in year. Budget has been increased for 2018/19.
- **Network Safety** – 3 schemes successfully completed with a further scheme; A412 Black Park Road, Wexham, deferred until 2018/19 following the need for further consultation.

- **Parking** – Successful completion of pay & display schemes in Aylesbury, Amersham & High Wycombe. A further proposed scheme in Marlow has been deferred until 2018/19, following the need for further consultation.
- **Bridges** – Throughout 2017/18 in excess of £900k has been invested in improvements to various structures across the county including pumping stations, subways, a footbridge in Buckingham and a scheduled monument in Thornborough.
- **Traffic Signals** - Programme of works successfully completed with a total of 8 countywide schemes including the high profile scheme along the A412 at George Green, finished in year.

Moving into 2018/19, a budget of £4.6M has been allocated to continue improvements across the county. With design work already progressing well, schemes identified for delivery during 2018/19 will be available to view on the Member's Portal before the end of May.

Road Safety

Casualty reduction schemes - The Network Safety Team implements an annual programme of road safety engineering schemes in order to reduce the number of people injured on Buckinghamshire roads. These locations are identified through collision analysis and investigation to prioritise sites that have the highest incidence of reported injury collisions, both in number and severity. Recent progress since last Cabinet meeting has been centred on A421, see below:

A421 Bletchley Road at the Thornborough / Padbury Road junction –

Collision data revealed collisions occurring whilst making a right turn out of the side roads onto the A421. In order to raise awareness of the junction to those on the main A421, red surfacing was laid under central hatching and under new SLOW markings on both approaches. The keep left bollards were upgraded to solar powered illuminated bollards in order to highlight both side roads and vegetation was cleared to improve inter-visibility to and from the side roads. A Vehicle Activated Sign has also been installed which warns drivers of the junction when exceeding the 50 mph speed limit and at any approach speed when a vehicle is detected to be waiting to turn out of the side road.

This is in addition to two sites which have previously been reported on as part of the 2017/18 programme. These are A413 Great Missenden (red surfacing, signing and lining) and The A4020 Oxford Road, New Denham (red surfacing, signing and lining).

2017 Casualty Data - Provisional collision /casualty data shows that 2017 (January to December) has seen a 17% reduction in the number of people injured on Buckinghamshire roads, compared to 2016 data.

Road Safety Education:

- **Older Driver Assessments, Eyesight and General Road Safety** - promoted at a Community Wellbeing events at Chalfont St Giles and Great Missenden in partnership with Thames Valley Police and Bucks Fire and Rescue Service during February 2018.
- **Mobile Phone Campaign** - Supported Department for Transport - National Mobile Phone Campaign and endorsed Bucks Free Press local mobile phone campaign throughout March. Attendance an event at Asda, High Wycombe to raise public awareness of using a mobile phone while driving.
- **Seat Belt Campaign** - Delivered a child seatbelt awareness campaign at Asda High Wycombe with Thames Valley Police on 14 March 2018.

- **Ecodriver Training** - 58 drivers from Transport for Bucks and the Epilepsy Centre, in Chalfont St Peter completed Ecodriver training assessments, which has contributed to a 10% reduction in their fuel consumption and reduced emissions
- **Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) Training** – During February and March a 2 day Client Centred learning course has been organised and sold out within 24 hours. The course aims to raise the standard of driving instruction and reduce the number of young driver collisions. Due to the demand of the first course another is being organised for May and June.

Network Operations

Following wintry weather through October, November and December 2017, the network (especially the minor road network) has suffered, with significant increases in carriageway defects reported. Operations in the final quarter of the year have therefore been very centred on carriageway repairs, winter maintenance and drainage works. Further details are listed below.

Urgent defects (Category 1) usually run at around 220 per month. In January 2018, we identified 835, February 898 and March 1156. This has placed considerable pressure on resource and budget. The legacy of the severe winter is expected to be seen, with continuing increases in defect numbers until end April 2018.

The above has been mirrored by a similar increase in claims for damages.

This position necessitates a temporary change in our techniques for undertaking full repairs using hot material as a standard repair.

- Where possible and where resources are available, we are continuing to undertake permanent repairs through the excavation of deteriorated areas and the laying of hot, compacted material to ensure a durable and long lasting solution.
- To supplement this and to ensure the increased numbers of required repairs can be addressed, we are also using proprietary cold lay materials, designed specifically to address such problems. These repairs, although not giving the same visual appearance as a fully excavated and sawn repair, are still designed to give the same durability.
- We have accelerated use of jet-patching (a system of defect repair using material injected into the carriageway at high velocity, forming a semi-permanent repair) to assist in arresting the deterioration of defects into more severe potholes.
- Using the principles outlined in our Highway Inspection Policy we are also focussing our efforts where numbers dictate on repairing priority defects on busy main roads rather than cul-de-sac's, this will ensure that the passage of traffic is as safe as we can make it.

Business Planning for 2018/19 has been completed in Q1 of 2018, with the following headlines relating to Revenue spend in 2018/19:

- Routine funding for carriageway defect repairs maintained, given the increasing numbers identified.
- **Gully programme** – increase in numbers of gullies to be emptied in 2018/19, with concentration on increasing frequency in areas of known vulnerability.
- **Grass cutting** – no change to regime of urban or rural cutting this year. Programme commenced 1st week of April.
- Member's schemes – increased budget this year means an increased pot (£10,204) for each Member. Consultation letters have been issued asking for schemes.

- **Drainage repairs** – budget for undertaking small scale Revenue repairs/improvements has been increased, complementing the increased Capital budget and enhancing our ability to deal quickly with identified defects.
- **Plane and Patch** – DfT funding has been enhanced through Council funding to provide a significant plane and patch budget aimed at quickly reducing the recent deterioration to the network through more substantial machine patching of pothole ‘farms’.
- **Jet-patching** – budgets have been maintained to allow continuation of significant programmes which arrest the deterioration of minor defects on rural roads.

Winter Maintenance

The formal winter season draws to a close on 15th April. After this time no operatives will remain on standby although we will be able to react to any further salting requirements.

The season has been the most challenging since 2010, with comparable statistics. We plan for 55 precautionary salting runs (of 25 routes each) over the entire winter season (October to April). This year, we completed 103 runs, almost double the anticipated amount for a normal season. To put this into context, this equates in total to a distance nearly 6 times around the world or 2/3 of the way to the moon.

We anticipate using around 5000 tonnes of salt each year. Again, this year we have used more than double, and have had to restock salt barns twice, using additional salt from supplier and also resilience salt from our Saunderton backup stock.

Three major snow events have taken place.

- **The first**, between 10th and 12th December, presented a challenge with substantial unforecast snow falling on Sunday 10th December. Ploughing took place over most of the day, with snow routes implemented in the south to maintain an open network, whilst those around us struggled. There followed a period of melt and cold overnight temperatures resulting in almost continuous treatment over 4 day period.
- **The ‘Beast from the East’** merged with Storm Emma during the last week of February/first week of March to prompt very cold temperatures with regular and heavy snowfall and high winds leading to significant drifting. Although Buckinghamshire escaped the worst of heavy snowfall, continuous action was required over a period of 7 days to maintain a safe network and meet the challenges caused by drifts.
- **A second ‘Beast’** over the weekend of 17th/18th March brought similar challenges, although for a reduced period. Again, frontline services acted willingly, maintaining a safe and open network throughout.

Testament should be paid to drivers, decision makers and supervisors, who have risen to the challenge again and again over a long winter period to maintain the network in a safe and serviceable condition, and also to those operatives who have supported on emergency response and the inevitable resulting pothole repairs.

Highways Development Management Guidance

The Transport Strategy and Highways Development Management teams have been working to develop a Highways Development Management Guidance document. The guidance is intended to help developers create great places and thriving communities - which contribute to the Council's vision for Buckinghamshire. It provides developers with the information they need to prepare successful transport proposals through the existing planning process.

The Guidance contains guidance points relating to 4 sections of the report, namely; Key Principles, Designing for Transport Inside Developments, Managing Developments Transport Impacts and Delivering Works on the Highway.

Following analysis of public consultation, officers have been working to update the Highways Development Management Guidance document. It is anticipated that the Guidance will be taken through internal sign off processes during May, with adoption of the document to follow (anticipated June).

MARK SHAW
DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORTATION

9C CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Community Organising in East Wycombe

A Community Organising project has been running in East Wycombe in the areas of Bowerdean, Micklefield and Totteridge. The project has created a network of nine community organisations and through these organisations has had 400 conversations with residents on improving health and wellbeing for local residents and how the community, network and other partners can work together to make progress.

The priority areas identified through these conversations were housing and the environment, and the need for a programme of youth activities for those aged 5 to 18 years.

Work is underway to develop projects to address the priority areas identified. A project fund is available to support new initiatives which can demonstrate they have plans to be sustainable when the project funding ceases. A first round of applications has been agreed for the following two projects:

1. Managing your Home and Garden in East Wycombe
2. Health and Wellbeing Youth Project in East Wycombe.

A commemorative poster celebrating the work completed by the local residents has been produced and presented to all the Community Leaders and a meeting was organised on Thursday 5th April to which all local Councillors were invited to discuss the project.

Mental Health Informational Resource

The Public Health Team is supporting schools to promote mental wellbeing and support those who suffer from or are at risk of development mental health problems, by producing and Mental Health Information Resource. This resource is aimed at school leaders, teachers, pastoral leads and designated staff for vulnerable people, in both primary and secondary schools

The resource provides in one place all the nationally available evidence around a whole school approach to promoting mental wellbeing and is complemented with local information on current initiatives, resources and support agencies. This resource was developed in collaboration with a range of professionals including school representatives to include local examples of practice.

The resource is now accessible as an e-resource on the public health webpages hosted on the SchoolsWeb. It will be a live document and will be updated bi-annually as and when review information becomes available.

Buckinghamshire Physical Activity Strategy 2018-23

The Buckinghamshire Physical Activity Strategy was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 29th March. Over 30 organisations have been involved in the development of this multi-agency strategy, as well as many teams across the Council. The strategy aims to increase physical activity levels by encouraging inactive residents into regular activity and supporting all residents to meet the Chief Medical Officer guidelines of at least 150 minutes a week for adults and at least 60 minutes a day for children.

The strategy reviews why being physically active is important in Buckinghamshire and outlines some of the realisable benefits in tackling this issue. It identifies the groups that are most likely to be inactive and sets out a framework of four principles based on national policy, evidence and best practice that can support the achievement of the aims. The four principles are: Active Environments, Active Communities, Skilled Workforce and Working Collaboratively.

The case for being regularly active is compelling and we need to make physical activity part of everyone's everyday life. We need a system wide approach to making being active the easy choice for residents, particularly for those who are currently inactive.

An annual multiagency action plan will be developed to deliver the strategy, involving a wide range of partners and Council colleagues.

Registration Service - Weddings and the snow

During the recent severe weather events, the Registrars team attended 30 weddings on time and with each one going ahead as planned. The service spoke to couples during the week leading up to their wedding to provide reassurance and also contacted all venues to ensure that they were fully accessible, for example with clear driveways (if not the venues arranged for transport). The service also made arrangements for staff with 4x4 vehicles to collect colleagues from home without needing to call on the Bucks & Oxon Resilience Group (BORG).

Many of the venues were in remote parts of the County, with the south proving more challenging.

As well as the 30 weddings, the service held a British Citizenship ceremony where some 20 new citizens were welcomed into Buckinghamshire and couples attended appointments to undertake their legal preliminaries ahead of their weddings. There was also a planned Open Morning at the Beaconsfield Registration Office which had been heavily publicised, which was attended by around 30 couples.

Both periods of bad weather were difficult to manage as the forecasts were changing constantly. However, the Registrars maintained their 100% record of attending weddings despite whatever weather and travel disruptions faced.

Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village 2018

The County Council is once again one of the sponsors of the Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village competition. Information and entry forms are currently being sent out to parish and town councils across the county by the competition organisers. The deadline for entries is 30th April 2018 and judging will take place in June and July. The winners will be announced by the end of July, and the presentations will take place in the winning villages on 15th September.

Street Association update

Hughenden Street Association

The Hughenden Street Association currently has 89 members covering 59 streets with a dedicated and engaged group of residents on the Steering Group. Eighteen local businesses are supporting the initiative.

Two coffee afternoons have been created as new community assets – Monday Mingle in the Naphill ward and Welcome Wednesdays in Hughenden Valley ward - which help vulnerable adults connect with their neighbours and reduce isolation.

During the recent snow, Street Members were taking care of their neighbours by checking their needs and shopping for basics supplies. One Member is now baking for three vulnerable residents who she met whilst delivering letters from her Street Association pack.

Quarrendon Street Association

Quarrendon Street Association launched on 26th Sept 2017 and currently has 24 members including an active volunteer Street Lead who, with other Street Members, has transformed her street. Three elderly residents are now regularly checked on and Street Members are helping with their garden maintenance.

Quarrendon Street Association has organised a wide range of other activity, including litter picks, developing a local open space for sure by residents and a Street Easter egg hunt. One Street Member, who was isolated herself until she became a member, expressed how the Street Association has changed her life and created friendships. She now volunteers once a week in the local Community Café at St Peter's Church.

The Street Association arranged for a Dementia Friends workshop to be held for Haydon Abbey Year 6 students and planned for intergenerational IT safety workshops to be delivered by 6th form college students to residents over the age of 50 at the end of April.

Pond Park Chesham

The third Street Association in Pond Park, Chesham, launched on 29th November 2017 and has since recruited 26 members covering 18 streets. Seven local groups and businesses are supporting the Street Association. One resident, a carpenter by trade, has offered 'handyman' services for local residents when the need arises.

Burnham

The Burnham Street Association launched on 27th February 2018. This is the smallest of the schemes launching in just 6 roads, covering a population of 400 residents.

As part of their role, the Street Associations are keen to help their local communities stay safe and so link closely with the Trading Standards service. In addition to some of the community based activity provided above, in the last year, Trading Standards has recorded 14 doorstep crime incidents in the Street Association pilot areas, representing £132,008 of fraud.

Twelve persistent victims of scamming living within the Street Association areas have also been reported to Trading Standards in the last year. Each victim is now the subject of intensive work to reduce their susceptibility to scams (mail, telephone and internet) and stem their losses.

As a result of the Council's work on Street Associations, we have had interest in the model from other local areas and other organisations. Work is continuing to recruit more members and a recent promotional video has been completed <https://youtu.be/ecrOrX-n0aw>. A longer case study video is currently in production.

BorrowBox – A New Free Audiobook Service

A new digital collection called BorrowBox, brings 847 new audio titles to our customers and is a mixture of adult, young adult and children's titles of both fiction and non-fiction.

The BorrowBox collection will replace RBdigital (formerly known as OneClickdigital). We will continue to have eBooks and eAudio available on OverDrive, but new titles will now be on BorrowBox.

The new supplier has been chosen as they have more recent titles on offer and we are able to offer more than twice the number of titles we had previously at less than half the cost.

With no subscription costs, late fees or reservation fees up to 5 titles can be borrowed at one time. The BorrowBox collection can be accessed with a library card number and PIN at library.bolindigital.com/buckinghamshire

**NOEL BROWN
CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

9D CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Country Parks

Country Parks have had another extremely successful year with some notable additions to the facilities including car park extensions at Black Park and Denham. Go Ape has added the Nets Kingdom to their portfolio of activities at Black Park, attracting an additional 14,000 visitors. A review of car park charges has been implemented across all sites and has generated an additional income of £130k, off-setting increasing costs of site management resulting from additional wear and tear from the growing visitor numbers.

Notable end of year statistics include:

- Visitor numbers:- **Total 1,009,696**

Black Park	640,378
Langley Park	207,438
Denham	161,880

- Customer satisfaction from Trip Advisor:- **Average 94.1% good or excellent**

Black Park	95.4% good or excellent
Langley Park	98.6% good or excellent
Denham	88.2% good or excellent

- Annual Turnover (total income generated):- **£1,086,829**

Car Parking	585,778
Lease income	281,082
Filming	130,725
Events	37,168
Sales & other income	28,959
Grants & S106	23,119

A partnership project with the Environment Agency (EA), The Wild Trout Trust and the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) has been completed on the lower stretches of the River Misbourne at Denham Country Park to improve the river habitats for water voles and wild trout. Works have been valued at £40k and these have been funded by the EA through the Wildlife Trust and delivered by volunteers and local contractors.

Update from Planning and Enforcement Team

Despite a threefold increase (from 10 in 2016/17 to 30 in 2017/18) in the number of unauthorised encampments in Buckinghamshire in 2017, the average time for clearance has remained at circa 10 days. The team has led on the drafting of an emerging Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which will provide a framework for much better joined-up and collaborative working with partners in dealing with unauthorised encampments.

The Planning team has determined 100% of planning applications 'in time' since June 2017. This is a major improvement of 50% 'in time' at the end of 2016. The team has also commenced the first confiscation proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act in relation to a successful planning enforcement conviction. This is in relation to a property

in South Bucks where the team successfully prosecuted a breach of a planning enforcement notice. The defendant will now appear before Crown Court where the judge will scrutinise the financial benefit of the illegal activity. If it is found that the defendant has financially benefited from the crime, he may be ordered to pay a fine, a percentage of which is paid to the County Council.

Despite rising fly-tipping totals across Buckinghamshire for the last 5 years, there was an unprecedented number of convictions in 2017: a total of **72 cases** prosecuted successfully against fly-tipping in Bucks. The total bill awarded against the dumpers at court was **£129,500**. This amounts to, on average, one fly-tipping conviction per week in Bucks for the last eight years. In Buckinghamshire, the chance of being prosecuted for fly tipping is 1 in every 33 compared to a national average of 1 in every 438, highlighting the success of Buckinghamshire's zero tolerance approach.

Rights of Way Update

Our volunteer partners have provided a fantastic 2335 hours of labour during the last year – (with an estimate value for work in kind at £40k - £50k) – completing over 430 jobs on the Rights of Way network including, amongst others :-

- Installed 80 gates
- 60+ Stiles
- 100 waymarking posts
- 80 trees cleared
- And 26 kilometres of paths cleared of vegetation

This is a magnificent achievement and the work of our volunteers supporting the network is greatly appreciated and I wish to hold an event to thank them personally in the summer.

River Restoration at Pednormead End in Chesham

Buckinghamshire County Council carried out some restoration work to the Missenden Stream during January and February 2018. The works are to restore part of a chalk stream which is a globally rare habitat, confined mainly to North West Europe. England has the majority of the world's chalk streams and, as such, has a special responsibility to conserve this rare wildlife habitat. The Missenden Stream is a tributary of the River Chess which is one of a number of chalk streams which rise in the Chiltern Hills.

By carrying out this restoration work, this section of the river Chess will be restored to more a "natural" state and allow the natural chalk stream processes to re-create habitat. Once the habitat is created, the flora and fauna will come back to this reach of the river Chess. This work is the first part of a flood management scheme at Pednormead End, Chesham which will be seeking to manage flooding to 100 properties. Restoring this part of the river will allow base flows and groundwater to flow in a more natural way, reduce the sedimentation and allow flood water to more naturally flow onto the natural floodplain. This has been done by restoring the river channel to a more natural shape and size where it has been extensively modified having been widened, deepened and impounded by two concrete weirs.

Draft Bucks Minerals & Waste Local Plan

Good progress is being made on the Draft Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, in line with our published Local Development Scheme, see <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/environment/planning/minerals-and-waste-local-plan/documentation-local-development-scheme/> for more details. The Draft Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (BMWLP) is a statutory plan to ensure we have up to date policies and site allocations to meet our needs in terms of minerals aggregate (sand and gravel) and waste disposal, in line with Government guidance.

We will now review the representations received (only eight received so far) and address any issues raised before submitting the Draft Plan and all our evidence to the planning inspector by the 31 May 2018. An Examination In Public will follow, expected to be in September 2018, with an Inspector's report expected later this year and adoption by Bucks County Council in early 2019.

Please contact the minerals and waste policy team with any enquiries at mineralswastepolicy@buckscc.gov.uk

Waste Management 2017-2018 Review

Whilst the official figures for 2017-18 are yet to be finalised, we expect that we have recycled or composted 57% of our waste across the county, an increase on last year's performance. The amount of waste that was not sent for recycling, or composting has also reduced, by more than 1,900,000 tons compared to 2016-2017, this is equivalent to the weight of a thousand cars. That waste now goes to Greatmoor, instead of landfill, so whilst not recycled. It will help generate electricity for the local area, enough to power 40,000 homes

The waste team has worked well with district partners to deliver the Fighting Food Waste project, which has seen a significant increase* in food waste collected for recycling in the second half of 2017-18. The Household Recycling Centres also remained open throughout the adverse weather this winter, with just one site needing an extra 30min to clear the snow to allow residents safe access. Whilst maintaining excellent satisfaction rates, the ten household recycling sites have also recycled or composted around 3/4 of waste brought in by residents.

A number of large-scale projects have been developed throughout 2017-18, aimed at ensuring long-term waste infrastructure remains robust and able to deal with future demand. Whilst waste has hit the national headlines, with ocean plastic, deposit return schemes etc. The waste team has continued to promote the excellent waste services reaching an average of 40,000 local people a month**

*653,000 tons extra October - February

**Social media only, BCC generated content.

Bucks Strategic Infrastructure Plan

Buckinghamshire County Council is making good progress on the development of a non-statutory strategic infrastructure plan, the first stage of which is the preparation of a programme to identify strategic infrastructure priorities across our county, in line with emerging District Local Plans and County Council strategies. Several workshops have already been undertaken with District colleagues to agree an approach and identify a range of strategic infrastructure needs, including roads, schools, public transport, flood risk management, digital connectivity, cultural amenities and green infrastructure.

Through this work and through working in partnership with the District Councils, we have attracted over £33million of additional funding for strategic infrastructure and are working with central government on a further £200 million of funding for critical strategic infrastructure investment in the future. Work is ongoing, led through the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure service and will be reported to the Select Committee and Cabinet later in the year.

District Local Plans

Buckinghamshire County Council continues to work with the Buckinghamshire Districts on their Local Plans and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) on their Draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) and with Wycombe District Council (WDC) on their Draft Wycombe Local Plan (WLP). Both these Local Plans have been submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination. Hearings are expected to take place later in the year.

Buckinghamshire County Council continues to engage with the Chiltern and South Bucks Districts (CDC and SBDC) on their emerging Joint Local Plan and to continue liaison with AVDC, WDC, CDC and SBDC District Cabinet member colleagues through regular meetings of the Bucks Planning Group. Buckinghamshire County Council continues to work with the Districts on the delivery of Local Plans in relation to service planning and funding for strategic infrastructure, including negotiation on developer contributions for schools, highways and transport, and with Bucks Thames Valley LEP and the Natural Environment Partnership on the implementation of their strategies.

As well as working alongside our District colleagues on their Local Plans, we also work with our neighbouring authorities on their Local Plans and have recently commented on the Mayor's Draft London Plan, Milton Keynes Draft Local Plan, Central Bedfordshire's Draft Local Plan and Dacorum's Local Plan (Issues and Options). We are actively working with other planning authorities to keep Buckinghamshire thriving and attractive. We are also active members of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group which was set up to manage and mitigate the impacts of the proposed expansion of London Heathrow Airport.

Aylesbury Garden Town

Buckinghamshire County Council is a joint partner with AVDC, South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and Bucks and Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (BTVLEP) for the Aylesbury Garden Town project which is gaining momentum with key stakeholders towards master-planning a vision for growth in Aylesbury. Aylesbury was awarded Garden Town status in January 2017, which means targeted support from DCLG, DfT and HCA (Homes and Communities Agency) and has attracted a total of £1.4 million to invest in the Garden Town project. An Aylesbury Garden Town website is expected to be launched soon, meanwhile further details on the project can be found at

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/environment/planning/aylesbury-garden-town/>

Bucks and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre

Transport Economy Environment's (TEE) Bucks and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Team (BMERC) recently hosted another highly successful annual Recorders Seminar. Over 90 people, a record number, attended a one day conference at Green Park. The day is a long standing popular event in volunteers' calendars and is designed as a reward for all their hard work collecting information on the wildlife of Bucks (all of which is free! and might cost BCC in excess of £250k - £500k a year if we had to buy it), and as a networking opportunity for professionals and amateurs alike. There was a mix of expert talks with updates from county experts and BMERC staff who all work towards better understanding why Buckinghamshire's environment is so special.

**BILL CHAPPLE
CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**

9E CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

What is GDPR?

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) replaces the Data Protection Act 1998 from 25th May 2018.

In very general terms the GDPR imposes stricter data protection requirements on the Council and potentially more significant penalties for data protection breaches. The GDPR represents an enhancement of our current regulations (the Data Protection Act) and should be seen as an 'evolution' of existing legislation, not a 'revolution'. The principal change is that the Council must now evidence its compliance with the law, this is known as the 'accountability principle' (Article 5 Section 2 GDPR) – meaning we must now '**show**' rather than just '**tell**'. This will mean a greater emphasis on governance and documented compliance.

Risk

The Council is adopting a risk-based approach to preparing for GDPR, which has been externally ratified by Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC). Such an approach focuses our activity on priority areas as we understand them based on the legislation and ICO guidance; accepting that as case law begins to accumulate and the legislation is interpreted into practice our priorities may need to be adjusted. This type of approach is being adopted by many organisations to mitigate the inherent uncertainty around preparing to comply with new legislation.

The key risk around the GDPR is the potential severity of financial penalties. Based on information currently available, our understanding is that the maximum penalty could be based on:

- 4% of annual budget allocation from national government (a close analogue to 'turnover' which is how the penalty is framed in current ICO guidance)
- Or 20million euros whichever is higher

Although these maximum penalties appear severe, what we understand from the ICO's guidance and practice around issuing penalties under the current legislation is that:

- Large penalties are rare, and tend to be focused more in the private than public sector
- Largest ever fine is £400,000 to TalkTalk and the largest public sector fine is £325,000 which was for Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust Penalties are seen by the ICO as a deterrent rather than a punishment
- The ICO will take into account sector, size, financial and other resources of an organisation and "it is not the purpose of a penalty notice to impose undue financial hardship"

What does GDPR mean for Members?

County Councillors under both the new GDPR and current Data Protection Act have a responsibility to protect personal data and use it in a fair and legal way. There are no specific County Councillor provisions within the new legislation but it is important to note that some of the burden for complying with the law will fall with Councillors. This is because GDPR requires those who use data on behalf of somebody else (data processors) to be more active in their compliance under the new law. Councillors' case work will often involve 'data processing' activity - when residents share information about themselves with Councillors or via Council Officers.

The GDPR Project Delivery Team are currently working on a range of support and training provisions for BCC Members and this will include the following:

- E-Learning training via our Learning Management System (this is same training that all BCC Officers will need to complete). This will be released w/c 23rd April and will have a deadline for completion of the end of May.
- ½ day face to face training specifically for Members with ‘real life’ scenarios – to be held 2nd May 2018.
- A Member ‘handbook’ with guidance of what exactly GDPR means for you. This will be available from the start of May.
- Update of the Members’ section on the Intranet and Internet (linking to the BCC Policies) will be live by end of May – in line with GDPR Go Live date.

Workplace Heroes

Cabinet members were delighted to present at the annual Bucks County Council Staff recognition awards at the Waterside Theatre on Tuesday 20th March. There were 196 nominations this year, showcasing the breadth and quality of the County Council’s excellent staff. This, compared to 129 nominations in 2017 is a 52% increase. 65 of the 196 nominations were considered against more than one award, taking the total number of submissions to 261.

The Award Categories and Winners are listed below:

Award Categories			
	Name	Job Title	Area
Creating Opportunities and Building Self Reliance	June Casemore	Assistant Team Manager	CS
Keeping Buckinghamshire Thriving and Attractive	Sustainable Drainage (SUDS)	-	TEE
Safeguarding our vulnerable	Christine Kingman	Care Worker	CHASC
Living our accountable value	Finance Direct Payment Team	-	Resources
Living our ambitious value	Donna Aldridge	Commercial Operations Lead Officer	TEE
Living our caring value	Jane Grant	Registration Technical Officer	CHASC
Living our collaborative value	Kate Walker	Business Strategy Manager	ACES
Apprentice of the year	Sophia Brannan	Apprentice Business Administrator	CS
Team of the year	Adult Social Care Occupational Therapy Service team	-	CHASC
Manager of the year	Chrissy Urry	Head of Highways DM	TEE
Employee of the year	Diane Murphy	Resourcing Consultant	Resources

Gender Pay Gap

All organisations were required to publish information on their Gender Pay Gap (GPG) by 31st March 2018. The GPG measures the difference in average earnings between men and women. The GPG does not show differences in pay for comparable jobs, and within BCC we have worked extensively to introduce a fair, transparent pay structure which values men and women equally.

Bucks CC published its GPG information before the deadline and the following metrics, as set out in the legislative requirements, show that BCC has an organisational pay gap in favour of males:

Mean hourly pay:	7.8%
Median hourly pay:	5.4%
Mean bonus amount:	2.6%
Median bonus amount:	6.1%

The overall gender split is 75.2% female: 24.8% male, our quartile data show that females are underrepresented in senior positions and males are underrepresented in more junior ranges (4-5).

Quartile	Male	Female	CBP Pay Range
4 th quartile: (top)	27.9%	72.1%	Range 8+
3 rd quartile:	23.2%	76.8%	Range 6-7
2 nd quartile:	19.4%	80.6%	Range 4-5
1 st quartile (bottom)	23.1%	76.9%	Up to Range 3

This data shows that, in common with many other organisations, our gap is influenced by having fewer women in our more senior roles and with a greater concentration of women than men in our caring roles – which are typically at Range 4.

When we look at published County Council data for the median pay gap, we see that BCC is placed 6th lowest out of 29, ranging from Nottinghamshire at 25.4% and Dorset at -6.5%.

Lowest Median Gap		Median Pay Gap %
1	Dorset County Council	-6.5
2	Hertfordshire County Council	-0.4
3	Oxfordshire County Council	0.1
4	Northumberland County Council	0.5
5	Durham County Council	4.3
6	Buckinghamshire County Council	5.4
7	Northamptonshire County Council	6
8	Worcestershire County Council	9.2
9	Norfolk County Council	9.7
10	Essex County Council	9.7

	Highest Median Gap	Median Pay Gap %
21	Devon County Council	17
22	Cambridgeshire County Council	18
22	Kent County Council	18.2
23	Suffolk County Council	18.6
24	Leicestershire County Council	20
25	Lancashire County Council	20.3
26	Hampshire County Council	21.7
27	Cumbria County Council	25.1
28	Derbyshire County Council	25.3
29	Nottinghamshire County Council	25.4

Whilst within County Councils we have a small median pay gap, we remain organisationally ambitious to address this gap and our actions include a review to understand BCC's comparative position against peers and to use this benchmarking information to inform possible future action.

Initial national media commentary is already highlighting issues around flexible work patterns at senior levels; societal 'norms' of male and female roles; statutory family friendly policies still placing the female as the primary carer. Through the spring and summer we expect to see a national debate on these issues plus deeper analysis of this new pay gap data.

Pension Fund Pooling

On 16 February 2017, the Council agreed that the Buckinghamshire Pension Fund enter into investment pooling with the other Brunel Pension Funds – Avon, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, the Environment Agency, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, and Wiltshire. The investment strategy remains the responsibility of the LGPS Pension Funds, with an FCA regulated Local Authority Company (Brunel Pension Partnership Ltd) created on an equal share basis to appoint the fund managers and manage the investments of the pension funds in order to deliver their investment strategies.

The objective of the pooling arrangements is to deliver savings over the longer term from both lower investment management costs and more effective management of the investment assets. Brunel will deliver savings based upon the collective buying power the collaboration initiative provides.

The company, Brunel Pension Partnership Ltd, was created in July 2017; following several months of recruitment, the 32 staffing roles, including the Chair and Non-Executive Directors, have now been filled.

The Brunel Oversight Board, consisting of representatives from each Pension Fund Committee, has been established to oversee the Council's investments and participation in the Brunel Pension Partnership. On 16 March 2018 Brunel Pension Partnership received its authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority to operate as a financial services firm. This approval now allows Brunel to provide advisory and discretionary investment management services, to their Clients, the Funds.

Brunel's Responsible Investment Strategy has been developed to provide clarity that Brunel's approach focuses on financially material risks and opportunities ensuring the fulfilment of its fiduciary duties, to provide Brunel's clients with clarity on the approach

responsible investment and responsible stewardship framework from which to publish a public facing Responsible Policy to support our commitment to transparency and stakeholder engagement.

Waterside North Programme

The Council is currently taking forward a programme of work to deliver benefits for this strategically important area of Aylesbury. This incorporates development that aims to maximise investment and generate income for the Council, with a focus on preserving the appearance and history of the buildings in question. A number of projects are being progressed within this programme, including those briefly outlined below.

The former Police Headquarters, on the corner of Walton Road and Exchange Street, has been earmarked for redevelopment as an A3 food and beverage/ restaurant unit. Discussions are currently underway with a SE Asian- themed bar and grill restaurant operator to this end, with a view to potentially opening in August 2018.

An outline planning application has been submitted to AVDC for an extensive redevelopment of the Old County Offices. The proposal is to convert these into high end residential accommodation (32 apartments in total), with a potential completion time of August 2019.

Plans to develop the Judges Lodgings, County Court, Porters Lodge into a single establishment are also being progressed. These buildings would form part of an innovative and tasteful conversion into a 60-room boutique-style hotel complex. Discussions are currently being finalised with the proposed operators, Bespoke Hotels, with a potential opening of March 2020.

Proposals for the public realm of this area include a restyling and uplift of the pedestrian link between Walton Street and the new Exchange & Cinema development and the remodelling of Walton Street. These plans include a new taxi rank, quality landscaping and more pedestrian-friendly links to shopping, the Waterside theatre and to bus and railway stations.

The Lending Library and Study Centre would benefit from a proposed rejuvenation and modernisation. This work would include a consolidated offering of reference and lending facilities as well as a reconfiguration and refurbishment of other existing facilities to provide a new conference centre and meeting rooms. This work would also create a new ground floor corner entrance to the NCO building, which will allow provision for an A3 food and beverage unit/ café.

**JOHN CHILVER
CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES**

9F CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Department for Education (DfE) appointed Commissioner for Buckinghamshire

Following the inspection of Children's Safeguarding Services in November 2017, a high level Action Plan was presented to Cabinet in February before we submitted to Ofsted and Department for Education (DfE). The Action Plan is split into priority areas based on the findings and recommendations in the Ofsted report.

The high level Action Plan is supported by detailed operational plans which focus on the three areas of the inspection framework: leadership, management and governance; children who need help and protection; and children looked after and achieving permanence.

As the Local Authority has been judged inadequate for the second time, the DfE has recently appointed John Coughlan CBE as the Children's Services Commissioner for Buckinghamshire following the November 2017 inspection. Mr Coughlan has been tasked to assess the Council's capacity and capability to improve its Children's Services in a reasonable timeframe. He and his team will work closely with the Council over the next few months and will report to the DfE with a recommendation about the future of Children's Services in Buckinghamshire at the beginning of June. Mr Coughlan will also Chair the Improvement Board overseeing the implementation of the Action Plan.

Mr Coughlan is the current Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council, a former Director of Children's Services and a past President of The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS).

For further details, please see the link below to the revised direction that was issued to the Council at the beginning of March.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-direction-issued-to-buckinghamshire-county-council>

Increasing local provision – Children's residential placements

Currently, there is a low level of local residential provision for vulnerable children and as a result too many of our young people are being placed out of county. In April 2017, Cabinet agreed to the development of up to four new local authority homes providing 20 new in-house residential care beds.

We have completed the refurbishment of our first residential care home in Aylesbury and a successful recruitment campaign has resulted in the appointment of a skilled and experienced residential manager and staff group. All staff have now completed an in-depth induction and the necessary training. An Ofsted registration is required to open the home which has been submitted and is expected to be approved by early June 2018. Every effort is being made to bring this date forward if at all possible.

Last month, the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee Chairman and the local member joined me in a visit to the home. This gave members the opportunity to see for themselves how the home has been developed to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable young people and the work carried out by staff with the local community.

We continue to see an increase in the number of young people who need our support and are moving ahead with the development of three further homes. The site for the proposed second residential care home is also in Aylesbury. The site is already owned by Buckinghamshire County Council and does not require extensive development. We anticipate that the home can be brought on line relatively quickly and aim to have it open by the end of 2018. Further work is underway to identify an additional two sites in the south of the county and it is anticipated that these two homes (homes 3 & 4) will open in 2019.

Early Help Update

Over the last few months, the Council has been talking with local councillors, residents, schools and partners, holding public meetings and sharing plans for the new early help service and the suggested future use of children's centres and youth buildings in the local community. As a result of these conversations, the Council wants to do more to capture the views of residents and local families before implementing the new service and will be carrying out a further public consultation in the next few months. As such, the Council will not be implementing the decision made by Cabinet on 8 January 2018 in relation to moving to the new service.

The Council recognises the strength of feeling amongst families and the local community about the changes we are proposing and want to continue to have these discussions. I hope residents and families will feel reassured that we are listening to their concerns and want to work with them to shape the support for families going forward.

We would like to reaffirm that our current early help service, which includes children's centres, is not as effective as it needs to be in supporting the most vulnerable children and families as early as possible. We are committed to developing a new early help service that helps those who need it the most.

Fostering and adoption information sessions

Information sessions are the public face for our Fostering and Adoption Services. There are events up and down the county that offer members of the public the opportunity to learn more about the experience of being a carer or adopter with Buckinghamshire County Council. We advertise these events widely and attract people from all over the county and beyond our borders. These events are the first step in the recruitment process and grow enquiries into applications.

The Fostering Service works across the county with the information events covering Buckingham, High Wycombe, Aylesbury and other venues. The events range from information evenings to coffee mornings. It has a large Facebook following and events are promoted widely. The information events include experienced carers and young people in our care sharing their experiences of fostering. These events provide a warm welcome to being a foster carer and are usually well received. The new Recruitment Team is developing these events further and are looking to draw on the potential of our local communities.

The Adoption Information Evenings are advertised on the website and via our social media. They are usually held on the first Monday evening of the month and alternate between the north and south of the county. Uptake from these sessions is good and one recent attendee commented they found the evening, "*a friendly, informative and emotional evening... a perfect introduction*". Details of upcoming events are detailed below:

Fostering:

- Thursday 3 May, 7pm at Buckingham Opportunities Centre, Well Street, Buckingham, MK18 1EN
- Wednesday 9 May, 7pm, Coleshill Village Hall, Barracks Hill, Coleshill, Amersham, HP7 0LN

Adoption:

- Monday 9 April, 6.30pm at Green Park, Aston Clinton
- Tuesday 15 May, 6.30pm at Chesham Town Hall
- Monday 4 June, 6.30pm at Green Park, Aston Clinton

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

The DfE (2017) statutory definition states that:

“Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.”

The National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day on 18 March 2018 aimed to highlight the issues surrounding CSE; encouraging everyone to **think, spot and speak out against abuse** and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children or children developing inappropriate relationships with children.

To show support for the national campaign via social media, people were invited to write a personal pledge on their hand, take a photo and post it to their Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or other social media account using the hashtags #HelpingHands and #CSEDay18. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to my Cabinet colleagues who helped me promote the awareness day.

Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board partners ran an information stall at Friars Square Shopping Centre in Aylesbury on Monday 12 March between 3pm and 5pm to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation, giving the public advice on how to spot warning signs and how to report concerns about a child.

Buckinghamshire’s Safeguarding Children Board is a collaboration of agencies who work with children and young people in the county and includes Buckinghamshire County Council, the four District Councils, Thames Valley Police, Barnardo’s R U Safe, and health organisations. Together, they run a partnership CSE awareness campaign, ‘RUWise2it?’ which provides parents and the public with information on how to spot the signs of exploitation and how to report concerns. Please see www.RUWise2it.co.uk.

If you are concerned about a young person, you can contact the First Response Team (Children’s Social Care) on 0845 460 0001 or 01296 383962 or email: secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk. If you think a child or young person is in immediate danger call 999. Alternatively, contact your local police on 101 who will have a dedicated team you can talk to about child sexual exploitation.

Corporate Parenting Panel

When a child comes into care in Buckinghamshire, the Council becomes their **corporate parent**. That means that elected members, officers and key partners become responsible for making sure that looked after children and care leavers have the best possible care and that they are safe and well in the same way that a good parent would. The rule of thumb should always be “would this be good enough for a child of mine?”

Buckinghamshire’s corporate parents have agreed a local Pledge for looked after children and care leavers that promises to:

- Treat children and young people with respect and hear their voices
- Look after them
- Provide a good education for them
- Keep them healthy
- Support them to be independent

At the most recent Corporate Parenting Panel, a Life Chances Forum was set up to enable lead officers and partners to work together and progress key priorities. The current priorities, which have been agreed with care-experienced ‘We Do Care’ Champions, include:

- Education, employment and training
- Emotional health and wellbeing
- Annual celebration event (planned for August 2018)

Supporting young people with special needs who end up in the youth justice system: celebrating the work of 50 Youth Offending Teams and their Local Authority partners

Over 50 Youth Offending Teams have recently been working on a project to secure better outcomes for children and young people with special education needs (SEN) who end up in the youth justice system.

The two-year Department for Education-sponsored project, led by the national education charity Achievement for All (AFA), working in close partnership with the Association of Youth Offending Team Managers (AYM) and researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University, has helped to illuminate the distinct problems that many young people with SEN in the youth justice system face. The project team has identified and shared best practice from all over the country in addressing these complex needs and has created a set of quality standards for all participating area partnerships to aspire to. There are two awards: one for quality lead status and the other is quality mark status, and the Buckinghamshire Youth Offending Team did really well to be awarded a quality lead status.

Awarded Quality Lead Status

Buckinghamshire, County Durham, Milton Keynes, Nottinghamshire, Sheffield, Southwark, Staffordshire, Stockton-on-Tees, Warwickshire, West Berkshire.

Awarded Quality Mark Status

Bedfordshire and Bedford, Birmingham, Brent, Cheshire East, Islington, Lancashire, Salford, Somerset, Southampton, Slough, Wiltshire.

**WARREN WHYTE
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

9G CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

'Better Lives': Adult Social Care Transformation Programme

We know that most people want to stay living independently or at least in their own homes for as long as possible. To support our residents to remain healthy and independent, we recognise that we need to change the support that is offered. Underpinning the transformation programme is our new social work approach, which focuses on people's strengths and what they can do, rather than what they cannot.

The Transformation programme is explained in our strategy document 'Better Lives' which will be published at the end of April. The strategy explains the three tiers in the Transformation Programme – 'Living Independently', 'Regaining Independence' and 'Living with Support':

Living independently – through this tier we will make it easier for people to take care of themselves, work with others to strengthen local opportunities, make sure there is a wide range of information and advice, and make it as easy as possible for people to get help when they need it.

Key transformation projects will include:

- Development of greater community capacity to support people at home;
- A new integrated approach to prevention (universal preventative services, including health-related services); and
- Digital front door and the first point of contact.

Regaining independence – when people experience a crisis in their lives, we will work with them and their families in the short term to help them regain the independence they had and help them to become better able to manage issues in the future.

Key transformation projects will include:

- Improved front door to services (including mental health and learning disability) – including hospital and community pathways;
- Short-term intervention services (reablement, rapid response and intermediate care);
- Short term intervention and recovery for mental health; and
- Smart technology and assistive technology.

Living with support – for some, longer term social care services will be necessary, but where this is the case we will try to meet people's needs in a way which centres on them and the strengths they already have through family, friends and social networks.

Key transformation projects will include:

- Market shaping – the right services, now and for the future (for self-funders as well as County Council clients);
- Housing solutions – to support independence for longer; and to support our aging population;
- A whole-of-life approach to reduce the impact for people moving on from children's services (and other life stages); and
- Greater use of assistive technology.

Cutting through the Transformation Programme, and essential to its success, is the use of assistive technology and greater digital support for individuals. In my next report, I

will update Council on our very effective assistive technology programme and the emerging new developments.

Integrated Care System (ICS)/Health and Social Care Integration

The work being done to transform the Council's adult support offer includes working with health as part of the Buckinghamshire Integrated Care System (ICS), (previously referred to as the Accountable Care System).

The overall vision is 'Everyone working together so that the people of Buckinghamshire have happy and healthy lives' and the ICS is a way of working across partners within Buckinghamshire which will:

- transform services in a way that improves the quality of care and ensures financial sustainability;
- ensure that services are operationally effective and efficient;
- prevent and reduce incidence of physical and mental ill health conditions; and
- provide more care closer to home.

The new way of working is already starting to allow staff to work flexibly in partnership to meet people's needs and create a more positive experience for residents, providing seamless care across clinical pathways and organisational structures.

The key partners within the Buckinghamshire ICS (working closely with wider partners and stakeholders such as other local councils and the voluntary and community sector) include:

- Buckinghamshire County Council
- NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group (NHS Aylesbury Vale CCG and NHS Chiltern CCGs formally merged from 1 April 2018)
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- Two GP federations (FedBucks and Medicas)

In 2018/19, the partnership will continue transforming health and care services for the benefit of local communities, including developing new approaches to clinical leadership and quality improvement.

Winter Response

This winter season has seen some short, sharp severe weather events which have resulted in challenging working conditions for those staff who provide care and support to the vulnerable people of Buckinghamshire. The dedication and commitment from our own staff and those who provide care through commissioned services has been commendable to say the least. Some staff walked miles and others even carried on their duties after dealing with difficult circumstances.

The support of our voluntary partners Bucks & Oxon 4x4 Response Group (BORG) and Bucks Search & Rescue (BSAR) facilitated many care calls and meals deliveries, ensuring the health and wellbeing of our services users.

I am proud of the fantastic effort and great team working across the sector.

Adult Social Care Green Paper

The Government's Green Paper on care and support for older people is expected to be published by Summer 2019. The paper will set out the Government's proposals for improving care and support for older people and tackling the challenge of an ageing population. Ahead of publication, the Government has been consulting with a range of experts and the Council has contributed both directly and indirectly to this pre-publication stage.

Given the vital importance of this issue, we submitted a written response to the Parliament's Community and Local Government & Health Committee's call for evidence on long-term funding. In our response, we highlighted the significant financial and demographic pressures that we face, as well as the impact that a lack of sustainable social care funding has on progressing the integration agenda with health. We also emphasised the importance of the Government involving local authorities in identifying options and solutions on behalf of local residents, staff and partners.

Through the Council's active membership of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, we have also contributed to the national professional leads' response to the Government's plans and will continue to take all opportunities to ensure the future sustainability of Buckinghamshire services are articulated to policy-makers.

Social Care Workforce

Another key challenge for social care services is around the future social care workforce and in April the Council responded to a Government consultation about the future challenges in this area. The consultation provided the opportunity to highlight improvements that we feel would improve recruitment, retention, workforce development and workforce planning. The Government will be publishing its health and social care Workforce Strategy to 2027, in July to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the NHS.

Over the last three months, we have recruited nine permanent social workers and are currently recruiting for a further four. We are actively monitoring and managing the numbers of agency workers which has decreased by 16 since January 2018, representing a cost avoidance of £385k per annum.

Hughenden Extra Care Village

Earlier this month, I visited a new Extra Care site in High Wycombe. The Hughenden Gardens Extra Care Retirement Village is due to open in May 2018 and offers fully accessible apartments and on-site care and support, as well as other facilities, for those over aged 55 years old.

Buckinghamshire County Council has entered into a partnership with the Extra Care Charitable Trust (ECCT), the provider of the village, and Wycombe District Council which has provided the land in return for affordable housing. As a result of this partnership, the Council will have up to 75 nominations for the rental apartments which will be prioritised for those with an eligible social care need. In return, the County Council will fund the care costs of these apartments, including a commitment of £500k to underwrite the costs of the Village's care support team, if necessary.

The nominations for the County Council will offer a better quality of life alternative for individuals at risk of residential care or who are receiving high cost care packages in the community, but are struggling with their current accommodation. Although the primary focus is the better outcomes for residents, we estimate that this approach will additionally achieve annual savings in the region of £600k to £700k.

Since the beginning of March 2018, 11 applications for the rental apartments have been made and a joint allocation panel, between the County Council, Wycombe District Council and the ECCT, has been set up to review and approve applications.

**LIN HAZELL
CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

9H CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Early Years Commissioning Team – The Meeting the Sufficiency Duties for Early Years Provision

On 20 March 2018, the Buckinghamshire County Council Early Years Commissioning Team won a national award presented by Department for Education for our 'Sufficiency and Market Management'. The award is for the local authority who can best evidence having taken an effective approach to identifying its sufficiency of childcare provision, and developing the local sector's response through impactful market management.

In Buckinghamshire we have worked with our early years providers to prepare for and manage a challenging growth in market demand following the introduction of the extended entitlement for 30 hours for eligible three and four year olds. Our initial forecast in 2017 showed a potential under supply of over 3000 places across the county but, following extensive market management, we are now confident that all eligible families will be able to secure a high quality early education place.

This award recognises the value and importance that the Council places on supporting all our young children to have the best start in life through securing high quality early years provision.

Special Educational Needs and Educational Psychology Service – Delivering the Special Educational Needs Reforms set out within The Children and Families Act 2014

In 2014, The Children and Families Act set out new expectations for all Local Authorities so that children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) were able to access a more joined up offer of support across Education, Health and Social Care. Central to these reforms was the ambition to put children, young people and parents and carers at the centre of service delivery and this meant converting what was previously entitled Statements of Educational Need to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) by the end of March 2018. The new plans include a number of assessments from the relevant services and there is a statutory duty for these assessments to be completed within a 20 week timeline. To ensure the reforms have been fully embedded, Ofsted and the Clinical Quality Commission are inspecting Local Authorities.

An improvement plan was developed to prioritise action so that the SEN team were able to re-focus their work. In parallel, the Educational Psychology service has been supported by two experienced Interim Senior Educational Psychologists. The impact of these changes is now evident with all statements scheduled converted to Education Health and Care Plans at the end of March.

It is also pleasing to note that the backlog of cases that have impeded the ability for the Educational Psychology service to undertake its assessments within the prescribed timeline has now been addressed and based on current performance, we will be in line with national performance by the end of the year.

Ofsted Inspection Results

It is pleasing to note the positive outcomes from Ofsted inspections of schools between October 2017 and March 2018. During this period a total of 31 schools were inspected: 3 schools maintained their current judgements of 'outstanding'; 2 schools moved from 'requires improvement' to 'good'; and 22 schools retained their 'good' rating. The remaining 4 schools retained a 'requires improvement' judgement.

Good news from Buckinghamshire Schools

Spinfield School and **Kingswood School** have both achieved a Gold Sports Mark award

Great Marlow School won the Youth Sports Trust Award for Outstanding Schools

Widmer End School and **Millbrook Combined School** have both been awarded a Nurture Schools Award

Holmer Green Junior School received a Green Flag environmental award

Princes Risborough Primary School has been awarded a silver environmental award

St Peter's CE School achieved a Gold ArtsMark award for championing arts and culture

The Grange achieved a gold award for its work with Looked After Children

Aylesbury Vale Academy, Aylesbury High School, Cottesloe School, John Colet School, The Grange School, Sir Thomas Fremantle School and **The Royal Latin School** all received Bucks Young Carers Awards in recognition of their work in supporting young carers in their schools

Holtspur School is receiving an award for the Best Community Building 2017 for its new pre-school building

Heritage House School has been part of the Seeability project for eyecare support for children with SEND

Marsh Gibbon School was visited by the BBC Children In Need Rickshaw Challenge

Stone CE School made it through to the quarter final of CBBC (Children's BBC) quiz 'Top Class'

Padbury CE School made a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £10,000 to develop an outside play area

Bedgrove Junior School has received a £30,000 grant from William Harding Trust to upgrade computer equipment

Winslow CE School now has a new all-weather outdoor play area funded by a BCC grant

Overstone School's new library was decorated by HomeBase staff as part of a community action programme

Finally, three Buckinghamshire schools have opened new Early Years provision: Kingfishers Pre-school is now on site at **Mursley CE School**, **John Hampden Infant School** nursery is now open and **Halton School** has opened a new Pre-School.

St Michael's Catholic Satellite School Aylesbury

In order to meet the demand for additional secondary school places in Aylesbury, a proposal was taken forward to open a satellite to St Michael's Catholic School in High Wycombe on the former Quarrendon School site. The Local Authority wished to ensure that any new proposal within Aylesbury town met the local need and the wishes of parents, following discussions with the DfE, a statutory consultation was undertaken to open a satellite to St Michael's Catholic School. During the consultation period a total of 444 responses were received and 99% of those replying were in favour of the proposal.

The planning application for the Satellite was considered by Buckinghamshire County Council's Development Control Committee on 19th March 2018. Development Control Committee unanimously approved the application.

The School is due to open with 120 Year 7 pupils in September 2018 at a temporary site in the former Berton Hill Day Care Centre before moving into its new buildings on the former Quarrendon site in September 2019.

Youth Service

We Do Care Champions

The Youth Service has appointed a group of young people to the role of We Do Care Champions.

We Do Care (the name for the Children in Care Council in Bucks) is made up of children and young people in care or those leaving the care of Buckinghamshire County Council who want to make sure young people have their voices heard.

The Champions work closely with Corporate Parents (the name given to every elected Member and officer) who are responsible for making sure that young people in care have a voice.

The roles also provide the young people with a Level 2 qualification and opportunity to gain valuable work experience. This supports a commitment from BCC to support care leavers with training and employment opportunities.

Bucks Inspired Traineeships

The Youth Service's 'bucksinspired' traineeship programme continues to see great success. Our programme includes a level 1 qualification in 'Employability Skills'.

The programme has been a catalyst for vulnerable young people to change their lives. Feedback from our current work experience placements has been extremely positive and it has been wonderful to see the young people grow in confidence as they gain vital employability skills which will support them in the future.

Prior to starting the traineeship one young man had been suffering from anxiety, he rarely left his home, was socially isolated and was at risk of becoming long term NEET. When reflecting on his progress so far, he said "I never thought I would be able to answer a telephone" or "talk to others at work". Each week he is growing in confidence and is enhancing his communication skills. He said that the traineeship programme and his work experience placement has made a huge difference to his life and that he realised for the first time.

**MIKE APPLEYARD
CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS**