

County Council



Cabinet Member Reports

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL



Unitary

Progress has been significant since the last update. Following the passing of the Structural Changes Order on 22 May 2019, there has been a noticeable shift both politically and with officers towards working together to create the new council for Buckinghamshire.

On 3 June 2019, the first Shadow Authority meeting was held. In total over 130 Members attended the Shadow Authority meeting which was webcast on the [Shadow Authority's website](#). At the meeting Councillor Richard Scott from Wycombe District Council was voted as Chairman and Councillor Peter Strachan from Aylesbury Vale District Council the Vice Chairman.

At the meeting the Shadow Authority also adopted a Calendar of Meetings, agreed the Constitution and Code of Conduct, appointed external auditors, and agreed that there would be no allowances for Members of the Shadow Authority. This means that any incidental expenses incurred by Members will be covered by their existing council.

On 11 June 2019, the Shadow Executive also met for the first time, to confirm the appointment of the interim officers for the Shadow Authority. The Shadow Executive also agreed on a spending protocol for the transition period, details of the Implementation Team, and a comprehensive communications and engagement strategy. The meeting was also webcast on the [Shadow Authority's website](#).

The interim officers were confirmed as:

- Head of Paid Service and Implementation Team Leader – Rachael Shimmin (Buckinghamshire County Council).
- Implementation Team Deputy Lead – Bob Smith (Chiltern & South Bucks District Council).
- Finance / Section 151 Officer – Richard Ambrose (Buckinghamshire County Council).
- Monitoring Officer – Catherine Whitehead (Wycombe District Council).

In addition, there has been considerable communications with staff, Members and key partners including employee representatives, trade unions and Town and Parish Councils regarding the transition to a unitary authority.

Activity which has taken place recently includes:

- A Members' engagement and networking event which was attended by over 150 members.
- Staff roadshows across the county which any staff member regardless of their office base could attend. These were jointly led by the Chief Executive of the County Council and a Chief Executive from one of the District Councils and attended by around 1,000 staff.

- Regular briefings for Employee Representatives and Trade Unions, from both the Chief Executives and HR workstreams.
- Workshops with Town and Parish Councils to develop the future relationship between the different councils.

The appointment of the Chief Executive for the new council has also begun with final interviews scheduled for 18 and 19 July 2019.

Growth

Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation

Heathrow is consulting on its expansion proposals until 13 September 2019. As part of its consultation process, Heathrow will be holding a series of events in the local area for people to go along and learn more about the consultation.

The events for Buckinghamshire are:

Gerrards Cross

Tuesday 16 July,
2pm-8pm

Colston Hall,
8 East Common,
Gerrards Cross,
SL9 7AD

Beaconsfield

Thursday 1 August,
2pm-8pm

The Fitzwilliams Centre,
Windsor End,
Beaconsfield,
HP9 2JW

Iver

Thursday 22 August,
2pm-8pm

Absolutely Fitness
Richings Sports Park,
34A Wellesley Avenue,
Richings Park,
Iver,
SL0 9BN

In addition to proposals for flood storage areas in the Ivers, Heathrow are asking for views on flightpaths for the existing two runway airport and when the airport expands to three runways in or about 2026. The consultation material can be found here [Heathrow Expansion Consultation](#).

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with partners to provide a submission representing the views of the county.

Western Rail Link to Heathrow

The Western Rail Link to Heathrow (WRLtH) is a scheme proposed by Network Rail to link the Great Western mainline to Heathrow and would run through the Ivers area. All of the above ground track from the Great Western Mainline and the tunnel portal to Heathrow would be in Iver.

WRLtH would enable passengers from the west and Wales to travel to Heathrow without having to go into central London. WRLtH is required whether or not a third runway at Heathrow goes ahead.

Buckinghamshire County Council supports the scheme in principle but has a holding objection due to the permanent closure of Hollow Hill Lane in Iver. Despite the objection in summer 2018, Network Rail has yet to show how the impact of closing this north-south link between Iver and Slough will be mitigated.

However, Network Rail has confirmed that the spoil excavated from tunnelling will be disposed of at the existing CEMEX mineral site. This will prevent a significant amount of traffic needing to use local roads either to remove the spoil or to bring in inert waste to restore the CEMEX site.

Network Rail proposes to submit the Development Consent Order application by the end of the year. The application would be considered by independent examiners who will then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport. If approved the Western Rail Link would

be operational in about 2027, providing an option for residents in the north and west of the county and wider Heartlands area to access Heathrow directly by train via Bicester and Oxford.

Oxford to Cambridge Arc

England's Economic Heartland

England's Economic Heartland is specifically referenced in the Arc joint declaration between the Government and local partners as an organisation that provides a 'single local voice for strategic infrastructure across the Arc and beyond its boundaries'. Its initial framework for the overarching Transport Strategy will be launched at its annual conference on 16 July 2019 at the University of Hertfordshire. The Transport Strategy's vision is to 'connect our people and places with opportunities and services' in a way which improves overall quality of life and results in net environmental gain. Publication of the initial framework will mark the start of a wider engagement with residents, businesses and potential investors before the final version of the Strategy is prepared for publication in summer 2020.

Expressway

Highways England's consultation on route options (within its preferred corridor) for the Oxford – Cambridge Expressway is due to begin in autumn 2019. It will be the first point of public consultation. It is anticipated that Highways England will announce its preferred route the following year in autumn 2020.

I recently attended a public meeting in Brill on the Expressway to support the Leader of AVDC. This was a good opportunity to hear a wide variety of views and concerns about this project.

HS2

Letter to Secretary of State

On 1 May 2019, I wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport to ask him to cease all work in the county until Notice to Proceed (which has been again delayed until later this year) has been approved. This followed a Notice of Motion to Council and debate on 25 April 2019. Many other councils and organisations also made this request.

Unfortunately the Secretary of State wrote back to me on 17 May 2019 and declined to stop all works until Notice to Proceed has been approved. Therefore, HS2 Ltd is continuing to carry out early works including utilities diversions, archaeology, ground investigations and haul road construction to the Chilterns North Portal at Great Missenden.

Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF)

CEF and BLEF are funds available to local communities and businesses to help with the disruption that will be caused by the construction of phase one of HS2 between London and the West Midlands.

As at 29 June 2019 the total amount of funding brought into the county from the funds is £1,858,011. The most recent awards were to:

Padbury Village Football Club – new equipment	£ 2,440
Ballinger Waggoners Cricket Club – female coaching	£ 4,540
Open for Business - Promoting tourism in the central Chilterns Corridor	£ 120,303
Little Kingshill playground improvements	£ 28,000
Supporting Carers in Buckinghamshire	£ 70,907

Broadband

The Connected Counties programme has ensured that over 95.4% of all Buckinghamshire premises are now able to receive superfast broadband speeds. Furthermore, the appetite for increased speeds in Buckinghamshire is shown by the level of take-up in superfast-enabled areas. Of the 42,000 superfast broadband connections enabled in Contract 1, 68.33% of these have been taken up by residents, the second highest take-up rate in the country.

The Connected Counties programme, which is a partnership between Buckinghamshire County Council and Hertfordshire County Council, will come to a close in 2020 as scheduled. However, broadband deployment will continue to be rolled out through contracts managed by Buckinghamshire County Council and subsequently the new Buckinghamshire Council.

The Broadband team continues to work with BTVLEP to ensure that the digital priorities of the council are reflected in the Local Industrial Strategy, and with colleagues in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc in order to share best practice and highlight further digital infrastructure opportunities.

Health & Wellbeing Board

In June 2019, the Board received a detailed update on the progress of the [Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership and the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire Berkshire West \(BOB\) Sustainability Transformation Partnership plans to become an Integrated Care System by April 2020](#).

The Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership has provisionally determined which outcomes and actions are best driven at a place level (Buckinghamshire) and which at the larger BOB level. A key priority is developing the emerging primary care networks (PCNs). There will be 12 PCNs in Buckinghamshire each covering a population of approximately 30,000 to 50,000.

The Board also heard of work being carried out to ensure a robust service planning and engagement framework following a stakeholder workshop held in early June 2019. The Board gave their support to a [social isolation project being taken forward as part of the shared approach to prevention](#), including plans for a two day workshop to look at how we can work together as a system to tackle social isolation and loneliness, as well as endorsing the [Buckinghamshire Tobacco Control Strategy](#) recognising that all partners have a part to play in achieving a smoke free generation.

Brexit

Buckinghamshire County Council, working with partners locally, regionally and nationally, remains well positioned to address any potential challenges and opportunities arising from Brexit in Buckinghamshire. Over the past few months, we have continued to focus on supporting residents' access to the EU Settlement Scheme and we welcome the high number of applications recorded across the UK. We will continue to engage with partners and government ahead of the current deadline for leaving the EU on 31 October 2019, and remain committed to securing the best possible outcome for Buckinghamshire.

**MARTIN TETT
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

DEPUTY LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORTATION



REPORT 1: Review of Winter Maintenance

The gritting season started unseasonably early on 26 October, but the winter was milder overall, with only one snow event of note, which was well managed to keep strategic routes clear. Despite the apparently mild winter, the period was actually quite challenging to manage, with numerous evenings seeing temperatures close to zero.

This, coupled with wet periods throughout, meant that there was a consistent requirement for treatment over the period. As a result, significantly more treatments were undertaken when compared against averages (68 against a “planned” 55), and salt usage was high overall. Treatments were managed well from all depots, with no significant problems experienced related to winter treatment.

In 2019, TfB commence a project with our specialist winter systems supply chain partner, aimed to provide route-based forecasting in future seasons, with potential for significant savings through intelligence-led treatment each evening of only those routes with potential to fall below zero, rather than the more blanket approach currently undertaken. Data capture and analysis over 2019/20 will inform the necessary alterations to treatment routes in 2021.

REPORT 2: Update of Progression of Weed Treatment

Although there is no statutory obligation for the Council to provide such weed control, Buckinghamshire County Council allocated a sum of £500,000, in addition to the £100,000 already allocated, to be targeted at routine weed treatment across the county in 2019, designed to combat:

- a) the unsightly nature of unchecked significant weed growth across the county
- b) accelerated carriageway structural deterioration through root ingress and maturity
- c) inhibition of the efficient flow of surface water into and through drainage systems.

Routine weed spraying – a programme of three cycles of routine weed-spraying is ongoing across the county. Spray one commenced in late May focussing on kerbs and channels and rear of footpaths in urban footway areas, and despite some disruption in June due to wet weather, is predominantly complete in all areas. There is evidence of dieback of established weeds in sprayed areas; chemical checks are also undertaken as part of the process.

Spray two will be undertaken in July/August and spray three in September/October.



The chemical used is a non-residual contact herbicide, applied from a moving vehicle or via backpack spraying. Potential for using a dye within the herbicide to highlight areas treated was discounted due to the potential for negative feedback.

The programme is being undertaken by three contractors, all of whom have submitted competitive prices.

The initial intention was to undertake a programme of sweeping of weed detritus following spray three to remove dead material. Given the savings achieved as a part of the competitive process and the vigorous growth experienced during the early season, it has been decided to implement an additional sweep following die back after the first spray. This sweeping exercise commences on 1 July, and will be complemented by resource to remove any mature growth, thus giving a 'finished' appearance to swept areas. Resource will concentrate on non-traffic management areas initially and will co-ordinate activities on busier roads with pre-planned traffic management for other activities (gully emptying, grass cutting etc).

A further sweep will take place following completion of the third spray.

Clearance of mature weeds/self-seeded vegetation and general detritus / sign cleaning –

We've agreed to spend £100,000 on cleaning signs and removing established weeds (where spraying isn't effective). Our teams have been working on these since early May, targeting places where work is most needed.

Supply chain gangs have been active on targeted areas of the network since early May. These have, to date, been predominantly been used in areas of existing traffic management (for example grass cutting/gully emptying and plane/patch). Sign cleaning has been carried out, fed by LAT intelligence, across specific locations countywide.

Resource is now being switched to work with the sweepers to loosen/remove areas of established growth which require more manual activity, as noted above.



The intention once sweeping has progressed is to then target inter-urban 'A' roads (not included in routine weed spray) which will benefit from a holistic treatment (for example Amersham Bypass). This will require individually associated mobile traffic management to enable safe working, as gangs will be working in close proximity to live high speed traffic.

REPORT 3: 2019/20 Carriageway and Footway Surfacing Programme Overview

Over £18m will be invested in carriageway surfacing treatments, including £3.25m on plane and patch. A further £1.5m will be spent on footway structural repairs across the county.

Actual spend to the end of May = £5.3m

- **Conventional Surfacing** – This programme commenced in April and in order to complete all 42 schemes it is expected to run through until December. With resources also assisting with carrying out preparatory patching work associated with both the micro-surfacing and surface dressing programmes of work, only six schemes have been completed at the end of May.

- **Micro-surfacing** - 44 schemes, some with multiple roads, have been identified for delivery as part of this programme of works. Preparatory patching work is ongoing and will be completed in July. The headline treatment commenced in June and with two crews working across the county will be completed in August. Ancillary activities such as ironwork adjustments and the reinstatement of road markings have also commenced and are due to be completed by the end of September.
- **Surface Dressing** – 19 schemes have been identified for delivery as part of this programme of works. Preparatory patching work is ongoing and will be completed in July. The headline treatment is due to commence at the end of July and will be completed in August. Ancillary activities such as the reinstatement of road markings are due to be completed by the end of September.

An additional eight schemes have been identified for delivery during 2019/20. The locations prioritised by the Asset Team were sites treated in 2018 as part of the 2018/19 plane and patch programme of works. Further targeted patching works are ongoing and will be completed ahead of the headline treatment that is due to commence at the end of July. The reinstatement of road markings is due to be completed by the end of September.

Remedial work associated with previously completed work is expected to commence after the completion of the 2019/20 programme of works. All remedial work is due to be completed before the end of August.

- **Joint Sealing** – This activity is provisionally programmed to commence in September with completion expected in October. 14 schemes are currently being considered for delivery during 2019/20.
- **Footway Structural Repairs** – 21 schemes have been prioritised for delivery during 2019/20. Design and other pre-construction activities commenced in June with construction work expected to commence during the school summer holidays in August. With multiple supply chain partners working on this programme of works, it is expected all schemes will be completed at the beginning of Q3.

2019/20 Capital Delivery Programme – Other Budget Headings

A further £4.9m will be invested in improvements to countywide assets associated with street lighting, safety fencing, parking, casualty reduction, drainage, safety fences, traffic signals and bridges.

- **Street Lighting**

Budget = £2m

Over 400 life expired street lights are due to be replaced, along with the conversion of lighting in 18 subways and seven high mast assemblies in High Wycombe to LED.

As part of the Salix invest to save initiative, over 2,400 street lights will also be converted to LED during 2019.

All work streams to be completed in 2019.

- **Parking**

Budget = £20,000

The installation of smart parking technology across various locations in Marlow was completed in April.

A single Pay and Display scheme in Burnham/Taplow has been prioritised for installation during 2019/20. Installation in Q4 is subject to the outcome of a consultation that will take place before the end of 2019.

- **Casualty Reduction**

Budget = £250,000

Eight schemes have been identified for delivery as part of this programme of works. All have been programmed for delivery during 2019.

- **Drainage**

Budget = £1m

32 schemes have been identified for delivery as part of this programme of works. Five schemes have already been completed with a further 25 schemes to be delivered before the end of 2019. The remaining schemes will be delivered in Q4.

- **Safety Fences**

Budget = £250,000

Three schemes have been identified for delivery as part of this programme of works. All have been programmed for delivery during 2019.

- **Traffic Signals**

Budget = £452,000

Six schemes have been prioritised for delivery as part of this programme of works. One scheme has already been completed with the remaining five to be delivered before the end of 2019.

- **Structures**

Budget = £961,000

12 schemes have been identified for delivery as part of this programme of works. One scheme has already been completed with a further nine to be delivered before the end of 2019. The remaining schemes will be delivered in Q4.

Further information regarding individual schemes across all delivery streams can be found on the Members' Portal.

REPORT 5:

Road Safety Education Training and Publicity Schemes

Following detailed analysis of collision data, education and training schemes are targeted at vulnerable groups. These include:

April - Mobile phone campaign was launched during April 2019. This consisted of publicity via social media and an education event for Asda Safety Day in High Wycombe in partnership with Thames Valley Police (TVP), Bucks Fire & Rescue and RAF Benson (with their in car simulator). TVP launched a mobile phone detector device to be used throughout Thames Valley and were conducting enforcement during the campaign.

May – Sept. Motorcycling – Since May there have been social media posts promoting TfB's Be a Better Biker Motorcycle Assessment days for 2019. The first was in June and was well attended. They will be delivered by Thames Vale Advanced Motorcyclist and Aylesbury Advanced Motorcyclist Groups. A press release has gone out and we are sharing 'See Bike – Say Bike' campaign which aims to reduce the number of 'looked but did not see' collisions at junctions.

June - winter driving online module – TfB launched an innovative educational online winter driving module to promote safe winter driving in Dec 2018. In June 2019 TfB was successful in winning the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) 'Ringway Road Safety Award' for the Online Winter Driving Workshop at the 2019 awards ceremony.

June/July - Drink Drive campaign - A publicity event was held in The Eden Shopping Centre, High Wycombe with TVP, Bucks Fire & Rescue and TfB to launch our summer drink drive campaign. The focus is on the 'morning after' and will be supported with a press release, social media campaign and radio advertising with Mix 96. <http://morning-after.org.uk>
TVP will be conducting drink drive enforcement during the campaign throughout the county and TfB will be supporting with education at the roadside.

During **August** we will be focusing on speed. This will involve a press release, social media, a publicity event and enforcement in partnership with TVP. We will also be undertaking a review of the TfB speed reduction campaign for communities.

2019/20 Casualty Reduction Schemes

Analysis of collision data has been conducted to identify sites for remedial measures across the county for this financial year 2019/20, and seven sites have been identified for treatment. Site visits have been conducted and remedial measures decided upon.

This year will see the current temporary measures at the Black Park Road junction with the A412 made permanent, and the installation of two pedestrian refuges on Langley Park Road near Iver.

The other five schemes include sites in Amersham, Chesham, Mentmore, A355 junction with Parish Road, and the A41 near Aylesbury.

First Year Rate of Return

The Network Safety Team carries out an annual review of all injury collisions that have occurred on Buckinghamshire roads in rolling a five year period. The personal injury data, which is supplied to BCC by TVP, is analysed and a list of sites and routes where collisions are occurring is produced and prioritised.

The first year rate of return (FYRR) is a calculation which is commonly used across the road safety industry. It is used to demonstrate the amount of return, in collision savings, that is generated during the first year of a road safety scheme, based on its implementation cost. It is utilized as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of the scheme and determining whether it represents a good investment return and a responsible use of public money.

In the financial year 2016/17 the Network Safety Team delivered six casualty reduction schemes across the County. The schemes are listed below with their corresponding first year rate of return:

- 1) C77 Missenden Road, Butlers Cross, **411.5%**
- 2) B416 Park Road junction with Church Lane, Stoke Poges, **803%**
- 3) A413 Aylesbury Road, Winslow, **389%**
- 4) B4009 Tring Hill, **254%**
- 5) A421 Thornborough Crossroads, **195%**
- 6) Brimmers Hill, Widmer End, **728%**

This means collisions have been prevented in six locations across the county, reducing the impact of injuries and the associated cost to the economy.

REPORT 5:

Update of Plane and Patch

TfB's £4m plane and patch programme has reached completion in early June, with 108 individual roads receiving treatment across the county since the start of March this year.

Defined and driven by TfB's Local Area Technicians (LATs), the programme formed an important tool in enabling comprehensive patching solutions to be targeted at those areas of the network,

primarily more minor routes, which it may be difficult to prioritise into capital resurfacing programmes.

Apart from the increased budget, the main change this year was in the communication. More substantial communication was delivered to Members and the public, including use of social media as a central information tool, proving to be of great assistance in informing large numbers of people about both forthcoming work and results. An array of before and after photos was published; these were well received by the press and across our social media channels.

Carrying out work on some of the quieter, more residential roads did prompt some queries about prioritisation, addressed by TfB on our blog and via social media.

TfB are now working to finalise accounts with the supply chain as quickly as possible, in order that any cost savings against the programme can be quickly recycled into further work later in the year.

MARK SHAW
DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORTATION

CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT



Country Parks

Country Parks have had a rather strange start to the year with unseasonably cool weather with wet weekends, meaning that visitor numbers are slightly below what we would normally expect at this time of year. However, it has been an exceptional start to the year with filming activities. At one point, there were four productions on site at the same time, and there are bookings in the parks through to the autumn. This has prompted the team to introduce some additional controls and procedures for film companies and declare certain areas of the parks as temporarily off limits for filming activities so that these popular areas are able to regenerate.

A busy season of events has been planned and, following a Facebook poll, three outdoor cinema screenings have been booked to show 'Grease', 'The Greatest Showman' and 'Jurassic Park' all in Black Park over the summer. Tickets will be released on a phased basis on Facebook. There are also outdoor theatre productions which include 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' on 13 July and 'Alice in Wonderland' on 9 August, both in Langley Park; again, ticket release and bookings will be via Facebook.

The Country Parks Team is very pleased and proud that Black Park has qualified for the Trip Advisor Hall of Fame achieving a Certificate of Excellence every year for the last five years and consistently receiving great reviews.

Reduce, Re-use and Refill

Waste prevention is important to reduce the environmental impact of waste but also reduce the cost of handling it. The Waste Team regularly engages with thousands of residents promoting ways to reduce their waste. Recently there have been some good, local campaigns, for example National Refill Day in June that encouraged residents to use the 100+ refill stations across Bucks, instead of buying bottled water. Thousands of local people downloaded the app to find their nearest refill station and many more heard about the promotions via social media and local radio.

Preventing Fly-tipping

The S.C.R.A.P Fly-tipping campaign holds its first anniversary in Buckinghamshire where it all started: at the Buckinghamshire County Show. S.C.R.A.P is now a nationally recognised campaign; pioneered by our partners in Hertfordshire, and adopted here in Buckinghamshire. The campaign focuses on education around the 'duty of care' that everyone has, be it as a householder or a business, when disposing of waste. This publicised guidance to help make sure that only authorised waste carriers take your waste away has seen fly-tipping in Buckinghamshire drop by 11% in the last year, and the drive for this refresh will be celebrating the success of the great work of the people of Buckinghamshire: working in partnership to S.C.R.A.P fly-tipping: <https://www.recycleforbuckinghamshire.co.uk/scrap-fly-tipping/>

Since the Waste Partnership for Buckinghamshire launched the joint work to combat illegal dumping and waste management offences in Buckinghamshire, the Partnership has secured 711 convictions against individuals and companies for illegal dumping and related offences. The exhaustive work carried out by County Council enforcement officers in the war against fly-tippers

in Buckinghamshire has been featured in a brand new Channel 5 documentary series 'Grime and Punishment'. As one of a number of local authorities featured, Buckinghamshire was selected because of its zero-tolerance approach to fly-tipping and continuing success in bringing perpetrators to justice. The episode featuring the Buckinghamshire enforcement team was aired on Thursday 11 July.

Rights of Way – access for all

As part of our work to provide access for all on the rights of way, new gates have been installed at Hockeridge Wood, Ashley Green. The new gates providing easier access for wheelchair and scooter users to the charms of this historic woodland have been officially opened. They were installed after local residents and members of the Disabled Ramblers and 'Chesham Walkers are Welcome' along with the Bucks Local Access Forum worked together in partnership. A grant was received from Chiltern District Council and the gates were purchased and installed through the 'Donate a Gate' scheme run between the Chiltern Society and BCC. The new gates, which are in addition to existing pedestrian gates, can be used by anyone with a RADAR key – the National Key Scheme supported by around 400 local authorities. Woodlands are increasingly recognised not just for the timber they can produce and the biodiversity they support, but for the health and wellness benefits they provide to all who spend time in them. The installation of these gates means that Hockeridge Wood is now more accessible to even more people.

Flood Management

BCC are soon to commence the construction phase of a Natural Flood Management (NFM) pilot project to install small, low cost NFM measures to help build evidence of the effectiveness of such measures at reducing flood risk and delivering benefits for ecology and wildlife. The project also aims to help alleviate recurrent flood issues within Leckhampstead village. 25 'leaky woody barriers' are due to be constructed from the end of this summer through the early winter across six reaches of the headwaters of the River Leck. These 'leaky woody barriers' are designed to emulate the function of natural occurring woody debris in rivers - storing and slowing the flow of water in upland areas to reduce the flood risk to the village downstream.

District Local Plans

Wycombe District Local Plan

The consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications to the Submitted Plan closed Wednesday 27 March. The Inspector is now considering the responses received to the modification as well as the discussion on the plan during the hearing session to consider whether the Plan is sound. The final Inspector's report is due this summer which outlines the changes required to make the Plan sound. The Plan is likely to be adopted by autumn 2019.

Aylesbury Vale Local Plan (VALP)

The District is still working on the modifications to the Local Plan and it is expected that these will be consulted on during the summer.

Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan

The Draft Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan is currently out to consultation, which is due to end on 19 July 2019. This is the Plan that will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Aylesbury Garden Town (AGT)

Work on the Masterplan for AGT has continued, with key outputs such as Green Infrastructure, Movement and Town Centre layers being considered by officers. The final draft version was received at the beginning of July and will go for consideration by the AGT Board at their July meeting. This will go out to consultation for the public to have their say in the autumn.

A strategic narrative that contains AGT version and key ambitions to 2050 is also being produced. The first draft of this was released in January, with a revised version due for consideration in

August. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan has been drafted and will set out the strategy for walking and cycling improvement across Aylesbury.

Bucks Strategic Infrastructure Tool (BSIT) and Interactive Mapping

BCC is currently inviting quotations from external consultants to procure the Buckinghamshire Strategic Infrastructure Tool. Phase 1 of this work will deliver an interactive dataset to capture, collate, and profile (to include cost and delivery profiling) all strategic infrastructure schemes known to be required to support growth across Buckinghamshire to 2036. Phase 2 will progress this dataset to apply an agreed scoring framework whereby each scheme is scored against a range of parameters to allow detailed data interrogation according to individual user requirements. Initial focus will be on the county's road network schemes, though scope may extend to other county interests. Tender submissions are due on 17 July, with the commission expected to be awarded soon after.

Work continues on the Interactive Map as a separate work stream to plot the known strategic schemes for delivery across the county to 2036. This reflects Local Plans supporting evidence and asset management delivery programmes to provide a visual representation of our strategic vision for the county.

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

**CABINET MEMBER
FOR
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
& PUBLIC HEALTH**



Bucks Libraries scoop Hoop awards

Four Buckinghamshire libraries have been voted as top local family attractions by users of the family activity app 'Hoop', which helps parents to find family activities in their local area.

Buckinghamshire libraries offer a broad range of services and facilities, as well as social and cultural events alongside traditional book borrowing, computer facilities and the opportunity to browse up to date magazines and newspapers.

High Wycombe Library came first and Marlow Library third in the Buckinghamshire 'Hoop' awards for 'Best Free Activities'. Amersham Library came second and Princes Risborough Library third in the 'Best Local Family Service' category.

More than 100,000 votes were cast by users of Hoop for 2019. Winners were then decided by a public vote.

Max Jennings, one of the founders of Hoop said:

“The Hoop awards are designed to find the UK's favourite kids activities and to celebrate the people and organisations that go above and beyond to entertain, educate and inspire children nationwide”.

Recognition from General Register Office for the Registration Service Annual Performance Report

In April, the Registration Service returned its Annual Performance Report to the General Register Office. This report takes the form of a national template against which the service completes a self-assessment framework based on statutory and non-statutory data and information.

The report was assessed by the General Register Office who commended the Buckinghamshire Registration Service for continued efforts over the last year, with particular note and congratulations for:

- Exceeding the national target in registration timeliness for births at 98% and still births at 100%
- Exceeding the national target for births, deaths and notice of marriages and civil partnerships for two years consecutively (highlighting the daily intervention taken by Bucks staff to proactively manage the diary system)
- High level of customer satisfaction levels at 99%.

Overall, the feedback provides the Council with the assurance the service continues to operate within the statutory requirements and to the satisfaction of the General Register Office. The report acknowledged the service's commitment to continued improvement on statutory performance levels, including plans leading to the refurbishment of Aylesbury register office, preparation for any forthcoming changes in registration legislation, development of brochures to generate income and feasibility review of a joint management team and service delivery with Oxfordshire.

Medical Examiner Service 'outstanding' CQC

The Bucks Medical Examiner Service (MES) is a partnership arrangement between Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, the Registrars and Coroners service, and forms part of the Trust's mortality review processes to ensure deaths are reviewed, accurate death certificates are written and families are contacted. It has been in place since December 2018.

Buckinghamshire is an early adopter of the MES approach which is currently being encouraged by the Department for Health and Social Care on a voluntary basis, before it is introduced as a statutory service in April 2020. At present the MES reviews all hospital deaths, however, work is also underway to look at a pilot for community deaths, with a number of GP practices in Bucks who are keen to progress this.

The Trust received an 'Outstanding' CQC rating for the bereavement team and medical examiner service. The service was commended for understanding, "the need to 'get it right' for every individual family and support relatives in a sensitive and proactive way" as well as sharing learning which has resulted in a reduction in the number of coroner referrals.

Next steps around shared approach to prevention and social isolation

Buckinghamshire health and social care organisations have recently agreed a shared approach to prevention through the Health and Wellbeing Board with an initial focus on social isolation. An exciting project is being developed so that a co-design approach can be taken to maximise all available resources.

To take this work forward, public health are working with the [Design Council](#) who bring a wealth of expertise in both the public and private sector in identifying and implementing high impact changes. The plan is for the Design Council to support stakeholders to collaborate and explore the challenges and opportunities at a two day workshop taking place at the end of September.

- Day one will focus on exploring the challenge using a variety of design methods and approaches
- Day two will then frame the opportunities and prioritised propositions and next step action planning.

The workshops will be followed by the establishment of a small number of task and finish groups (potentially one to three) to co-design solutions to the priorities identified in the workshop alongside a 'Show and Tell' approach where progress from the task and finish groups is shared with a wider group of stakeholders at key stages.

Cultural Strategy away day on 2 July

An event was held on 2 July at the Dairy at Waddesdon Manor for all stakeholders involved in the development of the Bucks-wide Cultural Strategy.

The event attracted over 50 attendees from a range of health, planning, economic development, tourism and education and skills, as well as culture and heritage.

The event started with external speakers, covering the value of partnership and the strength found in shared learning and collaborating on projects. Speakers included; Milly Soames, the current chair and Joseph Minden from the Arts Council.

The main purpose of the workshop was for stakeholders to align themselves to specific outcomes of the strategy and begin the process of developing priorities and action plans for each of the four outcomes:

- A thriving economy and more high quality jobs
- Equality of access to cultural activities and opportunities
- Improved health and wellbeing of the population
- Re-vitalised heritage and transformed places.

All delegates pre-registered with the outcome they wanted to participate in on the day. Leads for each outcome were agreed and they led table discussions to map current activity and discuss current and future priorities and how these could be delivered through each working group. The aim is to have action plans for each outcome drafted by the end of August.

GARETH WILLIAMS
CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Ofsted Monitoring Visit

Following the November 2017 inspection of Children's Social Care, Ofsted conducted their third monitoring visit on 22 and 23 May 2019. During the course of this visit, inspectors reviewed the progress made, with a particular focus on the:

- Quality of management decision making in the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and the application of thresholds for intervention.
- Quality, effectiveness and impact of assessment and planning in managing risk, and improving children's outcomes when they are first referred to the local authority.
- Arrangements in place to respond to children missing and at risk of exploitation.
- Quality and timeliness of supervision, management oversight and decision making, social work capacity and caseloads.

A range of evidence was considered during the visit, including electronic case records, discussions with social workers and their managers and other supporting documentation. The key findings as detailed within the monitoring visit letter are set out below:

- a) Leaders are making steady progress in improving the service to children when they are referred to children's social care.
- b) Leaders' persistence in seeking to strengthen management oversight is beginning to deliver results. Supervision is taking place and the quality of management oversight has been strengthened.
- c) The senior leadership team has a sound understanding of the improvements that are needed in children's services and are steadfastly determined to improve the quality of services for children.
- d) The multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) provides a mostly effective response to children's needs for early help and statutory intervention.
- e) Considerable work has taken place to strengthen social workers' and managers' understanding of thresholds. This has led to more confident, timely responses for most children.
- f) Management oversight has been strengthened since the last monitoring visit, and social work caseloads have reduced. This is beginning to provide social workers with the conditions they need to better support children and families.
- g) Children and families benefit from a range of early help services, but the early help service is under-developed.
- h) When children need protecting, the response is mostly effective, but the threshold for child protection intervention is not consistently applied.

- i) Contact and referral missing officers in the MASH ensure there is effective oversight of children who go missing. Not all children who go missing are offered return home interviews and, when they are offered, they are not always completed.
- j) Most children are visited regularly, but sometimes initial visits to children take too long and there can be gaps in visiting after initial intervention.
- k) Most child protection enquiries are thorough and lead to appropriate decisions. The quality of recording of the child protection enquiry remains too variable, with insufficient analysis.
- l) Managers are now more consistent in driving children's plans and supporting social workers, though leaders recognise that this work is not yet of the consistency, quality or regularity needed.
- m) Staff spoken to during the visit, told inspectors that they enjoy working in Buckinghamshire. They report being well supported by managers and, that leaders are visible and approachable.
- n) Newly appointed staff receive a thorough induction, which helps their transition into the service.
- o) In a small minority of children's cases, there are delays in convening strategy discussions and not all relevant agencies are consistently engaged in strategy discussions, particularly health partners.

The next monitoring visit is likely to take place in Autumn 2019.

Children's Homes progress update

Our first new home in Aylesbury has been open for almost a year and recently had its first Ofsted inspection, where it was judged to be 'good'. I am delighted with the outcome and it is a real credit to the children's home staffing team for the way they managed to achieve a 'good' rating in their very first inspection.

Our second new home, also in Aylesbury is now open (picture below) following a complete refurbishment, providing additional residential placements for up to five young people in care. The new home provides vital space for young people aged between 8 and 18 who, for whatever reason, need to live away from their parents or families. This new facility is great news for our vulnerable children in Buckinghamshire. We are committed to ensuring that as many young people in our care as possible are able to maintain important links to their friends and local communities. Homes like this provide a welcoming and stable family-like environment for children who are already going through a difficult time in their lives so it is important that we do all we can to support them.



I am also pleased to report that we have had an offer accepted and are currently going through the planning application process for our third new home. The property is located in High Wycombe and it is anticipated that if all goes to plan then the home will open in Spring 2020.

Increasing the number of places for children to be looked after in Buckinghamshire also reduces the high cost of out of county placements and reduces the distance children are placed away from their homes. This also makes it easier for children to see their social workers and spend more time together rather than having to travel long distances to see each other.

Fostering Update

In April 2018, the service launched its ambitious three-year recruitment and retention strategy with the aim of growing and developing our 'in-house' fostering service to increase the number of children placed with our carers within the county by 20% each year.

During the last year, we have significantly reduced the number of Independent Fostering Agency placements and as a result, we now have 31 more in-house placements than we did in April 2018. We, in fact, managed to exceed our targets with 15 mainstream households approved by the Fostering Panel, generating 19 new available placements.

Key developments during the last year:

- **Family and friend (Connected Persons) placements**
This is always our first consideration when a young person is brought into care. In the past year, we have aimed to bring support for family and friends in line with mainstream placements. Therefore, we have started providing access to our 'skills to foster' course to these carers and have included them in the review of payments. This helps us ensure that these carers are supported to provide stable placements.
- **Training**
We have run a total of 115 face to face courses to over 80 delegates, covering 55 different topics ranging from introduction sessions to prospective carers to behaviour models, such as the great behaviour breakthrough. Upskilling our foster carers supports placement stability and reduces the risk of placement breakdown.
- **Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) partnership**
We have been able to make available to our carers appointments to discuss concerns, either personal or related to children in placement, with a CAMHS clinical psychologist. CAMHS workers have also attended support groups to hear concerns from our carers to help shape their offer.
- **External placements:**
Where we do not have an available in-house carer we will place a child with an independent fostering agency. Over the last year we have worked closely with our providers to develop a closer working relationship which allows them to develop a longer term plan to meet our needs.
- **Post 18 support:**
Updating our staying put policy and developing our supported lodgings policies and offer which is supporting stability for young people following their 18th birthday.

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools

In September last year, Buckinghamshire submitted a bid for government trailblazer funding to develop Mental Health Support Teams in schools. This followed the Mental Health Green Paper which called for earlier intervention and prevention for children and young people. Working in partnership with the Department for Education, NHS England have committed to funding and rolling out Mental Health Support Teams to between one-fifth and one-quarter of the country by the end of 2023.

Buckinghamshire was delighted to be one of the 25 successful sites across the UK identified for wave 1, with almost £600k allocated to develop 2 initial Mental Health Support Teams.

These multi-agency teams will be fully operational in September and will include mental health practitioners, family resilience workers, youth workers and peer support workers, and will provide support to 31 of our schools in 3 key areas:

- 1) Delivering evidence based interventions for mild to moderate mental health issues. The new teams will carry out interventions alongside established provision such as counselling, educational psychologists, and school nurses building on the support already available and not replacing it.
- 2) Supporting the designated senior mental health lead in each education setting to introduce or develop their whole school or college approach;
- 3) Giving timely advice to school and college staff, and liaising with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education.

This is a collaborative, partnership project with strong buy in from across schools, colleges, health and voluntary sector partners and the Local Authority. The work is supportive of the approach set out in the Buckinghamshire Early Help Strategy and has been aligned to the new Early Help model.

Last month, Buckinghamshire submitted a bid for wave 2 funding following an invitation from NHS England. If successful, this would bring additional investment to implement two further teams and allow us to extend support across further areas of the county.

Youth Service Traineeship Case Study

The Youth Service's Inspired traineeship programme has just completed its fourth cohort and continues to see great success. The 12 week programme which combines education and employability training, including an eight week work experience placement, has been a catalyst for vulnerable young people to change their lives.

Below is an example of one of our care leavers who has recently successfully completed the programme.

Initially L struggled with her communication skills and coping with her emotions. At the very beginning of the traineeship programme she would regularly get very frustrated when things did not go her way and would struggle to accept constructive criticism or guidance. L stated that in school and college the formal classroom environment did not suit her and she would often get in trouble. Despite this, L attended the full 12 week traineeship programme. This included 100 hours work experience placement with the County Council HR department and the Adult Social Care business support team. She learned employability skills and developed specific work based competencies. The relaxed environment of the programme which utilised youth work methods was a much better approach for L rather than the formal learning programmes she had been involved in previously. A great deal of work was carried out with L to improve her communication and coping strategies linked to her emotions. She was challenged to try new things and set goals for herself.

L's hard work and determination was key in her completing this course. She actually completed the programme within 12 weeks, so was able to spend extra time looking for and applying for employment.

She pushed herself outside of her comfort zone by applying for the County Council's Business Development Apprenticeship position and was successful and has been offered this role.

The biggest achievement for L was her own recognition of how she had changed her communication approach and the improvement in her attitude. During her last session, she reflected on how far she has come in this area. L continues to attend the 'We Do Care' forums and supports other young people in care and care leavers.

Frontline visit to Youth Offending Service

Youth crime is an issue which has affected all communities across the country and a visit to the Youth Offending Service assisted in gaining a more detailed insight into their efforts to divert children away from the Criminal Justice System and prevent further offending.

If we are to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system in the first place, it is essential we understand the trigger factors to crime, and work with the root cause issues such as school exclusions, low self-esteem, dysfunctional families to name but a few. One way in which the Youth Offending Team is achieving this is by working more closely with schools.

Funding has been secured via the Early Intervention Youth Fund to offer Speech and Language Therapists to eight of our secondary schools as there is a clear link between children's unmet communication needs and those that are entering the criminal justice sector. A youth worker has also been employed to offer detached outreach work to those children who do not ordinarily access positive activities. In addition, Restorative Justice training has been delivered to schools, foster carers and social care staff to equip them to assist young people in recognising the harm they cause and enabling victims of crime to have a voice.

They have also redeployed their existing Early Intervention Worker to be co-located within schools to support staff and keep children in school environment. This is currently being piloted in Highcrest and The Mandeville School, with a view to increase this provision across other schools as two further workers are recruited via the community safety partnership fund.

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

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES



Technology Services Update

The focus of the IT Team remains on upgrading the council's core IT capabilities, preparatory work for unitary and joint working with our NHS colleagues.

All IT business cases are submitted for approval to the council's Technology and Digital Board (TDB). To date the following business cases have been submitted and approved by TDB:-

- Core infrastructure (Dec 2018)
- Corporate Telephony (Jan 2019)
- Mobile phone Telephony (Jan 2019)
- Managed Security Service (Feb 2019)
- User device procurement and replacement (May 2019)
- Microsoft Partner procurement (to support unitary/ICS work) (May 2019)
- Applications migration
- Move to Windows 10 for all staff devices (May 2019)

As part of the IT Improvement Programme the council is currently moving its core systems (SAP, Children's Services) onto a new IT Platform. This is part of a programme to provide a more resilient and more efficient service environment. By the autumn the council will also replace its two legacy telephony systems and move all users to a new Skype for Business Online environment. On the cyber security front, a new monitoring service is currently being rolled out; this service will enhance our current cyber stance through accurate risk alerting and pro-active threat analysis. We're currently in discussion with our District and NHS colleagues to see if they wish to join this new cyber service. Lastly the council will shortly be rolling out Windows 10 to 3,500 staff. Technical work is currently taking place to enable an initial deployment by September.

On the unitary front we continue to work closely with our District colleagues on what is a substantial programme of work to transform the IT provision both before and after vesting day. An immediate priority is to connect up all the councils so that key systems like SAP can be accessed by all staff. Working with specialist partners, the council is leading a review of each council's IT network environment with a clear objective for a safe and secure means to join up those networks this autumn well before vesting day. Other business critical work areas include: IT architecture design for the new council, cross border printing, applications review, new single email address (buckinghamshire.gov.uk), confirmed councillors' IT provision, telephony and call centre integration, IT licensing and supplier contract rationalisation and the new configuration of business critical applications like SAP.

As part of the Integrated Care System (ICS) the council's IT team continues to work with colleagues at Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG),

the Ambulance Trust and Fire and Rescue on areas of mutual interest and those that deliver economies of scale and increased efficiencies. We've already carried out a very successful joint procurement of new IT hardware (tablet PCs, PCs, phones, desktop screens etc). With a combined buying power of 10,000 IT users (against the council's 3,500) we are able to achieve substantial market discounts. With the NHS Trust also rolling out Windows 10 we have pooled resources so that one jointly funded team will manage the process for both partners; this is not only cost efficient but also maximises the availability and skills of the staff involved. Other joint working initiatives have included a joint procurement for a mobile phone provider, wifi access for NHS/council staff at each other's buildings, connecting up our respective data centres (to test potential disaster recovery opportunities) and option appraisals for both teams to share the same technical capabilities.

Apprenticeship Accelerator Programme

BCC has been successful in its application to join the LGA Apprenticeship Accelerator Programme (AAP). This will mean that BCC can access up to eight days of free consultancy work through the LGA consultancy team between July 2019 and January 2020, starting with an initial scoping meeting in July. The core offer from LGA is to work with councils on their apprenticeship strategies to increase the number of apprenticeship starts (which addresses progress towards the 2.3% public sector target). This will enable us to position a new BCC apprenticeship strategy leading into plans for the new unitary council from April 2020. In our submission to LGA, we proposed the following outcomes:

- An updated apprenticeship plan (core LGA offer).
- Analysis of workforce data linking apprenticeship training to job roles in specific areas such as Early Help service restructure and Adult Social Care restructures of direct care.
- Identification of resources for a coordinated apprenticeship offer to schools.

In return the AAP programme asks us to make the following commitments:

1. Commit to include apprenticeships as a keystone of their workforce strategy.
2. Commit to complete a skills mapping process to map apprenticeship standards against job / skills shortage areas for both the local authority itself and any maintained schools.
3. Commit to developing/updating your apprenticeship plan.
4. Commit to putting in place an 'Apprenticeships First' approach, prioritising apprenticeships for all new vacancies.
5. Commit to delivering an increase in apprenticeship starts by March 2020.
6. Commitment from Chief Executive / senior managers to support the above.
7. Share any learning and progress made with the wider sector by actively participating in the evaluation programme.

This AAP will provide a real organisational focus on apprenticeships across BCC and ensure that we are fully prepared for the move to unitary status from 1 April 2020.

Blue Badge

The Blue Badge scheme is extended to those with 'hidden disabilities': those with less visible disabilities will benefit from the biggest change in the Blue Badge scheme in 50 years, with the extended criteria coming into force on 30 August 2019, thanks to the rollout of [new guidance](#).

For drivers or passengers with dementia, anxiety disorders or reduced mobility, the anticipation of travel difficulties such as finding a parking space can build on top of the stress of the journey itself. The new guidance will offer a lifeline to people who often find road travel difficult by providing better access to work and other amenities. It will also help combat loneliness by enabling them to stay connected to family and friends.

Extending the Blue Badge scheme is a watershed moment in ensuring those with hidden disabilities are able to travel with greater ease and live more independent lives. To help councils with the expected increase in applications, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will provide £1.7 million in the first year of the programme.

National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)

BCC has this year joined LGA's National Graduate Development Programme. The NGDP programme aims to match local authorities with high calibre and committed graduates with the potential to become future leaders within local government.

BCC is delighted to have three graduates joining us through the scheme in the autumn fresh from studies at Durham, Loughborough and Oxford University.

The scheme attracted 4,500 applications, filtered down to 221 through a rigorous centralised assessment process. The shortlisted candidates then chose their top three host councils after meeting the 350 participating authorities at an event in May.

One of the biggest draws to Bucks, described by the candidates, was the opportunity to play a part in our unitary journey and bringing the vision for the county to life. They also described how the blend between heritage and innovation within the organisation's and county's identity is something that really stood BCC apart.

The HR&OD team hosted an interview day in June, where our shortlisted candidates got to meet CMT and the Leader, as well as spend time with some of our graduate alumni network (who took them on a familiarisation tour of Aylesbury). It was an inspiring day, meeting such driven, socially responsible and energetic individuals, determined to make a genuine difference.

The successful trainees will complete three placements across the breadth of the organisation over two years, where they will be given opportunities to get involved in high profile work from the start. All of the trainees' first placements will be within the Policy, Performance and Communications function. Alongside hands on experience, the trainees will benefit from a brilliant learning and development programme, including residential modules, regional networking events and a Level 7 Certificate in Leadership and Management.

We look forward to seeing where their careers take them and helping them fulfil their potential within Bucks.

**JOHN CHILVER
CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES**

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING



Digital Front Door

Following extensive redesign work and engagement with users, the Care Advice Bucks website has been completely redesigned. The new modernised site will work easily on mobile phones and content is much more tailored to the way in which people look for help and advice. As well as finding information and support for adults, their families and carers, visitors to the site will also be able to get recommendations of activities, groups and services near where they live. The new site is expected to launch at the end of August.

Short Term Intervention Service

The Council's occupational therapy and reablement services are being brought together to improve the quality of short term intervention for residents. This therapy-led approach builds on the strengths of both services and makes the best use of capacity. The service is being co-designed and workshops are taking place with staff to develop the new approach. Benefits for residents will include quicker access to services and a more holistic approach to meeting needs. Training will be taking place later in the summer to train staff as trusted assessors, meaning that more staff will be able to assess need and issue minor pieces of equipment.

Social Care Workforce

The recruitment of Senior Social Workers and Occupational Therapists remains challenging. However, we have recently been successful in recruiting three Occupational Therapists and one Senior Social Worker within the Learning Disabilities team following targeted recruitment campaigns and a 'try before you apply' initiative. From April 2019 to date we have successfully recruited two Social Workers and we are currently running campaigns to recruit Social Workers across the adult social care service.

The introduction of market factor payments and 'Golden Hellos' for Qualified Social Workers has brought salaries in line with local competitors and colleagues from Children's Services.

We are also introducing a face to face exit interview process to sit alongside the online survey which is already in place. The data from both processes will be used to help inform future actions around retention plans.

Adult Social Care Fees and Charges

The new schedule of Adult Social Care Fees and Charges came into effect on 22 May 2019. This followed a consultation process that took place between 15 October and 7 December 2018. Responses to the consultation did impact on the proposed fees. For Domiciliary Care, the proposed increase was scaled back from a 30p increase per hour to a 20p increase per hour and for Telecare, as a result of the consultation responses, the fee levels have been frozen.

It should be noted that the actual charge that an individual pays may not be the same as the published figure, as everyone who receives adult social care services is entitled to a financial assessment which determines what they can afford to pay, and bills are capped at this level.

The new fees and charges will take effect from the billing period starting 15 July. The gap between the decision date and the implementation date is to allow sufficient time to advise all users of their new charges.

Market Position Statement for Prevention, Early Help and Supporting People

On 21 May 2019, the Integrated Commissioning team held an event for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to launch the Market Position Statement (MPS) for Prevention, Early Help and Supporting People in a community setting. The event was well attended and received by over 60 people from 34 organisations.

Key messages from the workshop included issues for VCS organisations around grant funding focusing on service delivery, access to population data, the need for earlier engagement and the need to adopt new ways of contracting such the lead provider model.

Changes in the Buckinghamshire Health and Care System

The NHS England Long Term Plan published in January set out that integrated care systems will be at Sustainable Transformation Partnership (STP) level and introduced Primary Care Networks across the country.

On 1 July 2019, Buckinghamshire established 12 Primary Care Networks (PCN). Each PCN involves a number of local practices working together, typically covering between 30–50,000 patients. PCNs will get significant investment for new staff in the coming years and will take a proactive approach to managing population health.

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) STP has now become an Integrated Care System. The shift recognises the progress made in improving the care and health of local communities when NHS providers, commissioners, local authorities and other sector partners work together.

In Buckinghamshire, this signals the move to becoming an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) at the county level, which will provide the opportunity to focus on delivering local services for local people whilst getting the benefits of working at scale and sharing expertise and resources across the BOB Integrated Care System.

**LIN HAZELL
CABINET MEMBER HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS



Special Educational Needs Service

The service has now been restructured into three geographical area teams across the county with bases in Aylesbury, Amersham and High Wycombe following the transfer of the Specialist Teaching Service from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust last year. The teams will be an integrated service with Educational Psychologists, Specialist Teachers and SEN Officers, creating a more consistent and effective approach to the way we work with families and settings across Buckinghamshire. We are currently in a transitional phase in preparation for full implementation from September 2019.

Hero Slinn joined the team on 1 April 2019 as the permanent Head of Service and has already driven a significant amount of change within the service. There are three key areas for improvement identified from the SEND Improvement Plan for the Local Area (across education, health and social care):

1. Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans – ensuring we are meeting statutory timescales alongside improving the quality of the content of the plans.
2. Autism – being the fastest growing area of concern, we need to be sure that we are all in a position across the area to meet the needs of these children and young people.
3. Sufficiency - making sure we have sufficient school places for all of our children, both within mainstream and in specialist provision.

During the last year, the service has been addressing the significant backlog of EHC plans (those outside of the statutory 20 week timescale). This backlog has now been effectively eliminated but the residual effect on current performance being less than the target of 20 weeks will remain until September 2019.

At the beginning of June, an SEN Conference on Autism was organised by the Local Authority and health partners. Approximately 100 school practitioners attended a number of workshops from a range of speakers, including representatives from our special schools and health colleagues alike.

Strong and Improving Educational Performance

The latest figures show that the percentage of pupils attending a school rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted within Buckinghamshire continues to increase. As a result, 91.5% of our students now attend a high quality school which is significantly above the 85% of pupils nationally. This is the highest figure that the authority has achieved since the Ofsted framework changed in 2013.

For the first time, disadvantaged pupils in Buckinghamshire outperform similar pupils nationally for the Key Attainment 8 measure. Improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils has been an area of

focus for several years and this hard work in schools across the county is now reflected in the performance of our children in GCSE results. The gap between our pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers has also closed and work continues to continue this trend. In looking at another vulnerable group, the Year 1 phonics for children who have a first language other than English has also improved and is now above results for similar pupils nationally.

The overall performance of pupils in Buckinghamshire remains above those nationally. Our data shows that at a secondary level our GCSE outcomes are first in many measures when compared against our statistical neighbours and are strong against all authorities nationally. Our secondary schools continue to improve their performance and permanent secondary school exclusions have fallen below national figures for the first time in three years.

Supporting Schools after the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust

The education team has been working hard to support those schools who bought into services from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT) since the Trust went into administration in March 2019.

They have ensured that all of the Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) that were managed by the BLT on behalf of the authority have had a smooth transition into the new support brokered by 'Teaching Talent', the umbrella organisation for teaching schools in the county. 'Teaching Talent' is supporting these teachers to ensure that all are on track to complete their probationary year.

As an authority, we have also ensured that key events for the teaching community continued without interruption, including a variety of training courses and conferences. There has also been a significant amount of work with governors to guarantee that they continue to receive high quality support and training. This support will be strengthened through plans to run a governor conference in the autumn term.

Throughout this period, schools have been briefed on the changes through a weekly newsletter. So far, we have had very positive feedback from Headteachers about the work that we have carried out and they have been very appreciative that there has been a strong level of support and communication from the authority.

**ANITA CRANMER
CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS**