

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council convened and held on Thursday 25 July 2019 in The Oculus, AVDC, The Gateway, commencing at 9.30 am and concluding at 11.08 am.

PRESENT

Mr B Roberts in the Chair;

Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mrs P Birchley, Mr S Bowles, Mr N Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Mr A Christensen, Mr C Clare, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mr A Collingwood, Mrs A Cranmer, Mrs I Darby, Mr D Dhillon, Mr C Etholen, Mrs B Gibbs, Ms N Glover, Mr C Harriss, Mr D Hayday, Ms L Hazell, Mr A Hussain, Mr M Hussain, Mr P Irwin, Mr R Khan, Mr S Lambert, Ms A Macpherson, Mrs W Mallen, Mr D Martin, Mr P Martin, Mr I Rashid, Mr R Reed, Mr D Shakespeare OBE, Mr M Shaw, Mrs L Sullivan, Mr M Tett, Ms J Ward, Mr W Whyte, Ms A Wight, Mr G Williams and Ms K Wood

DIGNITARIES AND OTHERS PRESENT

Sir H Aubrey-Fletcher, Mrs M Aston, Mrs M Clayton and Mrs V Letheren

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Appleyard, Mr R Bagge, Ms J Blake, Mr N Hussain, Mrs J Teesdale, Julia Wassell, Mr B Allen, Mrs G Miscampbell OBE DL, Mr K Ross MBE DL and Mrs J Upton MBE

1 MINUTES

A minutes silence was held in memory of former County Councillors Mr Roger Parker-Jervis and Mr Mike O'Sullivan who had recently passed away.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd May 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 PETITIONS

There were none.

3 COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies were received from Mr Appleyard, Mr Bagge, Mrs Blake, Mr N Hussain, Mr Khan, Mrs Teesdale and Julia Wassell and from the High Sheriff, and Honorary Aldermen, Mr Allen, Mrs Miscampbell and Mr Ross.

The Chairman reported on a number of events he has attended since the last Council meeting in May. He particularly highlighted the success of the recent Armed Forces Day which was held at Booker Airfield in High Wycombe. He paid tribute to Mr Joe

Bradshaw and his team for all their hard work in planning this event and also thanked all the volunteers on the day who helped to make it such a success.

The Chairman advised members that Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher, Buckinghamshire's Lord Lieutenant had recently been appointed Royal Knight Commander (KCBO) in recognition of his service to the Queen and her family. The Chairman was joined by local Air Cadets to present the Lord Lieutenant with a magnum of champagne in recognition of this achievement. Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher thanked the Chairman for this gift and thanked the County Council for helping him to learn a lot about local democracy over the past 14 years.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5 ANNUAL REPORTS FOR: POLICE COMMISSIONERS PANEL, CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD AND ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

The Chairman invited Mr W Bendyshe-Brown as the County Council's representative on the Police and Crime Panel and Chiltern Conservation Board and the lead member for the Armed Forces Covenant to present his report.

During the presentation and in answer to subsequent member questions, the following main points were noted:

Police and Crime Panel

- The Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel (TVPCP) scrutinises the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- The Thames Valley Police (TVP) area covered 18 local authorities.
- An increase in the Police precept had been agreed
- It was noted that County Lines and knife crime was spreading out of London.
- A member noted the increased police precept and hoped it would lead to the police being more responsive when travellers moved into an area, as had happened recently in High Wycombe.
- A member asked what the PCC's office was doing with regards to apprenticeships and asked for some figures on this. Also there was concern about the numbers of PCSOs being reduced and an increase in crimes being reported. Mr Bendyshe-Brown was asked for a written response to clarify numbers. Mr Bendyshe-Brown did comment that many PCSOs in the area had gone on to become fully fledged Police Officers
- It was noted that the new Prime Minister had promised to provide an additional 20,000 police officers nationally and members hoped that the PCC would lobby to ensure that TVP benefitted from this extra resource.

Chilterns Conservation Board

- The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is one of the most visited areas in the country.
- The Chilterns Conservation Board has 27 members with four fifths of its funding coming from Government and the remaining fifth from local authorities. In addition, the Board can bid for other sources of funding.
- The management plan for Chilterns AONB was updated in Feb this year.

- In June 2018 the Board reviewed the possibility of becoming a National Park but this would take many years to come about.
- It was reported that Sue Holden was retiring as Chief Executive Officer and would be replaced by Dr Elaine King.

Armed Forces Covenant

- In 2012 the County Council had signed the Armed Forces Covenant, which had gone from strength to strength with a recent meeting being attended by 48 different organisations.
- In the past year there had been three significant events – 100 years of the RAF which was marked by a celebration in Chesham, 100 years of cessation of World War 1, with many celebrations held across the County and in June, 12,000 people attended Armed Forces Day.
- Mr Bendyshe-Brown thanked Joe Bradshaw's team for their work in organising these events and thanked the Lord Lieutenant for his time in attending the celebrations and contributing to the working groups which planned them.

6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT

Mr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources presented the Treasury Management Annual Report. During the presentation and in response to subsequent member questions the following main points were noted:

- It was a statutory duty to present a report to Council on the previous year's Treasury Management activity. The Council was fully compliant with the CIPFA code of practice and had reduced treasury risk through the repayment of three LOBO loans with a projected net saving of £10.4m.
- Mr Chilver thanked the Treasury Management team for their prudent approach and the Regulatory and Audit Committee for their valuable contribution.
- A member paid tribute to members of the Risk Management Group chaired by Mr David Martin for their careful scrutiny of this activity and thanked the officers who supported their work.
- In response to a member's question regarding the consolidated borrowing position of the new Unitary Council, Mr Chilver reported that the County Council had gross borrowing of £296million and £286million net borrowing. The new Unitary Council would have circa £300million gross borrowing and £210 net borrowing.
- A member asked how much of the County Council's debt was related to investment properties and it was agreed that Mr Chilver would provide this figure after the meeting.

RESOLVED: Council AGREED the Treasury Management Annual Report and the actual Prudential Indicators for 2018/19.

7 ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Mr Martin Tett, Chairman of the Senior Appointments and Bucks Pay Award Committee introduced the report.

RESOLVED: Council AGREED the Council's Annual Pay Policy Statement 2019/20, as recommended by the Senior Appointments and Bucks Pay Award

Committee.

8 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN 2016-2036

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment introduced the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Plan, explaining that it was a statutory requirement for Council to agree the up to date plan. The plan had taken many years to develop and the Cabinet Member paid tribute to all the officers and previous Cabinet Members who had contributed to it, particularly highlighting the work of Ismail Mohammed who had led this work. Ismail had recently left the County Council having taken up a new post on St Helena.

A number of members echoed the Cabinet Members thanks to the officers as they appreciated the significant work which had gone into the Plan. A member also noted that officers had been very supportive of a local brick making company in her division, assisting with procedures around clay extraction.

A member raised particular concerns about the Ouse Valley, asking if mitigation for flooding and access had been included in the Plan. In response, the Cabinet Member explained that a site assessment had been undertaken and the Strategic Flood Management team and the Environment Agency had not identified any issues at this time.

RESOLVED: Council AGREED the adoption and publication of the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2016-2036

9 CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

Leader

Mr M Tett highlighted the following points:

- The consultation on a potential third runway at Heathrow was open and the Leader urged all members to look at the consultation document, as this would have a dramatic effect on the whole of the County. The possible introduction of significant fees for dropping off passengers at the terminals could lead to offsite parking issues in the Iver area.
- To date, three formal meetings of the Shadow Executive had been held and there had been a real sense of collaboration and joint working from representatives of all five existing councils, which was very positive for the creation of the new Unitary.
- It was noted that the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government was Robert Jenrick and the new Minister for Housing was Esther McVey.

In response to Members' questions the following main points were noted:

- The Armed Forces Community Covenant was included in one of the workstreams for the new Unitary Council.
- Following a disappointing response from Chris Grayling in response to the Council's notice of motion on HS2, a member asked if the Leader would be pressing for a meeting with the new Secretary of State for Transport. The Leader confirmed that he would want to have early discussions about HS2 and also the routing of the Cambridge to Oxford Expressway.
- The Council's position would remain steadfast – the Leader had always

opposed HS2 and the Council gave qualified support to the expansion of Heathrow, always pressing for mitigation for areas such as Iver which would be impacted most, in partnership with South Bucks District Council.

- In response to a Member's concern about inappropriate content on Social Media, the Leader commented that he always encouraged members to conduct themselves with dignity and courtesy and this should also apply online. Often there was a motivation to make social media posts interesting to stimulate debate, but they should remain respectful and discrimination of any kind was not appropriate. Another member noted that any discriminatory or offensive posts on social media should be reported to the relevant monitoring officer.
- It was noted that the new Prime Minister had promised to 'fix the crisis in social care once and for all'. The Leader agreed that he would continue to press Government on resolving the funding issues for Social Care. The Green Paper had been delayed five times and a resolution was vital for both local government funding and the dignity of older people and adults with learning difficulties.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation

Mr M Shaw highlighted the following:

- The Cabinet Member apologised for the recent traffic issues on the A41, which were caused when a developer removed traffic lights earlier than planned. Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB) had worked well with the developers to rectify the issues as quickly as possible.

In response to Members' questions, the following main points were noted:

- TfB had already completed their first round of weed spraying and had resources to undertake further sprays.
- Wycombe High Street was looking very shabby and had issues with rising bollards not working. The Cabinet Member agreed to look into progress of discussions and would try to resolve any issues.
- A member raised the condition of the C3 road between Grendon Underwood and Gawcott. Although there had been some patching undertaken on this route, it remained hazardous particularly for cyclists. An assessment of the road was requested and the Cabinet Member was asked if HS2 would be required to contribute to the maintenance of haul routes.
- In response, the Cabinet Member explained that the road was inspected in line with the Asset Management Policy, so it was inspected annually and any potholes reported in between would be dealt with by the local area technician. It was noted that the Council had a duty to maintain highways which were safe to use but this didn't necessarily mean 100% defect free. It was suggested that the Member and her neighbouring Councillor, Mr C Clare, might want to consider nominating the road for additional plane and patch work.
- A member thanked the Cabinet Member for the recent jetpatching work at Sunnybank and welcomed the announcement of a further 9 additional charging points.
- Issues remained with faulty bollards in Aylesbury West and the Cabinet Member was asked if this could be properly resolved.
- Further update on the ADEPT project was requested and the Cabinet Member agreed to include this in his report to the next Council meeting.
- A member noted that GP provision in Aylesbury was being reconfigured but there would be issues for patients reliant on public transport in reaching their surgeries. The Cabinet Member explained that there was a reliance on commercial bus companies to provide these routes, but he would investigate.
- A member noted that there had been some complaints about grass cutting

being undertaken too early and some residents had enquired about the possibility of establishing green corridors. The Cabinet Member commented that the idea of green corridors was being discussed with rangers.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

Mr W Chapple highlighted the following:

- Officers of the Council featured in a BBC programme on preventing flytipping which was aired on 18th July and could be seen on iPlayer.
- The Aylesbury Garden Town meeting due to take place in July had been cancelled so the next one would be held in September.
- Chiltern and South Bucks had extended the consultation deadline on their Local Plan.

In response to Members' questions, the following main points were noted:

- A local campaign was being launched to raise money to apply for planning permission to reopen the Household Recycling Centre at Bledlow, which had been closed earlier in the year.
- The Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan consultation would close on 23rd August.
- A member asked if the Council would be objecting to the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan on the grounds of its proposal to release significant areas of green belt land for development. The Cabinet Member reiterated his own commitment to protecting the green belt and it was noted that he was currently drafting the Council's response.
- A member thanked the Strategic Flood Defence team for providing training and assistance in deploying flood defences on the Willows estate in Aylesbury.
- The Cabinet Member was asked if incidents of flytipping had increased since the closure of the Bledlow HRC and the closure of the Rabans Lane site for two days per week. A member suggested that in some instances town or parish councils could be removing flytipping without reporting it as an incident. The Cabinet Member confirmed that there had not been an increase in flytipping incidents.
- A member noted that the future of the Burnham HRC would be decided shortly and asked how members would be kept up to date. It was reported that the decision would be taken at Cabinet on 9th September.
- A member expressed concern that the Aylesbury Garden Town Plan could have aspirations of becoming a new district council. The Cabinet Member explained that the Aylesbury Garden Town masterplan was being developed to raise the status of Aylesbury up to proper Garden Town status. Reasonable governance arrangements had been put in place to support this aim.

Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health

Mr G Williams highlighted the following:

- Buckinghamshire had a vibrant voluntary and charitable sector and the Cabinet Member had been meeting with many groups since taking up his post in May. Concerns about the continuation of grant funding with the introduction of the new Unitary had been raised and this was being discussed.
- The Street Association initiative was celebrating its two year anniversary – there were 6 Street Associations in Bucks with 326 volunteers and their success was being recognised with award nominations. Street Associations would be particularly focussing on tackling social isolation and the Cabinet Member gave an example of a lady in Aylesbury who had moved from South Africa and had

not spoken to anyone for two years until she joined the Street Association and was now one of its integral members.

- A member congratulated the Street Association's on their success and invited the Cabinet Member to visit Youth Concern in Aylesbury to find out more about their Next Steps project which would be tackling homelessness. The Cabinet Member accepted this invitation.

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Mr W Whyte highlighted the following:

- The Judicial Review of the Council's decision to redesign its Early Help service had been dismissed and the new improved service would launch in September to coincide with the start of the new school year.
- Fostering events were coming up in Aylesbury on 15th August and in Micklefield in High Wycombe on 11th September.

In response to Members' questions the following main points were noted:

- A member thanked the Cabinet Member for the Ofsted Update in his report and thanked officers in Children's Services for their continued hard work in improving services for Children.
- A member asked for reassurance that all was on track for the implementation of the Early Help service. The Cabinet Member reiterated that everything was progressing well although there might be some delays around the Family Information Service.

Cabinet Member for Resources

There were no questions from members.

Cabinet Members for Health and Wellbeing

Lin Hazell highlighted that there had been a number of comments from the new Prime Minister regarding improvements in Social Care and the service would be monitoring developments closely.

In response to Members' questions the following main points were noted:

- A member reported that the Princes Centre had recently been presented with the Queens Award. The Cabinet Member congratulated all the staff at the Princes Centre for this recognition of their work.
- A member noted the significant changes to the healthcare system in Bucks with the introduction of Primary Care Networks and asked that the Cabinet Member would work closely with health colleagues to ensure the smooth transition and delivery of high quality services. The Cabinet Member confirmed that partnership working was key.

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Mrs A Cranmer highlighted the following:

- 91.5% of our maintained schools are rated as good or very good.
- Our Special Educational Needs service has been reorganised and this has led to significant improvements in the processing of Educational and Healthcare Plans (EHCP). The previous backlog had been cleared.
- Seven schools in Aylesbury which had been struggling were showing signs of improvement through the Side by Side project.
- A member asked what support had been given to Bucks schools in responding to the government's Period Poverty task group. The Cabinet Member advised

that this issue had been recognised and reported that schools were given support to help girls who might be experiencing period poverty.

- A member asked the Cabinet Member to pass on his thanks to all the Admissions team for the smooth running of the school placement process, which was not an easy task.
- The Cabinet Member was also requested to work closely with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to further reduce the attainment gap between looked after children and their peers.

10 NOTICES OF MOTION

There were none.

11 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN - INFORMATION ONLY

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Thursday 26th September 2019 at 9.30am in The Oculus.

CHAIRMAN