

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council convened and held on Thursday 26 September 2019 in The Oculus, AVDC, The Gateway, commencing at 9.35 am and concluding at 1.47 pm.

PRESENT

Mr B Roberts in the Chair;

Mr M Appleyard, Mr R Bagge, Mr W Bendyshe-Brown, Mr S Bowles, Mr N Brown, Mr T Butcher, Mr D Carroll, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Mr C Clare, 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 N 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 Tett, Julia Wassell, 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, Mr M Colston, Mrs A Davies, Mrs V Letheren, Mr R Pushman and Mrs J Upton MBE

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs P Birchley, Ms J Blake, Mr A Christensen, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mr M Shaw, Mrs L Sullivan, Mrs J Teesdale, Ms J Ward and Mr D Watson

1 MINUTES

The Chairman paid tribute to Police Constable Andrew Harper, Thames Valley Police Officer, who had died in service. The Council observed a minute's silence.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2019 were agreed, subject to an amendment which reflected that Mr Pushman and Mr Colston had been in attendance.

2 PETITIONS

The following petition was handed to Ms R. Shimmin, Chief Executive:

Julia Wassell presented a petition on Home to School Transport, which requested the new Unitary Authority to make transport places available to all students attending their catchment schools, including Grammar Schools and for students with paid for places. The petition had 1149 signatures and had been supported by Mr Dhillon.

3 COMMUNICATIONS

Apologies had been received from Mrs Blake, Mrs Birchley, Mrs Clarke, Mrs Ward, Mr

Shaw, Mr Christensen, Mr Watson, Ms Teesdale, Mrs Sullivan, and Honorary Alderman, Mr Lawrence, Mrs Miscampbell, Mr Allen, Mr Ross and Mr Colston.

The Chairman reported on a number of important events which he had recently attended.

He had visited the Bucks Army Cadets' Summer Camp to meet the next generation of potential recruits. He had attended a Looked after Children (LAC) and carer event at Missenden Abbey. The Chairman gave compliments to everyone involved in organising the event and making it a success.

Lindengate, a charity that supported adults with learning difficulties, special needs or dementia using therapy through horticulture and gardening had recently celebrated their 5th Birthday and the Chairman paid tribute to their volunteers in Buckinghamshire. The Chairman had also visited Waterside Festival in Aylesbury, which benefitted the Parkinson Society and Child Bereavement charities. The day had been a big success. The Chairman also commended the County Show and its organisers as they had attracted a record number of attendees and he felt that the event improved every year. Lastly, he had attended the Merchant Navy flag-raising ceremony in Market Square, Aylesbury, which had celebrated the Merchant Navy's contribution during the last war.

The Chairman asked Mr Dhillon, Vice-Chairman, to deliver an update about the events he had attended on his behalf. Mr Dhillon had attended the celebration of Buckingham Medical College's inaugural intake; this was the first private medical college in England, established since the Victorian era. He had visited Universal Care Ltd in Beaconsfield and had been delighted to present carers with over ten years of service with special commendations. He had also attended a regatta in Dorney and a celebration of student excellence at the Highcrest Academy.

Mr Bendyshe-Brown expressed thanks to the Kop Hill Climb event, which had achieved record attendance, despite having to close the event early due to adverse weather conditions. The event had raised £650,000 over the previous ten years for various local charities.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Whyte declared that he was a member of the Tesla Owners UK club and founder of Bucks EVs, a club for electric car drivers.

5 ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER AND CHIEF CONSTABLE

The Chairman welcomed Mr A Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) – Thames Valley Police (TVP), to present his report.

Mr Stansfeld informed the Council that he would be standing down in May 2020, following 8 years in his current role. The main points of his update were:

- There had been consistent cuts in policing but the service had recently seen a reversal of this, with additional police officers promised.
- TVP expected to get at least 600 additional Police Officers to support Neighbourhood Policing.
- Thames Valley covered a wide area with more roads and large major towns

than other force areas.

- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) results had not yet been released but TVP were performing well and confident of a good result.
- Mr Stansfeld reminded the Council of the main duties of his role and of important statistics relating to the policing of the area. He introduced 5 key topics areas which had represented the last year:

Prevention and early intervention

- A great deal of effort and money went into this area to ensure that people who had offended didn't become repeat offenders.

Vulnerability

- The police were working hard to support vulnerable groups; including the elderly, children and young people and people with mental health issues.
- A Victims First hub had been established in Reading, which commissioned partnership working and educational workshops.

Serious Organised Crime and Terrorism

- This had been a serious issue and TVP had the responsibility of co-ordinating this for the whole of the South East.
- County Lines had continued to be an issue and a recent operation had resulted in a large amount of warrants issued, arrests made and drugs seized.

Reducing re-offending

- It was important to properly support people after they had been released from prison, to prevent them reoffending.
- Mr Stansfeld told the Council that he was an advocate for GPS tagging after people who had committed serious crimes were released. There had been budgetary constraints on this activity but he felt that the benefits outweighed the costs.
- The PCC also gave £2.7m of the Community Safety Fund to local councils to fund prevention initiatives and support for victims.
- Mr Stansfeld acknowledged that the response to 101 calls had not been great and was an area which would need improvement

Mr Stansfeld handed over to Mr J Campbell, Chief Constable – TVP, and said that they would be happy to take questions at the end.

Mr Campbell introduced the strategic plan for the ensuing year and informed the Council that he had taken up his post in April, having worked for TVP for 9 years. He commented that the complexity of the police environment had increased in recent times with some crimes which were now dealt with regularly, not even existing 30 years ago. During the presentation the following main points were noted:

- Police Officers had to keep up to date with changes in crime and legislation and the basics of policing needed to be right to ensure public confidence in TVP as a good police force.
- Neighbourhood Policing Teams had been maintained, when other forces had lost theirs, albeit with less police officers within those teams.
- TVP aimed to react to calls in a caring and swift way. He praised the Officers for doing a remarkable job and advised that they would always prioritise 999 emergency calls over 101 calls.
- Mr Campbell felt that TVP had a good record with serious crime investigations, but needed to get better at local crime solving.

- In the last year, there had been additional events to police including the President's visit, two Royal weddings and other major events, whilst also maintaining business as usual
- TVP was a large organisation, so they needed to ensure it ran efficiently to enable more resources to be focussed on operational policing.
- Stop and Search exercises had increased with a focus on knives and there had been very very few complaints about how officers had carried this out.
- There had been an increase in street robbery last year and also a dramatic increase in rapes reported since 2007. Mr Campbell felt that rapes continued to be underreported and he hoped there would be an increase in reporting, as victims should be supported effectively.
- There had been a focus on exploitation, which included county lines, fraud, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation. The Chief Constable reported that 80% of fraud was preventable.
- The hot summer had caused a spike in call volumes. There had been improvements in 101 call response times which had decreased from 8 minutes, down to 2 minutes.
- Mr Campbell discussed the challenges which officers faced in their line of duty, the most frequent crimes within the Buckinghamshire area and next year's priorities for TVP.
- He advised Council that although funding for additional officers had been promised by the Prime Minister, it would take time to recruit and train the right candidates

He finished by thanking Councillors for their support of the TVP force.

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

- A violent crime strategy had been created to deal with knife crime across the Thames Valley. This had received some Government funding to help them deal with 'surge' activity. A multi-agency violent crime reduction unit had also been created and they regularly educated young people about dangers and created diversionary activities.
- Government funding didn't usually reach TVP until July and had to be spent by April.
- Problems with local motorist behaviours in Wendover and Halton, including regular speeding, would be passed back to the local Commander.
- Traveller communities and the impact they had on local people had been an issue. The laws around traveller communities were very weak and police could only move them on. Mr Stansfeld had met with the Home Secretary and had suggested that tighter rules were needed.
- There was no policing solution to fixing homelessness in town centres. Instead, this required a multiagency approach
- There had been a rise in reported crime; however, part of the reason for this had been the way crime classifications had been changed for reporting.
- Rape investigations had been particularly difficult to lead to a prosecution due to the fact they are often historic and lacked forensic evidence. Despite this, TVP remained committed to supporting victims
- TVP continued to attend local community events, such as the local area forums (LAFs) but needed to coordinate them around their existing duties. A member stated that the Buckingham LAF in particular had been well-attended and they had felt past police presence had been beneficial to residents and the officers

who had attended.

- A member, who was also an Independent Custody Visitor, observed that there had been a marked improvement in how detainees were treated, over the last ten years and asked for this to be fed back to relevant colleagues.
- Several of the Neighbourhood Action Groups had continued to be active and successful in High Wycombe, tackling many issues, not just speeding.
- There had been funding issues to create enough locally-situated sexual assault referral centres, as these had to be multi-agency funded. TVP had dealt with this delicately and tried to minimise victim travel times when accessing a centre
- TVP had been developing their capability for the public to report non-emergency incidents online. This project intended to reduce the burden on call handlers and on caller waiting times for 101 calls
- Councillors were keen for community initiatives such as street associations to continue to be supported and funded by Mr Stansfeld's successor
- Rural crime was recognised as a continuing issue, but had been successfully reduced, in particularly there had been a reduction in the theft of heavy plants and machinery. The increase in officers would help in rural areas.

The Chairman thanked Mr Stansfeld and the Chief Constable for their time and contributions and wished Mr Stansfeld all the best for the future.

6 CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

Leader

Mr M Tett highlighted the following points:

- He had experienced difficulty in meeting with Grant Schapps, Transport Secretary, to make Buckinghamshire's views on HS2 known, although he had managed to meet with 4 local MPs and a top Civil Servant from the Department for Transport.

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

- The Leader had written to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State to express concerns over the HS2 independent review terms of reference and had questioned the appropriateness of having an ex-Chairman of HS2 chairing the review. Additionally, the only local government representatives had been supporters of HS2.
- There was concern about the amount of clearance work which had continued in Great Missenden, Steeple Claydon and Calvert despite the fact the HS2 project had been paused, pending a review outcome. The damage the clearance continued to cause was an environmental disaster.
- He congratulated Mrs Macpherson's leadership on the issue of HS2 and also expressed thanks to Mr Clare and Mr Chilver, saying he would support any further representations which were made
- East-West Rail connectivity should be a priority and would boost the Northern Powerhouse. A further concern about noise levels from HS2 on Oxford Road, Aylesbury if the line was raised, would be included in further communications with Central Government
- The Leader agreed to report back to Members on whether Buckinghamshire would be bidding for 5G broadband.

A Member encouraged the rest of the Council to take practical action against vegetation clearance and sign a petition which requested cessation of this action, as

100,000+ signatures would force a debate in Parliament.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Transportation

Mr P Irwin, Deputy Cabinet Member for Transportation attended to represent Mr M Shaw in his absence. He highlighted the following:

- Buckinghamshire County Council had won a Live Labs award for their work, which had introduced more solar panels, better connectivity and had initiated a 5G project. All actions would be better for the environment.
- The plane and patch programme continued into its 2nd year and had reduced potholes from 1000 per month, down to 40 potholes per month.

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

- Transport for Bucks and the Cabinet Member for Transportation received thanks for the plane and patch programme in Marlow, for the new sensors on Marlow bridge, for flooding reduction on London Road and for the work completed on the A4010.
- The weed spraying programme was nearly completed, with the third round due in a couple of weeks.
- Gully Smart was a new programme that had been implemented to improve gully maintenance and to reduce instances of flooding on new road surfaces.
- A lot of recent roadworks across Aylesbury Vale which had caused issues had been due to water companies. The Council worked hard to manage these situations effectively with contractors.
- Road resurfacing would continue until April, with a lot more done after the Christmas period.

Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health

Mr G Williams had nothing further to add to his report. In response to Members' questions, the following main points were noted:

- Once the Public Health grant was reduced, the Addaction-type services would be delivered in collaboration with multi-agency partners. A substance misuse task group with high level representation from partner agencies had already been formed. Prevention services were under pressure.
- A lot of work was being done to tackle male loneliness and depression. There had been social isolation workshops, run jointly with local community groups, and cross-agency commitments to tackling social isolation, such as by the street associations.
- The recent PREVENT Community Roundtable meeting had been well-attended with representation across many communities and also by the Home Office. Mr Williams hoped that all Community Leaders would take responsibility and play their part in their PREVENT duties.
- The Cabinet Member would consider the feasibility of lobbying for minimum unit pricing for alcohol in the UK, due to the success and significant sales reduction which had been achieved in Scotland.

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Mr W Whyte highlighted the following:

- The Looked After Children (LAC) Celebration Event had been a really uplifting day and he wanted to thank the sponsors who had made the event possible.

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

- Speeches from care leavers had been excellent and had worked very well

- The personal adviser service would continue for 16-18 year olds as it played a very important role in supporting them towards independence.

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Mrs A Cranmer highlighted the following:

- She gave apologies on behalf of Mr Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation and for herself for the difficulties which children had faced with their Home to School Transport arrangements. All parents affected had received a letter of apology.
- All concerns and issues were being taken seriously and a team of transport professionals had been reviewing responses, so that similar issues would be avoided in future. Parents and Members had highlighted a number of general and specific concerns, which would take time to address.
- She thanked parents for the petition relating to eligible and discretionary travel passes and assured them that systems were being thoroughly reviewed.

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

- The possibility of implementing an automatic renewal system would be considered, so that parents would qualify for a school transport place until they opted out.
- Communications had been very poor when informing parents and issuing of discretionary passes had been too late in the process. The IT system had gone down over the August Bank holiday resulting in 1250 paid transport passes being sat in the system and unable to be actioned. The bus pass printer had failed halfway through the print run and the call system had been overwhelmed by the volume of calls.
- There were no plans to change policy in connection with children who passed their 11+ and wanted to attend a grammar school. There would be significant budget implications if the policy around grammar school transport were to change.
- GL Assessment had accepted full responsibility for the recent errors in 11+ testing and had confirmed that there would be no need for retesting. Members were reminded that the County Council had no influence over the choice of 11+ test providers.
- There remained some disparity in Black Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups and vulnerable groups of children attending grammar schools, but there were many initiatives in place to try and narrow the gap.
- A Member requested that the home to school transport policy should prioritise the welfare needs of the more vulnerable, younger children who would be making the transition from primary to secondary schools.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment

Mr W Chapple had nothing further to add to his report. In response to Members' questions, the following main points were noted:

- Members complimented the Cabinet Member on managing the budget effectively which had allowed Burnham Recycling Centre to remain open.
- Despite HWRC savings, the Bledlow HRC closure could not be reconsidered as the overall budget forecast still indicated a small overspend. In response to a question regarding flytipping on private land not being recorded as an incident by the Council, Mr Chapple explained that there was not sufficient resource to address tipping on private land, but the Council would take a prosecution to court on an individual's behalf if there was sufficient evidence.

- Following the formation of the unitary council, each of the existing district council Local Plans would continue and a new Buckinghamshire Plan would be developed as a priority, although this could take up to 5 years to finalise. In the interim, existing local plans would continue to apply.

Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Mrs L Hazell expressed her thanks to the new provider who would be taking over Thrift Farm. She stated that the project was in its infancy and a lot of hard work remained.

The local Member, Mr Chilver, also expressed thanks and asked when the facility management would pass across. Mrs Hazell couldn't provide a finalised date as the decision has only been taken that week.

Cabinet Member for Resources

Mr J Chilver had nothing further to add to his report.

A Member informed Mr Chilver that he had been waiting for a response about the allocation of the Bledlow HRC site to a Community Interest Company. Mr Chilver informed the member that he had forwarded the response to officers and would ensure he received a reply.

7 NOTICES OF MOTION

Oxford to Cambridge Expressway

The Chairman advised that a Motion to Council: "OX-CB Expressway" had been received from Mrs Macpherson.

Mrs Macpherson proposed the motion and highlighted these points:

- There was a need to improve the road network but there was no evidence to justify the construction of a motorway through the north of the county.
- There would be both an environmental impact and the addition of thousands of new houses.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) could be destroyed forever
- There had been a total lack of public consultation and visibility from Highways England on the Expressway project.
- It would be preferable to improve the existing local roads and support East-West Rail.

Mr Chilver seconded the motion and highlighted the following points:

- That Highways England had supported the worst route and had provided a poor example of how to consult on a major infrastructure project.
- The Expressway would not solve any existing transport issues and would destroy farmland.
- There would be very few junctions in the county, meaning residents would get all the noise and pollution but receive very few benefits.
- The Expressway would also create urban sprawl.

Mr Tett, Leader said that he wholeheartedly supported the motion and highlighted these points:

- He understood the stress this had caused residents

- The option of the most southern route would have delivered more benefits locally

The Leader of the opposition, Mr Lambert, highlighted the following points:

- He also supported the motion
- The Council had to balance the responsibility for infrastructure, with the responsibility for the environment.
- There were opportunities to safeguard the green areas in Buckinghamshire through the development of the new authority's Local Plan
- He didn't see the need for the Expressway and suggested the council wrote to MPs and the PM to express everyone's views.

The Chairman invited Members to debate the motion and the following main points were made:

- Members felt that facts had been hidden from the public
- The location of the expressway would have a devastating effect on the environment
- Money could be spent more effectively and costs would be excessive
- The proposed plan wouldn't be a joined up or cohesive plan for Buckinghamshire. In 2020 the Unitary Council would have more of an opportunity to consider the needs of this county holistically
- AVDC had approved a similar motion the previous week.

The motion was voted on and was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: Council agreed to:

- (1) Oppose the Expressway project and support the electrification of the East-West Rail route for passenger and freight traffic as part of the strategic rail network. This includes to encourage these intermodal connections to East-West Rail and to discourage long distance freight by road.**
- (2) Support better east west public transport and active rail solutions.**
- (3) Develop alternative proposals which avoid the damaging environmental impacts of The Expressway.**
- (4) Continue to work with environmental groups including the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership to develop plans as part of vital mitigation if the Expressway does progress.**
- (5) Write to local MPs to express the Council's view, to outline to them the points detailed in resolutions (1)-(4), and to ask for their support in the Council's endeavours.**

Kashmir

The Chairman advised that a Motion to Council: "Kashmir" had been received from Mr Lambert.

Mr Lambert proposed the motion and highlighted these points:

- Buckinghamshire residents of Kashmiri heritage were very concerned for their families in Kashmir
- He gave examples of personal refugee experiences from within his own family and reported that some Bucks residents had been unable to contact their family members due to curfews, communication shutdown and power outages.
- There was a need to promote harmony in Buckinghamshire's diverse communities.
- He would write to MPs to raise awareness of local residents' concerns.
- He paid particular tribute to Adam Cheyo at AVDC for his community work.

Mr Tett, Leader seconded the motion and made the following points:

- The Council could not get drawn into taking sides due to the complexity of the divisions in Kashmir.
- He paid special tribute to the Kashmiri women who had attended the meeting to support the motion.
- Buckinghamshire had very good cross-community relations.
- He would write to the local MPs and the Foreign Secretary.

The Chairman invited Members to debate the motion and the following main points were made:

- Buckinghamshire had a large community who had been affected by this issue.
- Members were community leaders and had a moral obligation to foster community relations and fight against human rights abuses. They should convey the strength of feeling within Buckinghamshire, to the Foreign Secretary.
- In Kashmir there had been a 52 day curfew, with no hospitals or broadband and no action being taken to resolve the situation
- Residents were encouraged to write to MPs to raise awareness of the issue.
- Steve Baker MP received thanks for raising awareness of the issue.
- There were approximately 15,000 Kashmiris in High Wycombe alone and some Council members had been directly affected by the issues, due to their own Kashmiri heritage.

The motion was voted on and was carried unanimously.

RESOLVED: Council agreed that the Leader would:

- 1) Write to all our local Members of Parliament to make known the concerns of local Buckinghamshire residents of South East Asian heritage. This has to be done in a manner that does not seek to heighten tensions between different communities within the county and in particular respects the human rights of all concerned.**
- 2) Ask that the MPs listen to those concerns and raise them, as appropriate, with the Foreign Secretary**

Climate Change

The Chairman advised that a Motion to Council: "Climate Change" had been received from Mr Tett.

Mr Tett proposed the motion and highlighted these points:

- He felt this was one of the most important motions debated in the Chamber, over his 15 year career in politics
- 2013-2018 had been the warmest years on record and 20% of that rise occurred between 2011 and 2015.
- There was a threat to the oceans, with warming waters endangering coral reefs and melting Arctic ice.
- The UK accounted for 1% of carbon emissions and there needed to be a global reduction in emissions and energy usage, with the UK leading the way.
- The target to reduce carbon would be a challenge, but progress had already been made as more power was now being created from zero emission sources instead of from fossil fuels.
- Buckinghamshire had been playing its part for many years by recycling over 50% of waste, reducing landfill waste and moving to LED streetlights to save energy and reduce pollution.
- Mr Tett was keen to exploit Buckinghamshire's agricultural estate by reforestation to offset carbon.
- A roll-out of electric car charging points across Buckinghamshire would promote sustainable travel.
- The new Unitary Council would implement new planning policies to encourage energy efficiency and reduce reliance on gas boilers.

Mr Chapple seconded the motion. He would bring a report to the next Cabinet meeting and told Council that the streets of London had been packed with young people protesting against climate change on the previous Friday. He believed that the Council had a duty to pass the planet on to the next generation in good condition and made the following points:

- 2050 would be an achievable target to become carbon neutral and bringing that date forward was unrealistic, as behaviours needed to change.
- Whilst he understood the motives of the protestors, it was important to recognise that other countries were much bigger polluters than the UK and therefore should be encouraged to make changes.
- Making the necessary changes would require courage, commitment and finance. All residents would be required to change their lifestyle and standards.
- It had taken the council 10 years to complete the actions which had resulted in a 41% decrease in carbon emissions across the county.
- Infrastructure would be needed to support the switch to electric vehicles and consideration needed to be given to the sustainability of electrical supplies.
- He encouraged people to take action immediately to improve their own carbon consumption.
- The future Bucks Local Plan should encourage developers to create carbon neutral developments.
- He hoped there would be tree planting and the creation of meadows to support bees and other insects.

The Leader of the opposition, Mr Lambert, also supported the motion and made the following points:

- He thanked Mr Tett and Mr Chapple for incorporating his comments into the wording of the motion and agreed that this item was one of the most important debates to happen in the Chamber.
- He felt it was important for Buckinghamshire County Council to pass on an

organisational memory of climate action to the new council.

- 70% of species on the planet would be at risk if action is not taken, this included humans.
- He paid tribute to Greta Thunberg as an inspirational young person.
- He noted that the Amazon rainforest had burnt uncontrollably and that global temperatures had risen to their highest levels, so now would be the time to take action.
- He praised young people who had actively educated people who were in a position of power and stated that he was proud of their actions, with the hope that this would be promoted in Schools
- He informed the Council that Alderman Davies and the High Sheriff had established SAVE (Save Aylesbury Vale Environment) and the Liberal Democrats had introduced recycling and a range of other environmental policies when they had controlled AVDC. He wanted all Members to act and lead the way in environmental change.
- At the recent Liberal Democrat Conference they had agreed a radical environmental policy. This policy gave local government new powers to be responsible for climate change, including the ability to cut emissions, to end fracking and to produce zero emissions by 2045.

The Chairman invited Members to debate the motion and the following main points were made:

- Members paid tribute to Greta Thunberg and the young people standing for climate change
- A more holistic view of planning and sustainability in communities would be welcomed in future
- There would be an economic cost to climate change. Leaders would need to analyse any improvements which could be made and any budget implications which these would lead to
- The Chiltern chalk streams were in a desperate state.
- The Council had many environmental achievements which were mentioned, notably the use of better building materials, solar panel and LED lighting upgrades, insulation and double glazing. All of these actions had delivered carbon reductions, improved energy efficiency and saved £1 million of the council's budget.
- The council had a duty to get a good return for their pensioners through the Pension Fund and responsible divestment would be supported
- Other countries and organisations, known to be the largest polluters, would be lobbied and encouraged to reduce carbon. A working group would be formed for this purpose and would include young people
- Buckinghamshire residents needed to reduce their energy usage
- Members looked forward to welcoming Buckinghamshire's plans for a carbon footprint reduction within the carbon audit report
- There was support for tree planting practices, to offset carbon output
- A target of 2050 for zero emissions was not thought to be ambitious enough and Members suggested that 2030 was preferred
- The environment should be at the heart of the corporate plan for the new council and the new local plan should encourage all developments to be carbon neutral
- Particular infrastructure projects were thought to be detrimental to the local environment, this included the expansion at Heathrow, which would destroy 1400 acres of green belt land and would require 6 rivers to be diverted

- Suggestions for moving action forward within Buckinghamshire included a plant a tree campaign, promotion of sustainable transport, educating children at school, introducing green waste recycling, increasing electric charge points and the provision of water refill stations
- J Wassell announced that she would be abstaining from voting as she had promised a group of children that she would support an amendment from 2050, to 2030, as the situation was an emergency and required urgent action. She could not support the motion in its current form and felt that she should have put forward this amendment herself.
- The public protestors were acknowledged and commended by several Members
- BCC had taken 10 years to reduce carbon by 41% and there would be new challenges including a rising population
- Everyone's cultures and standards would need to be changed to achieve the target and that had been why 2050 had been decided as the target date. Radical changes would need to be implemented including limiting air travel, transitioning residents to electric vehicles and reducing commuting. The Council would lead the way with these changes

The motion was voted on and carried, 1 Member abstained.

RESOLVED: Council agreed to:

- 1) **Recognise that the rate of climate change is a global emergency.**
- 2) **Recognise that, although the UK constitutes 1% of global carbon emissions, it must nevertheless play its part in leading the way in promoting change both in the UK itself and, importantly, globally.**
- 3) **Note the significant progress that Buckinghamshire County Council has made to date in addressing climate change.**
- 4) **Agree that the new Buckinghamshire Council should consider addressing climate change as a key issue.**
- 5) **Acknowledge the net-zero 2050 UK target, as contained in the 2008 Climate Change Act (as amended).**
- 6) **Commission a carbon audit pre assessment to gain an insight into the Council's carbon usage.**
- 7) **Recommend that Cabinet should further consider this issue, including what proposals, ahead of vesting day, the authority could implement to support this agenda. These proposals to include using the carbon audit gap analysis report to inform the policy decisions of the new Buckinghamshire Council once it is established next April.**

8 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS TAKEN - INFORMATION ONLY

9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting will be on 28th November 2019 at 9:30am in the Oculus room, The Gateway, AVDC Offices, Aylesbury.

CHAIRMAN