

TRANSPORT ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE



RETROSPECTIVE



FOREWORD



Cllr David Carroll

"I have been Chairman of the TEC Select Committee since 2015. The purpose of the Committee is to hold decision-makers to account for improving outcomes and services for the residents of Buckinghamshire, specifically in relation to strategic business planning, the growth strategy, highway regeneration and infrastructure and environmental services (such as country parks and waste management). Additionally, it also has within its remit many of the public services which we provide to the community, such as Registrar services, museums and libraries.

The Committee comprises of 8 Members and we work very closely with several partner agencies. We hold between 4 and 6 formal committee meetings a year and undertake in-depth reviews which run alongside the meetings, on topics which are agreed by the committee. The Committee has also worked with Officers to provide advice during policy development and undertaken pre-decision scrutiny."

KEY ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE OVER THE LAST 2 YEARS

- Modern Slavery (inquiry)
- National Infrastructure Commission Report
- Review of mobile library services
- Prevent duty
- Community safety partnership plan
- Museum trust
- TfB performance monitoring
- Freight strategy
- Energy and growth in buckinghamshire
- Local Enterprise Partnership Review Update and Local Industrial Strategy
- Sustainable school travel in Buckinghamshire (inquiry)
- Household Recycling Centre Policy Review (pre-consultation scrutiny)

MODERN SLAVERY INQUIRY

The Committee undertook an inquiry on Modern Slavery which examined the implications of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the steps the Council should take in order to comply with its duties under the Act. Through a series of evidence-gathering sessions, 8 recommendations were developed and all were accepted by Cabinet. These included the introduction of whole council training sessions which attracted over 500 attendees, the development of a clear positional statement for the Council and better signposting and procedures for reporting suspected cases of slavery through the national referral mechanism.

Additionally, a local victim support service was established in 2018. This was highlighted as a key gap by the Police during the inquiry and the Committee have recently received an update on the services, following the first year of operation.



SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL TRAVEL INQUIRY

In 2017, the committee undertook an inquiry into sustainable school travel in Buckinghamshire. Evidence was gathered from Council Officers, Head teachers, parents, residents, pupils, Police, Fire and Public Health using surveys and focus groups. The ultimate aim was to reduce the amount of family car journeys, which led to increased traffic around school sites.

A number of recommendations were made, including closer working between Education and Transport teams when planning for new developments to encourage sustainable transport options.

HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE POLICY REVIEW

The Committee held a pre-consultation workshop to discuss a draft consultation document with Officers. Through an open and collaborative discussion with Officers, the Committee highlighted some simple areas to further strengthen the consultation process to ensure that residents were well-informed and that the process met the recognised principles underpinning effective consultation.

The final decision report which was presented to Cabinet is used within Democratic Service's current Officer training programme as an example of best practice, due to the well-structured report, its high quality provision of data and as an example of an effective public consultation

Select Committee probe into modern slavery

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It's a hidden crime that slips under the radar and on to the secret pages of the illicit dark web. But the evils of modern slavery in Buckinghamshire are about to come under the full glare of public scrutiny.

County Councillors are launching an inquiry into the scale of modern slavery in Buckinghamshire and how the County Council can help tackle it. Modern slavery traffickers and slave drivers coerce, deceive and force people into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Research across the county last year by University College's Jill Dando Institute, warned there was potential for exploitation of workers in isolated agricultural jobs, remote factories, and in caring for an increasing ageing population.

And researchers identified focal points for the County Council to target in the fight against modern slavery; liaising with public transport providers to watch for victims who might be fleeing from slave masters, asking delivery drivers who visit remote locations to look out for tell-tale signs of exploitation.

Since then the County Council has worked on an adult exploitation strategy, which will be presented to the Safer Stronger Bucks Partnership Board next month.

However, as members of the County Council's Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee heard at a special briefing last week (Tuesday, September 12), people's awareness of the problem is limited, and exploitation could be much greater than figures show.

At the briefing, addressed by the police and Rahab, an agency from Reading working with modern slavery victims, Select Committee members heard how Thames Valley Police were one of only three forces now taking part in a cyber trial, logging references on Facebook, adult sites, and the dark web, where victims are recruited, to advance their investigations.

Police recorded 150 Buckinghamshire victims between February 2016 and March 2017, highlighting that females are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and domestic servitude, whereas males are targeted for labour and forced criminalisation.

School journey alternatives to be explored by Buckinghamshire County Council

Claire Jones | January 18, 2017 | 0 Comments



Later in January 2017 Buckinghamshire County Council is to launch an inquiry into the use of cars to get children to and from school to explore alternative, healthier options for parents and carers to make the school journey.

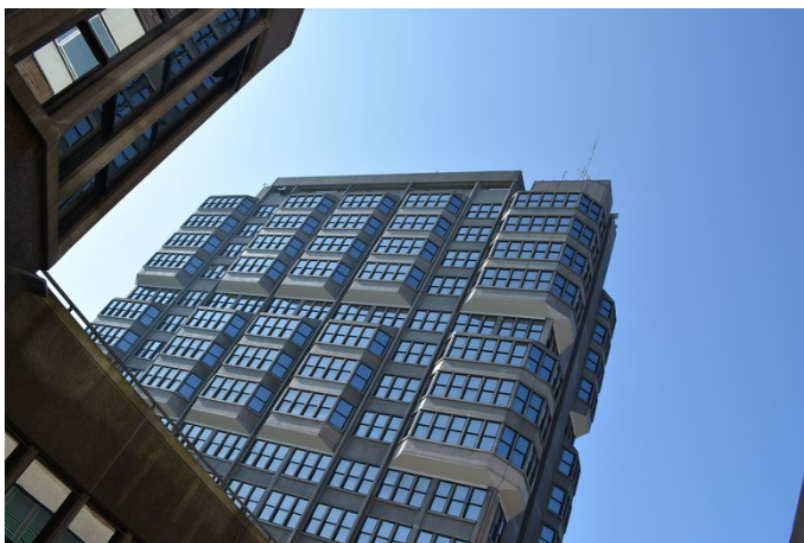
Chairman of the Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee, David Carroll, said that with planned housing growth across Buckinghamshire, school expansion and new school building could lead to worse congestion and parking around roads serving schools.

'We want to see if it's possible to reduce the number of car journeys to school,' said David. 'By exploring alternative, healthier modes of travel to school, we'll have the opportunity to see what good models schools are using across the county, and what good practice could be shared.'

It goes without saying that moving cars present a danger to our children, and where there is less congestion, the risks reduce. We're pretty sure enforcement at pinch points around school roads isn't being effective, so we want to look at other methods that do work.'

Early next month the Select Committee will hold two days of evidence gathering from head teachers, travel planning co-ordinators, Junior Road Safety Officers, police, fire service community safety officers, and national experts.

BCC engages with 'Prevent' strategy to discourage extremism



Published by the Mix96 News Team at 2:02pm 14th March 2018.



Bucks County Council has a legal duty to prevent people being drawn into terrorism.

It's known as the government's 'Prevent' strategy - and a Select Committee has been updating councillors on how they are achieving this.

Currently they're engaging with schools, making sure extremists don't have a platform, raising awareness with employees, with plans to do more.

A few excerpts from the Select Committee report:

Engagement with Schools

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Members of the public are actively encouraged to get involved in the work of the TEC committee and this can be done via submitting questions for the Committee meetings, responding to calls for evidence during an inquiry, completing relevant inquiry or consultation surveys or by raising issues with their Local Member or the Chairman of the Select Committee.

ONE COUNCIL, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

The launch of Buckinghamshire Council in April 2020 provides opportunities for the Select Committee to reflect on the achievements of the Committee over the last few years and to make suggestions for future areas of work for the new authority.