

Select Committee Inquiry July 2017

SCOPE

Title	Is the County Council Ready for Growth?
Signed-off by	Select Committee Chairman
	Head of Member Services (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)
Author	Committee and Governance Advisers: Kelly Sutherland, Kama Wager, Liz Wheaton, Kevin Wright.
Date	23 rd May 2017
Inquiry Group Membership	All Members of the 4 Select Committees of BCC.
Member Services Resource	Member Services will provide the following officer support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clare Capjon – Acting Head of Member Services – Project oversight • Committee & Governance Advisers – Policy Lead & project management • Committee Assistant – Administrative support (as needed)
Lead Cabinet Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of the Council
Lead HQ/BU Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gladys Rhodes-White (CSCL) Mark Kemp (TEE), Sheila Norris (CHASC), Richard Ambrose/Matt Strevens (BSP/HQ)
What is the problem that is trying to be solved?	Buckinghamshire will experience significant growth in the forthcoming decades as defined in the District based Local Plans. This growth will have significant impacts on demand for the County Council's services. It is vital that Council and Business Unit (BU) plans are well developed and co-ordinated to ensure residents continue to receive the highest quality services.
What will not be considered	As a strategic and initial piece of work, the Inquiry will not consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implications of the growth proposals on partner organisations • Detailed plans for all services
Is this topic within the remit of the Select Committee?	Yes, the Select Committees have the remit to consider the implications of housing growth in the County in relation to managing potential increased demand on Council services.
What are the key lines of enquiry	<p>In relation to the Growth Agenda in Bucks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a Business Unit strategy for both exploiting and managing growth? • What are the opportunities for the Business Unit that growth presents? • What are the challenges? • How co-ordinated is the approach to growth? • What governance arrangements are in place to manage growth <p>E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring delivery of policy/plans related to growth ○ Working together in the BU and more widely ○ Being in control of the growth agenda ○ Open and accountable in relation to decisions made around the growth agenda. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the BU manage the potential increase in demand financially? • Is robust modelling and forecasting used by the Business Unit to understand the impacts of growth on the BU, partners/stakeholders and service users over the short, medium and longer term?

What are the key issues to investigate/evidence needed.	<p>Stage 1 – Fact finding & discovery phase</p> <p>Stage 2 – Assessment</p> <p>Stage 3 – Identification of improvement measures. (Stakeholder views on improvement ideas for feasibility, effectiveness and deliverability.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on demand forecasts over the short, medium and long term • Information on the BU's understanding of the growth agenda and the specific impacts on the BU • Information on the BU's planning activity (higher level) • Evidence of an understanding of the impacts on other Business Units of decisions made around growth. • Evidence of a co-ordinated Business Unit wide approach to dealing with the growth agenda • Evidence of robust financial forecasting based on an understanding of growth forecasts/modelling.
Is the topic of relevance to the work of BCC?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Any population and infrastructure growth will impact directly on the services the Council provides to local people.</p>
What work is underway corporately already on this issue?	<p>The Council is a statutory consultee for Local Plans Growth Board (Members) Growth Working Group (Officers)</p>
Are there any key changes that might impact on this issue?	<p>The outcome of the Government's decision in relation to the local unitary bids may impact on focus for the Select Committees.</p> <p>Brexit negotiations</p>
What are the key timing considerations?	<p>Subject to agreement, the Inquiry would take place through scheduled meetings in June/July.</p>
Who are the key stakeholders & decision-makers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of the Council • All Cabinet Members • All One Council Board members • Business Unit Managers and Officers
What media /communications support do you want?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release/social media communications to inform the public of the Inquiry • Press release/social media communications on the report publication

Evidence-gathering Methodology

What types of methods of evidence-gathering will you use?
<p>List them here e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desktop research (other local authorities, national guidance etc) • Relevant Minutes/Meeting Notes • Direct evidence from key stakeholders • Business intelligence information, including demand and demographic projections

Assessment Methodology

Gather verbal evidence from senior officers and Cabinet Members on:

- how the BU is working to understand how growth in Buckinghamshire will impact on the BU
- the plans in place for dealing with growth.

Undertake desktop research to:

- gather evidence of good practice in managing growth from elsewhere
- review the BU's plans for understanding and addressing growth in Bucks.

Triangulate verbal, written and desktop evidence from across all BUs to understand and judge the Council's strategic approach to growth.

Use evidence to make an assessment against a key list of assessment criteria (see below)

Assessment Criteria

Evidence shows that

- The Business Unit has a good understanding of the impact of growth in Bucks over the short, medium and longer term.
- The Business Unit is working well with other Business Units and partners in dealing with growth
- There is a strategic approach to managing and exploiting growth.

Outline Inquiry Project Plan

Stage	Key Activity	Dates
Scoping	Outline Scope agreed by Select Committee Development of scoping	21 Mar 17 April / May17
Evidence-gathering	Preliminary context setting In-meeting evidence gathering by each Select Committee, followed by identification of findings and recommendation areas	23 rd May 17 July 17
Developing recommendations	Report drafted Testing & development of recommendations with key stakeholders	End July -Aug 17
Reporting	Report signed off by TEC Committee Cabinet meeting to consider recommendations	12 Sept 17 2 Oct 17