

# Minutes

## Cabinet

Date: 9 September 2019

Venue: Mezzanine Rooms 1 & 2, County Hall, Aylesbury

Time: 10.30 am to 11.45 am

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr M Tett (in the Chair).

Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr J Chilver, Ms L Hazell, Mr M Shaw, Mr W Whyte and Mr G Williams

### **OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms N Glover and Mr D Dhillon

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms R Bennett, Mrs S Ashmead, Ms R Shimmin, Mr T Vouyioukas, Ms J Bowie, Mr P Robson,  
Mr M Dickman and Mr A Rush

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs A Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **3 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2019 were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

## 4 HOT TOPICS

**Cabinet Member for Transportation** highlighted the recent visit with the Mayor of Chesham to meet a 7 year old boy who championed a cleaner and brighter environment and had been out litter picking in his local area.

**Cabinet Member for Children's Services** thanked all staff and foster carers and highlighted the recent celebration event that celebrated the achievements of all the looked after children in the county and the event heard from a number of inspirational speakers. It had been a really enjoyable event and supported by local businesses. The press release could be found [here](#).

Mr Whyte also highlighted the new family support service that had gone live on Monday 2 September 2019. Mr Whyte thanked all staff that had worked on the transition into the new service. Mr Whyte referenced the new website [www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/familysupport](http://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/familysupport) which gave lots of advice to families and how to interact with the new service. Mr Tett, Leader, gave his appreciation to all the staff that had been involved in the transition and recognised that it had been a long journey, but was pleased that a new effective service was now in place to benefit the lives of children and their families.

**Cabinet Member for Resources** had attended presentation of two Best Kept Village awards in Winslow. The awards were annual and a real incentive for Buckinghamshire villages.

**Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health** highlighted the NHS Health Checks and that although there would be a central government review of them they were still running in Buckinghamshire. Mr Williams had recently had one himself that would be shared on social media and he urged anyone invited to take up the offer.

**Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing** stated that there had been some positive news from central government regarding Adult Social Care funding however there still needed to be a long term funding reform and a long term plan.

Lin Hazell also raised the recent incident at Seeley's House that had resulted in the temporary suspension of the overnight respite service and confirmed that this had not affected the day time service. The council were working closely with staff at Seeley's House the overnight service would be reopened as soon as possible.

**Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment** highlighted the Best Kept Village awards and mentioned villages that had won various prizes in a number of groups. Mr Chapple also mentioned the recent Pednormead End flood management community exhibition held on the 4 September giving flood management advice to Chesham residents and highlighted that another event was being held on 10 September. Mr Chapple had also been invited to the FCC Greatmoor celebration event. The site had now been running for 3 years and had dealt with 1m tonnes of waste and to celebrate had set up at Westcott Adventure Park an aviary for 1m bees with the proceeds going to the charity TheraBees.

**The Leader** highlighted the Spending Report that was announced by the Chancellor the previous week. There was good news in terms of a number of one off grants and the proposal for another potential adult social care precept. However it was emphasised that since a lot of the announcements related to one off funding this could not prudently be added to base Revenue expenditure. This could be a problem for the new unitary council. Mr Tett emphasised gratitude to the government. He also said that expectations needed to be managed and careful measures would need to be made when planning the new budget as ongoing funding was not guaranteed.

## **5 QUESTION TIME**

Mr D Dhillon, Local Member for Cliveden and resident of Farnham Common presented questions around home to school transport within both divisions.

In reference to Cliveden, Mr Dhillon stated that in 2015, residents of Dorney had provided evidence that the walking route from Dorney to Burnham Park Academy or Burnham Park Grammar was deemed unsafe. The evidence went to appeal and in 2017 a private operator was arranged by Buckinghamshire County Council to transport students. It had been predicted that in 2019, 30 children from the area would be attending Burnham Grammar School as a result of the closure of Burnham Park Academy, making it the most appropriate school. Mr Dhillon stated that there were some residents who lived 2.9 miles from Burnham Park Grammar School, meaning that their children did not qualify for free home to school transport. However due to the walking route having been identified as unsafe, free transport should be provided.

Mr Tett, Leader, summarised Mr Dhillon's question and stated that any children who would be unsafe walking from home to school would be eligible for free transport. It was highlighted that in year 7 the boundary for free transport was two miles as opposed to three miles.

Mr T Vouyioukas, Executive Director for Children's Services agreed to look into the specific case to understand Buckinghamshire County Council's position, and would respond to Mr Dhillon directly.

In regards to Farnham Common, Mr Dhillon highlighted that the Beeches Local Area Forum (LAF) had identified an ongoing problem with paid for home to school transport in that there was no nearest appropriate school. Until the previous year children had been using the 74 bus for school transport but this route had now been changed. Parents had attended the LAF to present the issue, but there had been an increase in the number of effected children since. 13 children were yet to be allocated a bus place two weeks before the start of the school year. Mr Dhillon wanted to know what assurance would be given to parents where there was a lack of transport and what would be done to help them. There were concerns over children's safety as transport was unavailable.

Mr Tett stated that he was aware that things had not run well with home to school transport this year and had received a large number of emails and correspondence in relation to the issues. Mr Tett apologised on behalf of the County Council to all parents that had not received the service they should have done and gave assurance that the issue would be looked in to.

Lin Hazell highlighted the identified route to transport children to Beaconsfield, but stated that the route was not satisfactory. The route provided would take an hour which was too long.

Mr Tett invited Mr P Robson, Interim Head of Integrated Transport, to provide a response. Mr Robson stated that there were concerns over paid for transport and although there was no statutory duty to provide this it was constantly reviewed with commercial operators. Transport was currently provided on a voluntary and partnership arrangement basis and the home to school transport service was working with commercial operators to take on additional school services. Buckinghamshire County Council had secured 21 bus services from September 2019, and a further 30 from November 2019. Mr Robson highlighted the enthusiasm from commercial services to provide home to school transport, but acknowledged that this did not detract from the difficulties parents experienced and ongoing work to collaborate with commercial services would continue.

Mr Tett summarised the issues discussed, and stated that the issue would be taken away and looked into to try and resolve. Mr Tett gave apologies for any difficulties experienced and stated that he would not give commitment on this occasion to change the policy but needed to work with parents to get the best result.

Mr Dhillon gave thanks on behalf of the residents of Burnham for the recommendation included in the household recycling centre item on the agenda to keep Burnham Household Recycling Centre open. In response to this Mr Tett highlighted that he did not want to pre-empt the decision, but that this issue would be addressed later in the agenda.

Ms N Glover, Local Member for Wing highlighted the recent Looked After Children event held at Missenden Abbey. Ms Glover praised the achievements of two care leavers and the commitment from officers and foster carers. It was highlighted by Ms Glover that the service had a lot to be proud of on behalf of Buckinghamshire's foster carers. Mr Tett and Mr Whyte thanked Ms Glover for her comments.

## **6 FORWARD PLAN FOR CABINET AND CABINET MEMBERS**

**RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the report.**

## **7 CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

**RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the report.**

## **8 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME & INQUIRY WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED: Cabinet NOTED the report.**

## **9 HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE (HRCS) SERVICE CHANGES FINANCIAL APPRAISAL**

Mr Tett invited Mr M Dickman, Environment Services Director and Mr Chapple, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment to introduce the item.

Mr Chapple reminded members that on 7 January 2019 the report had been brought to cabinet and examined in great detail. Four decisions were taken:

- 1) To implement charges for non- domestic waste**
- 2) To close Bledlow recycling centre**
- 3) To close Chesham, Burnham and Rabans Lane on Wednesdays and Thursdays**
- 4) A minded to decision to close Burnham recycling centre.**

The fourth decision would be reviewed at the meeting, and it was highlighted that the report set out the detail of the site. Communication was crucial to ensure that any plans and decision were made clear.

Following the increase of waste disposed in March due to the pre-empting of the charges there had been a decrease in the following months. However the amounts were starting to pick back up. It was highlighted that although at the end of the current year there would be a deficit, the following years would break even including Burnham. Mr Chapple stated that the Burnham site should be kept open as it served residents in the area well.

Mr Chapple highlighted that in terms of charges, there was only one item that was charged at £20 which was a boiler. 65 items in total came with charges to dispose of. 40 of the items came with charges of £2.50, 13 items were between £5 and £9 and only 5 items cost more than £10. There had been a significant amount of reports on flytipping, but in the previous year the statistics had decreased due to the combined efforts with S.C.R.A.P.

### **The Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:**

Mr Tett highlighted that waste disposal was one of the most important customer facing services run by the Council and emphasised the excellent staff. Mr Tett was aware that the charges were not popular, but that the decision was dictated by the financial situation. Mr Tett remarked that it was not surprising that the volume had dropped in May 2019, but the system was now well embedded. Mr Tett expressed that he was very pleased that Burnham Recycling Centre could be saved and paid credit to Lin Hazell for her leading role in lobbying. Statistics proved that the level of flytipping had not increased. It was highlighted that one flytipping offender a week was prosecuted and that there was zero tolerance in Buckinghamshire.

Mr Shaw gave congratulations to Mr Chapple and the team. It was highlighted that it was worthwhile for residents to participate in consultations as their opinions were taken into account.

Mr Whyte reiterated the importance of residents taking part in consultations and also congratulated the team for flytipping prosecutions and welcomed the increase in skip hire.

Mr Williams highlighted that 2/3 of fly tipping offences were commercial and it was positive that the prosecution level was high.

Lin Hazell gave thanks to Mr Chapple and officers and reiterated the importance of Burnham Recycling Centre to South Buckinghamshire.

Mr Chapple highlighted that communications were meaningful and that residents were listened to. An extra officer had been recruited to combat flytipping. Thanks were given to the staff at the sites that had dealt with the changes effectively and professionally.

Cabinet were asked to:

- 1) **AGREE to keep Burnham HRC open and continue to operate it 5 days a week, with closing days being Wednesdays and Thursdays.**

**RESOLVED: Cabinet Members AGREED the above recommendation.**

## **10 THRIFT FARM**

Mr Tett introduced the item and highlighted to members of the public that the item would be presented in two parts. One part would be presented in confidential session, as it contained commercially sensitive information. The item would be discussed in general terms and then moved into private discussion to discuss commercial aspects of the Thrift Farm bidders and back into public session to present the decision. Mr Tett invited Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to introduce the item.

Lin Hazell stated that the officers had received viable plans and acknowledged that it had been an unsettling time for service users of the farm. Lin Hazell also commended the staff for their dignity and patience throughout the process.

It was highlighted that there had been an overwhelming response to the consultation, and thanks were given to all those who took part. All views had been carefully considered. It was stated that a call in period had to lapse before any decision could be implemented.

Lin Hazell introduced Ms J Bowie, Service Director for Integrated Commissioning to provide further detail. Ms Bowie highlighted that the paper brought to Cabinet on 4 February 2019 looked at consulting on the future of Thrift Farm and required approval to source alternative operators to run the service.

**The Cabinet raised and discussed the following points:**

Mr Tett highlighted the various proposals included in the report pack, and acknowledged that they had been discussed previously in great length. Mr Tett strongly felt that the centre should stay open if possible.

Mr Chilver expressed his concern as the local member over the closure of the site. Thanks were given to officers for the hard work they had put into the consultation and the detail in the report.

Mr Whyte reinforced Mr Chilver's point and highlighted that he would support a reassessment due to the concerns over the potential closure of the site. Gratitude was expressed that there was a promising proposal and good engagement as part of the consultation.

Mr Tett gave credit to Mr Chilver, Mr Whyte and Mr C Clare, Local Member for Buckingham West for the intense lobbying done for their residents.

**Following the confidential discussion the meeting returned into a public forum and Mr Tett highlighted that there had been a full and thorough debate on all the options put forward in the confidential pack and Members had discussed the additional activities on the site and discussed the financial rectitude of the various organisations that put forward proposals.**

**Cabinet were asked to:**

- 1. To note the findings of the consultation report as set out in Appendix 1.2. To seek approval for the proposed business plan from Provider A and for Thrift Farm to be transitioned to Provider A for ongoing provision and operation. This included:**
  - a. Adult day care provision**
  - b. Use of the property as a farm park open to the public, café, retail shop, agricultural operations and the farmhouse**
  - c. All associated land (on a full repair lease basis)**
  - d. Additional proposals for use of the land (details of this are part of the confidential appendix)**

**RESOLVED: Cabinet Members AGREED the above recommendations.**

**11 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED**

**That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

**12 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED: The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2019 were AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.**

**13 THRIFT FARM**

**14 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

30 September 2019.

**MARTIN TETT  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**