



Minutes

TRANSPORT, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 17 July 2018, in Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 12.38 pm.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr S Bowles (Vice-Chairman), Mr D Carroll (Chairman), Mr D Dhillon and Mr R Reed

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr M Averill, Mr W Chapple OBE, Mr S Dando, Mr M Shaw, Mr M Tett, Ms K Wager and Ms R Wileman

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from:

Mrs L Clarke
Mrs A McPherson
Mr S Lambert

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

3 MINUTES



The minutes of the meeting held on 29 May were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were none.

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman thanked everyone for working well as a team.

6 TFB PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

The Chairman welcomed the following contributors to the meeting to present the report:

Mr M Shaw, Cabinet Member for Transportation.

Mr M Averill, Head of Highways, Client.

Mr S Dando, Contract Director, TfB.

The Cabinet Member provided an overview of the Transport for Buckinghamshire Programme of Works and Performance Dashboard. The full discussion can be viewed on webcast.

Member questions and discussions covered the following areas:

- **Contract monitoring:** Members were told that the strategic board met every quarter and monitored performance against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - the KPI's were also monitored throughout the year.
- **Street Lighting:** Members raised concerns about the street lighting performance, in particular, the time taken to fix defects and the removal of stumps. The Cabinet Member and officers recognised and acknowledged that street lighting had not been in a good place, but reassured Members that recent improvements would continue.
- Members heard that there would be a challenge over the next 2-3 years around the replacement of old streetlamps, due to the age of them. However, they heard that there was a current SALIX bid for new columns that would help with this.
- Members heard how the street lighting manager who was recruited a year ago was helping drive improvements.
- Concerns were raised about street lights which had been knocked down in car accidents. They were advised that this was down to the individual drivers to take responsibility for their safety and security as well as those around them. An employee had been appointed to manage the Green Claims, claiming money back from drivers who caused the accidents and damage.
- Members asked how the service monitored and managed deterioration of lamps and questioned whether the performance targets were realistic. Members were told that the targets were amended at different times of year and took into account changes over

winter and summer models. They were aspirational but realistic and ensured the Council received value for money and acknowledged that it was a high area of concern for residents when street lights were not working.

- Members heard that there was a need to move to a dilapidation model of repair. Officers acknowledged that they needed to improve the repair time. This had been a resource issue, but they would be focussing on this before going into the winter and the darker evenings, with a focus on the priority areas.
- Members asked how they would know who owned the streetlights. Officers told members that they would be able to look into adding this information to the Member's Portal and the Parish Portal being developed.

ACTION:

Simon Dando to look into options to add information on streetlamp ownership onto the Portals.

Members agreed that they would examine this area further within the detailed item due at the September Committee.

- **Underperformance in Routine Works for Cat 1 defects:** Members were told that the high sickness levels over the winter had impacted on this, along with the severe weather conditions experienced. Members were assured that the service had been robustly working through the potholes and that the situation was rapidly improving. There had been an extra £3m in the budget this year. It was acknowledged that the performance indicator was low but that the service had to balance productivity of the crews and the risk to the network to ensure the crews were as productive as possible. Members were assured that the indicator had significantly improved.
- **Asset Management and compliance with the Well Maintained Highways (latest Code of Practice) recommendations:** Members heard that there were 36 recommendations that authorities needed to demonstrate their compliance or approach against. It was important that the service met the 36 different requirements by October 2018, to avoid risk to the County. Members were told that the service were looking at each of these and to date, only 3 were off track, with the remainder on track for compliance by October 2018.
- **Understanding the asset groups – Drainage as a key asset that the service need to understand more fully:** Members heard that gulley cleaning was an area of focus, there had been extra budget allocated. The key challenge was a lack of information on what the asset looked like underground. A Member raised concerns about a roundabout in Halton Village that had poor drainage and would flood badly after even small amounts of rain. Mr S Dando said he would investigate and report back.

ACTION: Mr S Dando

- **Quality:** £1m of the conventional surfacing works would be market tested to ensure the Council received value for money. They were advised that this would start in August

and take 6 weeks to complete the testing. The latest schemes and tenders approached in the local market and the recommendations reported to the client team demonstrated that the Council was receiving value for money.

- **Spray and Jet patching:** The service would have three machines in the County during the peak operation. The jet patching work had a 12 month warranty. Members heard that the surface dressing programme needed to be prioritised across the county.
- **Footways target performance:** The target was 90-105% but was currently performing at 80%. Members were told that they did not normally start the pavement schemes until November. This year, however, they were starting earlier which would improve this performance target. This year they had to prioritise the roads due to the extreme levels of damage caused by the severe winter.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and his team for their update.

7 GROWTH; IS THE COUNCIL READY?: 6 MONTH RECOMMENDATION REVIEW

The Chairman welcomed the following contributors to the meeting to present the recommendation progress report:

- Mr M Tett, Leader
- Mr B Chapple, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment
- Mrs R Wileman, Head of Strategic Planning and Infrastructure.

The Leader provided a high level overview setting the current context around the growth agenda and the expected increase in service demand as a result of the planned growth. He shared his aspirations for shaping Bucks as a place, ensuring it thrives and becomes a place people want to live and work, and not simply a commuter belt for London. The full discussion can be viewed on webcast.

Member questions and discussions covered the following areas:

- **Recommendation 1- Business Unit plans:** Members were assured that the Business unit plans now acknowledged growth and their plans next year would include more detail on the impacts upon their services. Members were assured that there was far more collaboration and input from the Business Units. Members also heard that growth was reported at each Council meeting through the Leader's update, and that this was a live debate.
- **Collaborative working and the Corporate Working Group (recommendation 3):** Members asked about the time frame and scope of the comprehensive review of the working group. Members heard how the working group were moving from an influencing position to one of monitoring delivery; what was being delivered, when, where and what the impact would be for County Council Services and integrating this across the service areas. The Business Insight team were also looking at projections. The working group

were now looking at who needs to be on the group and the terms of reference, considering who needed to be engaged, on what and where the working group needed to focus on in terms of monitoring delivery. The service recognised the significant need for input and engagement with the Districts. The Districts were currently focussed on the local plan examinations, but come November the service would be clearer about engagement and monitoring of this through the working group. Members were assured that the tools and services were in place to enhance collaboration with the Districts and partners to drive growth and special planning.

- **Recommendation 4 – IT and data sharing:** Members were told that an interactive map had been published, showing where the housing growth would be and the infrastructure that was coming and where. This was an example of IT being used to share information and how the Council had taken an active role in sharing information across the county. There had been issues with “share point” as a platform for data sharing across the county, but they would be addressed. Members were assured that further information sharing progress was underway and that the barriers experienced were ones that would be resolved.
- **Recommendation 6:** The Members were advised that finance colleagues were exploring the longer term capital planning, under the wider Capital Investment Strategy work.
- **Progress:** Members heard that growth was now on the agenda and in the mind-set of key partners. Understanding and collaborative working with the districts around growth and the impact on services had significantly improved.
- **Developments:** Members heard how developing the way that information on growth was shared going forward was imperative, as was the development of the role of the Growth Board and Corporate Working Group.

The Committee felt that progress was on track for the 6 month stage and would monitor further progress and implementation of the recommendations at 12 months.

The Chairman thanked the Leader and Ms Wileman. He also congratulated Ms Wileman on her new role at another local authority and thanked her for her hard work and support to the Committee in their work on this Inquiry.

8 ENERGY AND GROWTH - FUTURE DEMAND, CHALLENGES AND INCOME GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES

The Chairman welcomed the following contributors to the meeting:

- Bill Chapple, Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment
- Ed Barlow, Head of Energy and Resources

Mr Chapple introduced the item with a contextual overview, background to the need for a new strategy, some of the high level key challenges the county faced in relation to energy supply and demand, the opportunities to mitigate some of these and the recent (and continuously evolving) government policy changes.

Mr Chapple highlighted that they were in the early stages of developing the strategy and welcomed the Committee's views on the emerging priorities. The full overview can be viewed on the webcast.

Mr Barlow, then presented an overview of the key areas for discussion (see presentation slides and webcast for further information).

The following areas were highlighted during the presentation:

- **Grid Capacity:** Bucks had a high number of the grid operators within the County – three in total. This created an issue with three sets of processes, maps, people to deal with etc. A key issue was capacity; in many of the areas grid capacity was full. There was a Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Bid which was hoped would be able to be used to alleviate capacity around Aylesbury with the planned growth.
- **Renewable Generation Sources in Bucks:** Members heard that Bucks produced significant renewable electricity from the Energy from Waste (EfW) facility, which qualified as renewable generation. The biggest local renewable source was Landfill Gas. Overall, there was sufficient local renewable generation to 27% of local demand which was in line with the government target of 30% by 2020. The challenge was that over time as landfill reduced we would find it hard to meet this target going forward.
- **Increasing Cost of Energy:** Bucks County Council's costs for estate and street lighting would significantly rise. Street lighting was the biggest source of cost of energy. Members heard how LED lighting was vital, and the challenge was that the price of energy was going up quicker than we could install them.
- **Heat Networks:** These would only work in high density housing areas. These would produce low carbon heat. These would be ideal to consider as part of planning for new housing developments, particularly where they are near to industrial sites where waste heat might be used.
- **EV Charging Requirements:** Members heard that Bucks had limited charging infrastructure. It was discussed how planning conditions were expected to change to require new houses to have charging points installed. Members heard how public transport could be another area to explore. They heard how Milton Keynes already had electric bus routes and Oxford and Cambridge were starting trials. Wider use of electronic vehicles would have wider benefits of reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** The key challenges and opportunities were highlighted to Members – see the slides for a table summary.

Member questions raised the following:

- **Roles and responsibilities:** Members asked who was responsible and who would be driving this strategy and the work within it. Members heard how there was little statutory responsibility on the County Council around energy, nonetheless, it had an important role in addressing the issues. It was a LEP process and the LEP would be adopting the strategy. Member heard how roundtable events were being held to get buy in of key stakeholders. It was recognised that we needed to understand more the role of the LEPS, energy companies, and other stakeholders around how to drive this forward – growth would be coming and demand would grow.
- **The role of regional hubs:** Members asked what the purpose and role of regional hubs would be. They were told that they would work through the LEPs to deliver local energy projects. There would be 5 hubs. The purpose was for them to pick up on the common themes within local area strategies and use their resources and deliver projects that would benefit across the areas. They would be able to bid for funding through joined up projects with other areas.
- **How the Council Influencing Government policy:** Members heard that there was a clear need for lobbying and a heightened awareness around more lobbying on the energy side. For example, Mr Chapple said he would be pushing against the government introducing an “Incineration Tax”, this would go against the logic behind Gratemoor and significantly undermine the return and provision of energy from Gratemoor, which provided 37% of the renewable electricity in the County and gets rid of our waste.
- **Value for Money and Income Generation:** Members heard that the use of batteries for storing energy was a key area to be explored further. Having the batteries ourselves was seen as too high risk, however, the Council could lease land to developers to put the batteries on and generate income that way.

The Committee agreed it would have an update in 6 months to consider how this work had progressed.

Members requested the presentation be shared.

ACTION: Ms K Wager

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and Mr Barlow for their presentation.

9 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members suggested that the following items be considered by the Chairman for adding to the future work programme:

- Police and Community safety
- Members choices with regards to transport; the process, approach, monitoring, delivery and implementation etc.
- Gypsy and Traveller community and how TVP deal with issues.
- Air quality and the action that had been taken to improve it.

Members also agreed the following key lines of inquiry to be included for the street lighting item for 25th September:

- How well is the current approach working, how efficient and effective is it? I.e. what is the current approach to programming of works and the timeframes?
- How satisfied are residents with the current approach? What does our complaints data tell us?
- What are the key challenges with the current approach?
- What do the current contract KPIs measure? How is the contractor performing against these? Are they fit for purpose going forward?
- What would “acceptable” look like (e.g. in relation to waiting times for repairs and programming of works).
- What are the opportunities to improve the process and service to residents?
- What should any new policy/approach/processes look like?

10 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 25th September 2018 in Mezz 1.

CHAIRMAN