

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the **CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL (CDC)**

held on **9 JANUARY 2018**

PRESENT: Councillor P Shepherd - Chairman of the Council
G Harris - Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillors:	A Bacon	Councillors:	P Martin
	D Bray		V Martin
	J Burton		D Phillips
	J Cook		N Rose
	E Culverhouse		C Rouse
	I Darby		M Shaw
	M Flys		L Smith
	C Ford		M Smith
	J Gladwin		M Stannard
	M Harrold		D Varley
	P Hudson		N Varley
	C Jackson		E Walsh
	C Jones		J Waters
	P Jones		C Wertheim
	R J Jones		F Wilson
	J MacBean		

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors A Garth, M Harker, S Patel, J Rush, M Titterington and H Wallace

58 MINUTE SILENCE

Following the prayer Members stood for one minute in silence in memory of Councillor Derek Lacey who had passed away on 29 December 2017.

Members also paid tribute to former Councillor Leslie Hodgkinson who had also passed away.

59 PRESENTATION FROM THE CITIZENS ADVICE

Members received a presentation from representatives of Chiltern Citizens Advice (CCA): Jennifer Allot (Manager); Kristle Barker (Chairman of Trustees) and Claire Seaward (Trustee).

The presentation covered the follow key areas:

- Major issues faced by clients: housing, employment, debt, benefits and tax credits
- Trends: youth debt (housing related); employment; health and benefits
- Community engagement
- Funding: increases in project funding
- Future strategy: consolidate services and funding; develop a more sustainable and innovative advice service and innovate areas of excellence (quality of advice)

Following the presentation Members were invited to ask questions, and during which the following key points were made:

The Leader, along with a number of other Members, expressed thanks to CCA for the work they carried out. The organisation's new approach to funding was also welcomed which had meant that project funding was now its main funding source. Another Member mentioned that they regularly received positive feedback about CCA from residents. It was felt that residents were very fortunate for the service provided by the organisation, much of which supported the Council's own work.

Following a question regarding how people became volunteers and the time commitment involved it was advised that CCA had become more systematic in its approach towards attracting volunteers, for example open days were held and more volunteer roles were available. Volunteer advisors were required to commit to a minimum number of days, or half days, per month.

In response to a question about the key areas where residents were seeking advice it was advised that there were four main areas. Immigration queries related to worries from residents about the effect to them following the result of the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU. This had however reduced during Autumn 2017. Travel and transport questions focused on questions around access for people with disabilities. Relationships and discrimination was another common area for questions. Positive work had been carried out in relation to domestic violence which included advisors asking residents about past or current experiences.

Following a question regarding capacity and volunteer numbers it was noted that a number of longstanding projects had ended in March 2017 due to difficulty maintaining funding. One of which was a GP surgery project which ended after 12 years and it was hoped that this may reopen again in the future.

A question was raised in connection to CCA taking on services provided in Slough, and the impact this had had on the service provided to Chiltern residents. In response it was advised that CCA received additional funding following the dissolution of Slough CA which had been used to support advisors' skills and knowledge. During very busy times the telephone service also prioritised calls from Chiltern.

In response to a question regarding whether the change in law regarding employment tribunal fees had explained the increase in employment related questions it was advised that the increase in employment related questions had started three months prior to the change in law.

The Chairman thanked the representatives of CCA for attending the meeting to deliver the presentation and for answering Members' questions.

Note: Councillor D Varley entered the meeting at 7.00 pm

60 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 14 November 2017 were approved as a correct record.

61 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

62 ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Chairman's Engagements

A list of Engagements carried out by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council between 9 November and 27 December 2017 had been circulated.

(b) Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Jonathan Waters to the Council following the by-election for Penn and Coleshill Ward held on 16 November 2017.

The Chairman reported that the sale of Christmas Cards had raised over £700 and the painting, as shown on the cards, would be auctioned at the Chairman's Reception on 9 March. All proceeds would go to the Gateway, the Chairman's chosen charity.

(c) Announcements from the Leader of the Cabinet

As reported at Cabinet on 12 December, the Leader advised Members that the Cabinet Portfolio for Sustainable Development now included responsibility for economic development (previously within the Leader's Portfolio), and would now be known as the Cabinet Portfolio for Planning and Economic Development. This change took effect on 30 November 2017.

(d) Announcements from the Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive had no announcements to make.

(e) Petitions

No petitions were submitted.

63 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

There were no recommendations arising from Committees of the Council held since the last Council meeting held on 14 November 2017.

64 CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no recommendations arising from the Cabinet meeting held on 12 December 2017.

65 VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS OR CHAIRMAN OF A COMMITTEE

a) Councillor Mike Smith (Environment)

Waste Collections

Councillor Smith expressed thanks to the waste collection crews who despite the inclement weather over the Christmas period had worked very hard to continue to deliver the service which had been one of the most successful Christmas collections for a number of years.

Amersham Multi Storey Car Park

Members were advised that there had been high demand for parking in Amersham as some spaces were temporarily unavailable whilst construction was taking place to increase capacity at the multi storey car park. The project was on track for completion in November 2018.

b) Councillor Peter Martin (Planning & Economic Development)

Planning

It was noted that a Memorandum of understanding had been signed with Aylesbury Vale District Council which would help meet housing need in the area. A lot of hard work had been carried out to get to this point and thanks were expressed to the officers that had been involved.

There were currently a number of vacancies in the planning team which had put officers under greater pressure. Open recruitment days had been planned with the aim of successfully recruiting to the vacant roles. The vacancies were being advertised widely, including adverts being placed in local newspapers. There was potential for additional resources to be used to temporarily fill gaps in capacity. The Council was taking action to address the issue as quickly as possible, and a further update would be provided to Members following the recruitment events.

c) Councillor Liz Walsh (Healthy Communities)

Community Awards 2018

Councillor Walsh highlighted that the Community Awards provided an opportunity to recognise the volunteers and community champions who did so much to enrich life in the district.

There were several award categories covering young, older, individuals, groups and businesses. Nomination forms were available in the Members' Room, and could be submitted online via: <http://www.chiltern.gov.uk/article/8535/Community-Awards-Online-Nomination-Form>. The closing date was 2 February 2018, and this year's awards ceremony would take place on 15 March 2018 at the Kings Church, Amersham.

Chiltern & South Bucks Lottery

The lottery aimed to raise money for good causes in the Chiltern and South Bucks area. Tickets cost £1 per week and each ticket had a 1 in 50 chance to win a prize. The top prize was £25,000. Members were encouraged to promote the lottery as widely as possible.

d) Councillor Fred Wilson (Customer Services)

The Council had a local discretionary rate relief scheme which aimed to help local businesses. All businesses that had applied under this scheme would receive their entire claim in full. The remaining money in the scheme would be used to help special cases of hardship.

An update was provided on the Customer Experience Strategy and Members noted that the Member Working Group was due to take place on 10 January.

e) Councillor Mike Stannard (Deputy Leader - Support Services)

Chiltern pools

Councillor Stannard provided an update on the redevelopment of Chiltern Pools project. It was noted that an architect had been appointed. A number of options had been put forward. Progress updates and forthcoming decisions required would be included in future reports to Members.

f) Councillor Isobel Darby (Leader)

Peer Challenge

During November 2017 Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils invited a peer challenge to take place which involved external partners coming to audit the work of both Councils. Initial feedback from the process had been provided to staff and Members, and a draft report had been received. A final report would also be made available in due course.

Thanks were expressed to staff and Members that had taken part in the peer challenge. A lot had been learnt from the process and the peer challenge team had also noted good practice from both Councils which could then be used by other Councils.

66 QUESTIONS ON VERBAL REPORTS FROM ANY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL

Councillor Peter Hudson referred to the Christmas waste collections and said that he had received a number of complaints regarding missed collections for some roads. Clarification was sought regarding the procedure that waste collection crews followed when some roads were missed, in particular whether crews automatically returned to collect waste when it was safe to do so following heavy snow. Councillor M Smith advised that residents were encouraged to report any missed waste collections so that they could be recorded, and confirmed that further clarification would be provided to Members on the procedure on returning to collect waste that had been missed due to inclement weather.

The Chairman referred to news reports that goods producing countries, such as China, had stopped receiving plastic recyclate. It was asked what the impact of this would be on the Council or its waste collection contractors?

Councillor M Smith confirmed that the collection of recycling is a District Council function, and Serco, the Council's waste collection contractor, had responsibility to dispose of the plastic recyclate collected. It was possible that there might be an extra cost to the Council arising from the reports.

Incineration of this material would always be a last resort. An update would be provided at a future meeting.

67 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE (IF ANY)

There were no questions.

68 PETITIONS (IF ANY)

No petitions were received.

69 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS (IF ANY)

There were no reports.

70 MOTIONS (IF ANY)

No Motions had been received.

71 CHANGES TO APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted the following appointments that had been made by the Chief Executive, under delegated authority, and in accordance with the Constitution:

- 1) Councillor S Patel appointed to Planning Committee
- 2) Councillor H Wallace appointed to Licensing Committee
- 3) Councillor J Waters appointed to Resources Overview Committee

The Council was asked to agree the appointment of Councillor C Jones as the Council's representative to the Chiltern Open Air Museum.

It was proposed by Councillor I Darby, seconded by Councillor J MacBean, and

RESOLVED:

That Councillor C Jones be appointed as the Council's representative to the Chiltern Open Air Museum.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm