

## **SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Council - 8 November 2016**

Present: Councillors Mr Bagge, Mr Bastiman, Mr Bradford, Mr Chhokar, Mr Egleton, Mrs Gibbs, Mr Griffin, Mr Harding, Miss Hazell, Mr Hogan, Mr Hollis, Mrs Jordan, Mr Kelly, Dr Matthews, Mr Naylor, Mr Pepler, Mr Read, Mr Reed, Mr Sandy, Mr Sangster, Mr D Smith, Mrs Sullivan and Mr Walters MBE

Apologies: Councillors Mr Anthony, Mr D Dhillon, Mrs Lewis, Mrs Lowen-Cooper and Mr Samson

### **18. PRESENTATION FROM STEVE FINN AND JOHN CHESTERS OF BLUE SKY**

A presentation was given to the Council by Blue Sky – an organisation that recruits ex-offenders and places them into existing teams of commercial clients, including Local Authorities, SMEs, and National and International companies.

The presentation explained Blue Sky's three mission aims:

1. Break the cycle of reoffending by providing real work opportunities
  2. Reduce the cost of reoffending and rehabilitation to the public purse
  3. Enable ex-offenders to be economically contributing members of society.
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- Re-offending costs the UK £13bn each year and the cost for a single re-offender is £200,000pa and it costs around £40,000 to imprison one criminal for a year (Eton is £34,434)
  - England and Wales release 90,000 prisoners annually. 60% re-offend within two years. A job reduces that rate by 50% (but 75% are released to unemployment)
  - In 2013/14, just 25% of prisoners entered employment on release from prison
  - Of the children interviewed in prison in 2004, 13% were regular crack users, and 11% had used heroin daily
  - Between June 1993 and June 2012 the prison population in England & Wales increased by 41,800 to over 86,000 but according to the National Audit Office, there is no correlation between prison numbers and levels of crime

All jobs are entry-level, ensuring ex-offenders start work on Monday and have a wage by Friday, a key incentive to not re-offend and helping people regain structure, self-respect and normality. Employees also receive access to training grants, onward job support and housing or crisis loans.

Members asked what checks were in place regarding suitability/level of standard of the recruitments. It was explained that all jobs were of entry level, the main focus would be on the capability of a person. A typical process would be:

- Is this person fit and able to carry out the job
- Talk them through the interview process
- Ensure they can get to the interview (e.g bus/train routes)
- If required accompany them to the site on their first visit.
- Keep in regular contact with them
- Keep in regular contact with the on site supervisor

In response to a question regarding if drug testing was carried out before ex-offenders were given a work placement, it was clarified that drug testing played a critical part, especially where ex-offenders were being placed where they would be working with machinery or on the highway.

Members thanked Blue Sky for the presentation which had been very informative.

### **19. PRESENTATION FROM ANDREW SMITH OF TVLEP**

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The Members of the Council received a presentation from Andrew Smith, Chairman of Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership.

It was explained to the Council that the Strategic Economic Plan was originally produced in 2014, and provided the framework for the Local Growth Deal for Buckinghamshire, which aided the securing of funding for:

- New Road & Rail Connections
- Town Centre Investment
- Skills & Business Incubation Facilities
- Business Investment Funds
- Digital Infrastructure.

Members' attention was drawn to those issues that would need to be addressed within the near future, and included – amongst other subjects – the Planning Context of Bucks needing to provide 55,000 new homes in the next 20 years; National Industry Strategy; Business Rates Policy; Enterprise Zone Development; National Infrastructure Opportunities and Threats; Skills Landscape Changes and New Government Funding (LGF3).

In terms of Investment priorities, the following factors were seen to be taken into account in term of projects that:

- generate a return/recycle funds within Buckinghamshire;
- integrate business support, skills with new infrastructure;
- enable the creation of affordable business premises and starter homes and support widespread regeneration;
- support the growth of mid-range and larger firms, to develop greater resilience in the economy;

Members thanked Andrew Smith for the presentation which was well received.

## 20. ANNOUNCEMENTS

### (a) Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman reported on recent functions and events he had attended on behalf of the Council, which included:

Races & Prize Giving – Thames Punting Championships	07/08/16
Supportive Organisations Evening Reception – 11 Infantry Brigade & Headquarters South East	25/08/16
Rio 2016 Paralympic Torch Relay – International Paralympic Committee	02/09/16
Induction Service for Rabbi Charley Baginsky – Council of SB Jewish Community	17/09/16
Battle of Britain Commemoration Sunday – Chairman of WDC	18/09/16
Participation & Presentation of Prizes -South Bucks 10KM Run	01/10/16
Official Opening Thames Valley Hospice Shop – Thames Valley Hospice	14/10/16
High Sheriff's Justice Church Service	16/10/16
Official Opening Greatmoor Energy from Waste Facility – Greatmoor EFW	27/10/16
Annual Friends and Supports Reception – Heart of Bucks	01/11/16

### (b) Announcements from the Leader of the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council wished to highlight the outturn of the financial year which ended in April of this year, which was shown to be £300k better than budget estimates, which all saw as a significant

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achievement considering the huge growth in demand to house the homeless that the Council is experiencing. Members of the Council notes that the £300k would be transferred to the Council's reserves, with the Leader wishing to make known his thanks to officers for their tight control of budgets and to the management team for creating a culture that promotes and supports good budgetary discipline.

### **(c) Announcements from the Head of Paid Service**

Acting Chief Executive Robert Smith announced that Louise Cole would be replacing Judy Benson as Head of HR and thanked Cllrs. Bagge, Gibbs and Walters for their help with the appointment.

## 21. **QUESTIONS**

The following question was asked of the Leader of the Council by Mr Sheriff in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10:

*Bucks CC is proposing to abolish District Councils in Buckinghamshire and create a unitary authority out of the old Bucks CC. Are Chiltern and South Bucks in favour of this proposal and will the public have a voice in the form of a referendum?*

The Leader of the Council, Mr Bagge, replied as follows:

It should be clear that both proposals are to abolish the Districts and County Councils and create one or more unitary councils.

SBDC has not formed a formal view on the Bucks County Council proposal to create a single local authority.

SBDC, alongside its District Council partners (AVDC, CDC and WDC), instructed Deloitte to conduct a broader examination of the options for modernised services including structural change. Their strategic options report has highlighted that structural change needs to sit alongside improving existing services; delivering across the most economic geographies and working in partnership to drive down demand. This would achieve greater financial benefits and better outcomes for residents than structural change alone.

The District Councils are now taking forward a consultation with local stakeholders on the options highlighted in the Deloitte report before coming to a view on the favoured option and next steps.

At this stage there is clearly no local consensus of support for the county council's proposal.

Any final decision on changes to local government structures would rest with the Secretary of State having considered the views of stakeholders; however this would not necessarily entail the holding of a referendum.

## 22. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 July 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## 23. **APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Council received a report detailing the recommendation of the Joint Appointments and Implementation Committee, regarding the appointment of a shared Chief Executive/Head of Paid

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Service (including the roles of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer) following the recent recruitment and selection process.

Robert Smith – the Acting Chief Executive – withdrew from the room during discussion of this item.

Paragraph 4 of the Report detailed to Members the reasons for recommendation, along with the processes followed, which determined that following the conclusion of the selection process JAIC considered the candidates and agreed to recommend that Robert Smith be offered the appointment on the agreed salary grade.

Members discussed the practicalities of this post being deferred until mid-January 2017, due to a possibility of receiving an announcement from the Secretary of State regarding Local Government in Buckinghamshire and the Future Options.

After a lengthy debate, members agreed it was essential to have a level of continuity and stability throughout both Councils especially around the joint partnership working. It was also important for staff to feel that clear officer leadership was in place as was the case with all the other Buckinghamshire authorities. It was concluded by members that it was vital the appointment should not be deferred.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that

- i. Robert Smith be appointed as Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service of South Bucks District Council shared with Chiltern District Council (to include the role of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for South Bucks District Council);
- ii. the appointment be confirmed and remunerated in accordance with the approved salary grade; and
- iii. authority be delegated to the HR Manager in consultation with the Leaders of both Councils to finalise the arrangements and the start date for the appointment.

### 24. **CABINET MEETING**

The Leader, Mr Bagge, presented the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 October 2016 and 25 October 2016.

The following minutes were the subject of a recommendation to Council:  
Minute 19 - Medium Term Financial Strategy

**RESOLVED** that the Medium Term Financial Strategy be updated.

And

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the 11 October and 25 October 2016

### 25. **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 29 September 2016 were presented.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be received.

### 26. **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

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The Council considered the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, following a 12 week public consultation which had led to amendments being made to the draft policy. Further to this, the Licensing Committee of the 5 October 2016 took these changes into consideration, before recommending that the amended draft policy be adopted by Council.

**RESOLVED** that

- 1 The Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy is adopted with effect from 21 November and
- 2 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2016 be received.

### **27. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 3 October 2016 were presented.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be received.

### **28. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 19 September and 25 October 2016 were presented.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be received.

### **29. PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 3 August, 31 August, 28 September and 26 October 2016 were presented.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be received.

### **30. MEMBERS' REPORTS**

The meeting received the following reports from Members:

- Dr Matthews - Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee Updates June, September and October 2016
- Mr Pepler - Meeting of the Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust held on 28 September 2016.

### **31. DEMOCRATIC & ELECTORAL SERVICES SHARED SERVICE REVIEW**

The Members of the Council were asked to consider the recommendations arising from the Democratic and Electoral Shared Service review.

Members noted that the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee considered and endorsed all recommendations regarding the Business Case for the Democratic and Electoral shared service on the 2 August 2016 – with the Business Case attached as Private Appendix 1 to the agenda.

After careful consideration it was

**RESOLVED** that

1. The case for a shared Democratic & Electoral Service is proven and that both Councils should proceed to establish a Shared Democratic & Electoral Service.

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2. Subject to consultation with staff and a formal agreement between the Councils, the services of staff in South Bucks District Council's Democratic and Electoral Service be put at the disposal of Chiltern District Council under Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 so they can work across the two local authority areas.
3. Authority be delegated to the Acting Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Leader and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to finalise the terms of any legal documentation required to give effect to recommendation 2 above.

### 32. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act:

- Paragraph 1 Information relating to any individual
- Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular persons (including the authority holding that information).
- Paragraph 4 Information relating to any consultation or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter raising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

### 33. CABINET

The Part II minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet meeting held on 25 October 2016 were received.

The following minute was the subject of a recommendation to Council Minute 30 – Station Road Car Park.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. Council approve the further consultancy costs of £157,000 to allow the project to proceed up until planning has been determined.
2. Council is approve the further consultancy costs of £276,000 if planning is granted, to conclude the work on design, specification, costings and finalising the full business case which can then be reported to Cabinet.
3. Council note that the full business case will be reported to Cabinet for their decision in February 2017.
4. The Director of Services be authorised to negotiate any necessary agreements to enable this project to progress as indicated within the report and to conclude any necessary documentation.

### 34. PRIVATE HEALTHCARE PROVISION FOR SENIOR MANAGERS - 2017

It was requested that this item be deferred to enable proper consultation with staff.

**RESOLVED** that the item be deferred.

The meeting terminated at 7:37 p.m.