

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council - 17 July 2018

Present: Councillors D Anthony, R Bagge, P Bastiman, S Chhokar, D Dhillon, T Egleton, B Gibbs, P Griffin, B Harding, P Hogan, G Hollis, J Jordan, M Lewis, J Lowen-Cooper, Dr W Matthews, N Naylor, J Read, R Reed, R Sangster, D Saunders and D Smith

Apologies: Councillors M Bezzant, M Bradford, L Hazell, P Kelly, D Pepler, G Sandy and L Sullivan

8. CHIEF CONSTABLE'S ANNUAL PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed Anthony Stansfeld, the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, Francis Habgood, Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, and Superintendent Neil Kentish Local Policing Area Commander to the meeting. Neil Kentish had recently been appointed the Policing Area Commander for Chiltern and South Buckinghamshire.

The PCC and Chief Constable gave a presentation to Members covering a number of key themes and these have been included on the website with the agenda:

The PCC's presentation included information on:

- His responsibilities and information on the Thames Valley area
- Police and Crime Plan priorities
- Victims First – this was a new hub which was introduced in March 2018 and was working very well. The Service ensures that all victims of crime received the support they needed to cope and recover from the impact of crime.
- 2017/18 Crime Performance Headlines – Thames Valley saw recorded crime increase by 8.7% compared to the national increase of 15%. The latest published figures from the Office for National Statistics showed a wider increase to the relatively rare but 'high-harm' violent offences such as homicide, knife crime and gun crime, a trend that had been emerging over the previous two years. A further slide went into detail on the increase in types of crime.
- The PCC commented that over recent years his budget had been reduced by £100million which did have an impact on the number of police officers that could be employed.

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The Chief Constable's presentation covered the following areas:

- Policing the Royal Wedding/visit by President Trump – largest deployment in the Thames Valley
- Call volumes/time to answer – last year was incredibly busy, particularly over the summer, with an increase in calls and number of incidents and the pattern was similar this year with an increase in calls over the last few weeks. In addition a number of police officers had left the Thames Valley to move to other areas because the cost of living was lower. 999 calls had increased and 101 calls had decreased and they were undertaking some work on this area to understand the cause of this displacement. Due to the recent increase in calls over the last few weeks the response times to 101 calls had become more challenging. They had improved their website to encourage residents to report incidents online.
- Performance/crime trends
- Crime Data Integrity – HMICFRS was graded as inadequate but found that the Force still provided a good service to victims, even when the crime was not recorded.
- Problem solving initiatives, for example Round Coppice Farm – multi agency support to help patients to live in supported but non-therapeutic accommodation
- Demand Reduction Success, for example domestic abuse engagement worker and the multi-agency approach to unauthorised encampments
- Hidden Harm Campaign which aims to raise awareness in reporting abuse related crimes across the Thames Valley.

The Chairman asked that the slides be circulated to Members of the Council.

During the question and answer session that ensued, a number of issues were clarified/explained by the PCC, Chief Constable and the Local Policing Area Commander as follows:-

Question 1

If Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMICFRS) rated TVP outstanding in its efficiency in keeping people safe and reducing crime, could you explain how this tallies with the recent Sunday Times report that showed South Bucks in the lowest group for arrests and subsequent convictions at 4.4% comparing with County Durham at 18.4%, and does this indicate a weakness in TVP processes?

The Chief Constable reported that in 2017/18 HMICFRS conducted their 'police efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy inspections and TVP was graded 'outstanding' in terms of efficiency, 'good' for effectiveness and 'good' for legitimacy. He commented that TVP need to do more work on the investigation of crime but they

have a plan to address this which included upskilling people. One of the issues with the South Bucks area was that many crime groups were not local and came from other areas such as London which made intelligence gathering more challenging. He also commented that he was unsure of what methodology the Sunday Times had used and that the figures were unclear. The PCC had set some real priorities around residential burglary. South Bucks District did have some crime types that were out of kilter with the rest of the Thames Valley and gave an example of theft of fuel. It was important to prioritise addressing those crimes which had a greater risk of threat. The PCC referred to the national formula grant and the lack of funding given to the Thames Valley. If they were given the same amount of funding as Durham they would be able to afford an extra 1,500 police officers and with a total number of police officers of 3,900 this would have an enormous impact.

Question 2

The A412 junction at Black Park has seen many accidents and fatalities. The Police and Bucks County Council have received many complaints and said the Junction and the speed on the highway would be addressed. This is the worst junction in Bucks. Can you confirm when the police will tackle the speed and introduce speed cameras as requested it's been ongoing for a number of years with no changes implemented. The accidents continue despite the history.

The Chief Constable reported that there had been two serious accidents and two slight accidents. This had triggered some enforcement activity but it was also important to look at engineering to design out any faults. In 2018 there was 100 hours of enforcement and 2,200 people received traffic offences. TVP had looked at average speed cameras but the cost of the system at approx. £100,000 was unaffordable. Transport for Buckinghamshire should investigate whether an engineering solution could be implemented but until then mobile speed enforcement would continue. Another Member commented that the speed enforcement was not effective because they were one mile away from the junction. The Chief Constable responded that he understood the Member's concerns but they had to look at the safety of their officers in parking their car and this was the closest area to park to the junction.

Question 3

As a Magistrate he was concerned about the number of courts being closed and asked the Chief Constable views on this.

The Chief Constable reported that he was concerned about the number of courts being closed and that once they had been closed it was difficult to get back those resources. He commented that it was also extremely stressful for witnesses to travel. The PCC also commented that if cases were delayed it was difficult to get witnesses to travel to courts for a second day at some considerable distance and it was not a satisfactory situation.

Question 4

I understand that County Lines drug distribution is impacting on all parts of the Thames Valley with the result that these metropolitan organised gangs are now making hard drugs more readily available. I appreciate that operationally the Chief Constable will be allocating greater resources to the large urban areas of the Thames Valley where a large part of the criminal activities originate and occur however this new approach by criminals results in a substantial increase in hard drug usage in the rural and semi rural areas of the Thames Valley which will result in a major problem in a few years hence as the number of addicts will increase.

Our District not only borders Greater London but also Slough so we are at great risk how will you be able to reassure our residents that you will have the resources available to combat this threat to our residents quality of life now and in the future.

Is it not time that the funding formula for the allocation of central government grant between individual police forces is revised to reflect a more structured approach to the challenges facing individual forces?

The PCC responded that county lines was a major issue for police forces; once one line was closed it was immediately replaced. This was serious organised crime run by some big organisations and the police needed to close down these at source and should be addressed nationally by the National Crime Agency. He referred to Zurich who had legalised drugs but had proven that this did not help cure the problem and had in fact exacerbated the situation. The Chief Constable reported that South Bucks was unusual in they had not identified a problem with county lines although there was some local gangs drug dealing. The Local Area Commander had regular monthly meetings with the Community Safety Partnerships to discuss local intelligence and where action needed to be taken. The Member emphasised the importance of not being complacent and the Local Area Commander responded that this would be closely monitored.

Question 1 for the Police and Crime Commissioner:

With the apparent low level of successful convictions in South Bucks compared with other parts of the country what progress are you making as PCC with key delivery partners to achieve a joined up criminal justice system that actually delivers in supporting policing?

The Police and Crime Commissioner reported that there were some cross border issues with serious organised criminals using South Bucks as an area to commit crime because of its proximity to London. The Chief Constable reported that they had developed good relationships with criminal justice partners who were working together to achieve a common aim and referred to a recent meeting with three resident judges who provided positive feedback. However, it was acknowledged that a lack of funding was an issue.

Question 2

Last year you requested extra funding which was a matter of days/weeks prior to a scathing report being published, damning Thames Valley Police for not reporting 35k very serious crimes. Were you aware of the content of this report prior to it being

published and, if so, how does this reflect on both your integrity and ability to hold senior officers in the Thames Valley force accountable?

The PCC commented that this was not extra funding but a rise in council tax to ensure that the budget remained the same because of a reduction in government funding. £100 million had been removed from the budget in the past few years. In relation to the number of crimes not reported they were not serious crimes but the same incident could be recorded a number of different times depending on the victims involved. The Member referred to some of the non-recorded crimes relating to violent offences and the PCC commented that it could be difficult to obtain a prosecution without the required evidence. He reassured Members that procedures had been developed considerably in this area.

The Chairman thanked the PCC, the Chief Constable and the Local Area Commander for their excellent presentation.

9. **MINUTES**

Subject to a correction to record that Cllr Harding had given his apologies, the minutes of the meeting of Full and Annual Council held on 16 May 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

10. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

11. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported on recent functions and events she had attended on behalf of the Council. The Chairman referred to a charity event on 22 October 2018 which she hoped all Members would attend. The list of engagements were set out below.

Engagements May – June 2018

Charity Quiz Night – Chairman	01/06/18	Chairman attended
Evensong St Paul's Cathedral – Wheelpower	06/06/18	Chairman attended
Annual Reception – Directors SGI UK	07/06/18	Chairman attended
Summer Garden Party – Alfriston School	08/06/18	Chairman attended

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Annual Visit to Burnham Beeches followed by luncheon at Dorneywood	11/06/18	Chairman attended
Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to Meet and Mingle Group	17/06/18	Chairman attended
Annual Garden Party – Chairman, Universal Care	19/06/18	Chairman attended
Marlow Regatta Dorney Lake, Court Lane, Windsor SL4 6PQ	23/06/18	Vice Chairman attended
Opening of Playground & Summer Fair – Richings Park Residents' Association	24/06/18	Vice Chairman attended
AGM - Samaritans Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead	27/06/18	Chairman attended
Civic Service – Mayor of Beaconsfield	01/07/18	Chairman attended
Bucks & MK Schools Games Final – Bucks & MK Sports and Activity Partnership	05/07/18	Chairman attended
Awards Presentation & AGM – County Chairman Bucks Scouts	08/07/18	Chairman attended
Civic Service – Mayor of Milton Keynes	08/07/18	Vice Chairman attended
Grand Opening of New Town – Bekonscot Model Village & Railway Warwick Road, Beaconsfield HP9 2PZ	11/07/18	Chairman attended

The Leader informed Members that the training on social media would be re-arranged for September. There was an additional session on this on 25 July 2018 being held at the Amersham offices.

12. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chairman reminded Members that the agenda for this Council meeting reflected the changes made to the Council's constitution, as agreed by Council on 27 February on recommendation of the Governance & Electoral Arrangements Committee.

Minutes of Committee meetings would no longer be moved at Council meetings. The main agenda would show recommendations from Cabinet and/or Committee meetings as separate reports/agenda items. There would continue to be a list of Committee meetings held since the last meeting on the agenda for information.

A Member expressed concern about the openness and transparency of those Minutes and was informed that the Minutes of Committee meetings would be included for information only and made available via a public supplement pack separate from the main agenda.

13. **CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members noted that the Cabinet Minutes of 27 June 2018 were part of the supplement pack.

14. **REFRESHED JOINT BUSINESS PLAN 2018-19**

Full Council received a report on the refreshed Joint Business Plan 2018-19 which was part of the policy framework. The Joint Business Plan was reviewed every year to reflect the changing needs of the locality and the communities that live and work within Chiltern and South Bucks, as well as the service planning process.

It was moved by Cllr Naylor, seconded by Cllr Read and

RESOLVED that the refreshed Joint Business Plan 2018-2019 be approved.

15. **FARNHAM PARK PLAYING FIELDS STRATEGY**

Full Council received a report which set out the need for funding from reserves to explore the feasibility of an enabling development at Farnham Park Playing Fields. The Playing Fields were currently operating at a net cost of in excess of £100,000 per annum, and the buildings on the site were at the end of their useful lives. As the whole site was in the Green Belt the Council would need to argue very special circumstances and in order to consider the enabling development option, a specialist planning consultant would need to be appointed to build a case which the Council could then decide if it wished to proceed with.

Cllr Dhillon questioned the purpose of the £50,000 budget, which is being funded from the General Reserve and asked what it was being used for and what options were being looked at in respect of the Playing Fields?

Cllr Dhillon also questioned when a full report on the future of Farnham Park Playing Fields Strategy would be brought back to Members. He questioned whether there would be any residential development and whether any sports facilities would be taken away? The Playing Fields acted as an important open space buffer between Slough and South Bucks.

Cllr Gibbs agreed to arrange for a written response to be sent to Members following the meeting.

It was moved by Cllr Gibbs, seconded by Cllr Read and

RESOLVED that a budget of up to £50,000 funded from the General Reserve, be agreed in order to explore the feasibility of an enabling development.

16. **VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBER OR CHAIRMAN OF A COMMITTEE**

The Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities reported that an Air Quality Management Area had been declared and submitted to the Secretary of State, based on the Iver Parish boundary. This was a timely project bearing in mind the cumulative impact from infrastructure projects that were being undertaken in Iver. Over 90% of respondents agreed that the boundary should be aligned with the Parish boundary.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development commented that the Council had submitted a number of consultation responses recently and particularly referred to the consultation relating to Heathrow's Noise Action Plan and the Western Rail link.

<http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/heathrow>

<http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/Western-Rail-Access-to-Heathrow>

17. **QUESTIONS**

Notice having been given under Council Procedure Rule 10, the following questions were put by Cllr Harding and responses given by Cllr Gibbs as Cabinet Member for Resources:

Question 1, Can we please have an update on the cost thus far and subsequent costs including the planning application process for the New Gerrards Cross Car Park Project before any construction commences.

Response: The total pre-construction spend up to and including the submission of the current planning application is £824k.

Ex Thames Valley Police Station Site.

Question 2, There is a figure of 7.83 Million which is mentioned in the report, What will the total cost of purchase and construction be? Can you confirm that the amount paid for the Ex Thames Valley Police Station at Gerrards Cross is in accordance with the District Valuers Valuation?

Response: The total project cost estimate is £7.83m. The cost of purchase was £4m. There was no District Valuers valuation carried out. The purchase price was agreed on the basis of an externally commissioned valuation and negotiation.

Question 3, Can we please have an explanation and definition in the terminology used in Para 1.1 in particular 'Draft Business Case' 'Latest Cost Estimate' & 'Surety Route'

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Response: The draft Business Case; is the financial return on investment from resulting rental income based upon project cost and borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board, on an annuity basis, over 40 years. The final business case is due to be presented to Cabinet in October 2018 when fixed cost and planning conditions will be available.

The latest cost estimate; is the cost estimate based on cost figures received from the contractor to date

Surety Route; is the procurement route the Council has used that provides a fixed price for build after design work complete excluding certain risks that remain with the Council such as if archaeology was discovered during excavations and this needed further work

Question 4, Is the assurance given by the Contractor regarding 'target cost envelope' a guarantee And can we have confirmation of who agreed targets with the chosen contractor.

Response: Yes once the delivery agreement is signed further to the final business case being accepted by the Council. Cabinet 17 April 18 accepted to proceed with obtaining cost certainty through the Surety route but not to exceed the cost estimate of £7.83m.

Question 5, Given that the report concludes and relies upon construction starting in March 2019, reasons include that there are Bats on site. Can you confirm that a detailed analysis has taken place with regard to any contamination on the old Thames Valley Police Station Site and that any claim will be in line with the Terms & Conditions of Sale which for the Benefit of any doubt is March 2019- Only 9 Months Away.

Response: A contamination report has been completed and once a delivery agreement is concluded it will become the contractor's responsibility to decontaminate the site within the target date set for decontamination.

The Cabinet report 27 June 2018 clause 5.6 stated 2 years for reclaiming £200,000 for decontamination cost as part of the sales agreement.

Cllr Harding asked the following supplementary questions and Cllr Gibbs agreed to respond to these in writing and circulate the responses to all Members. The questions were set out below:

On para 6.3 of the redevelopment of former Gerrards Cross Police Station Site report there was reference to a loan interest rate of 2.77% with an internal rate of return of 3.67% - were these for the life of the Public Works Loan Board loan or variable figures?

With reference to Note 1 the difference between the management fee for managing affordable housing was questioned, being in the region of 30% rather than 10% as previously estimated? The Member asked for reassurance that the rest of the figures in the report were accurate.

In the report it stated that the contamination costs were not included in the estimated cost as the Council could reclaim up to £200,000 for any contamination costs incurred as part of a condition of sale on purchasing the police site and these costs need to be claimed within 2 years. The Member asked for more detail on the contamination referred to in the report and whether it was the responsibility of the contractor or the landowner to decontaminate the site?

18. **MOTIONS**

No motions were received.

19. **MEMBERS' REPORTS ON JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

The meeting received the following Members' reports:

- Bucks Health and Social Care Select Committee Update
- Report of the Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust – 28 March 2018

20. **MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2018-19**

Cllr Chhokar had left the meeting and Cllr Bastiman had arrived when this item was being discussed.

Full Council received the report which presented the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following its review of the Council's Scheme of Allowances to agree a Scheme for Members for the financial year 2018/19. The Panel met on two occasions in March 2018 to review the current scheme and make recommendations on each allowance as required by the Regulations. The Panel's starting point was to consider the Council's current Scheme of Allowance and compare it with the Scheme of Chiltern District Council whom South Bucks share joint working arrangements. The Panel also looked at neighbouring authorities and those deemed by the Audit Commission to be most similar to South Bucks.

Having reflected on the Panel's recommendation and the allowances scheme in place at Chiltern District Council, an alternative proposal had been received from the Conservative Group. Appendix 2 showed a Scheme based on the IRP's proposal and Appendix 3 showed a Scheme based on the Conservative Group proposal. The table on page 66/67 of the agenda highlighted the four differences between both Schemes. These were the Special Responsibility Allowances for Cabinet Members, the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman of Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee and Ordinary Members of the Planning Committee, which sought to reflect the level of additional responsibility attaching to these positions and had regard to similar allowances in place at Chiltern District Council.

It was moved by Cllr Naylor, seconded by Cllr Read that:

1. The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel at Appendix 1 be noted and that the Panel be thanked formally for the work they have done in producing the report.

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2. The Members Allowance Scheme for 2018/19 as attached at Appendix 3 of the report be approved
3. The budget for 2018/19 for Members Allowances be amended, as required, to put into effect recommendation 2.

A Member expressed concern about the 25% increase in Cabinet Member allowances compared to an increase of basic allowance of 10% and also compared this to the pay rise for officers of 2%. He also commented on the number of Special Responsibility Allowances. Another Member referred to the 27% increase for the Leader, 45% increase for the Deputy Leader and 25% for Cabinet Members. A request was made by Cllr Harding for a recorded vote on recommendations 2 and 3 due to the concerns raised above. Council procedural rules require that for a recorded vote to take place a quarter of those Members present must demand it. 7 Members out of 20 present requested a recorded vote and therefore the names for and against the motion or abstaining from voting were entered into the minute below.

The Leader responded that the views put by Conservative Group were similar to the recommendations put by the IRP. The Scheme had not been substantially reviewed since 2009, and the roles of Cabinet Members had changed significantly in that time and the allowances were reflecting this point. Last year the Council had also chosen to continue with the existing Scheme of Allowances. A Member also commented that the Panel had recognised the high level of responsibility of Cabinet Members and the additional workload arising from the joint working arrangements with Chiltern District Council.

A recorded vote was taken on motions 2 and 3 which were taken together, with 12 Members voting for the motions, 5 abstaining and 3 voting against the motion as follows:

For

Cllrs Anthony, Bagge, Bastiman, Egleton, Gibbs, Hogan, Jordan, Lewis, Dr Matthews, Naylor, Read, Smith

Against

Cllrs Harding, Reed, Griffin

Abstain

Cllrs Dhillon, Hollis, Lowen-Cooper, Sangster, Saunders

RESOLVED that:

4. The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel at Appendix 1 be noted and that the Panel be thanked formally for the work they have done in producing the report.

5. The Members Allowance Scheme for 2018/19 as attached at Appendix 3 of the report be approved
6. The budget for 2018/19 for Members Allowances be amended, as required, to put into effect recommendation 2.

21. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

22. **WASTE CONTRACT OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

Full Council received the report which requested approval for a budget of up to £300,000 to fund sufficient professional and technical resources to enter into initial discussions and prepare for the procurement project for the delivery of the waste collection, recycling and street cleansing services. Cabinet at its meeting on 27 June 2018 agreed the longer term strategy to procure a three way single joint contract for Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils.

It was moved by Cllr Gibbs, seconded by Cllr Read and

RESOLVED that the Council approve an initial budget of up to £300,000 to fund sufficient professional and technical resources to enter into initial discussions and to prepare for and support the procurement project, to be funded by the three Authorities in proportion to the number of households in each district (SBDC - 20.46%; CDC - 28.12%; WDC - 51.42%), with the release of funds to be delegated to the Head of Environment and Head of Finance in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

The meeting terminated at 7.40 pm