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**WYCOMBE**  
**DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Queen Victoria Road  
High Wycombe  
Bucks HP11 1BB

## Council

Date: 16 April 2018  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Council Chamber  
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe on 16 April 2018 at 6.30 pm to consider the business set out in the Agenda below.

Ms K Satterford  
Chief Executive

**Fire Alarm** - In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Please congregate at the Assembly Point at the corner of Queen Victoria Road and the River Wye, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

**Filming/Recording/Photographing at Meetings** – please note that this may take place during the public part of the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders. Notices are displayed within meeting rooms.

## Agenda

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1	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
2	<b>MINUTES</b> To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of Council held on 22 February 2018	1 - 34
3	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any disclosure of disclosable pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda. If any member is uncertain as to whether an interest should be disclosed, he or she is asked if possible to contact the District Solicitor prior to the meeting.	

Members are reminded that if they are declaring an interest they should state the nature of that interest whether or not they are required to withdraw from the meeting.

#### **4 CHAIRMAN`S ANNOUNCEMENT**

To receive such communication as the Chairman of the Council may wish to make.

#### **5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Written questions may be asked of the Leader or any Cabinet Member if submitted to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services no later than 12 noon on Monday 9 April 2018. Questions will be submitted in the order in which they were received.

#### **6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

Questions to the leader or any Cabinet Member must be submitted by 12 noon on Monday 9 April 2018. Questions shall be taken first from the Group Leaders of the political parties who shall be entitled to ask an initial Leader's question from his/her group, of which written notice shall have been given to the head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services prior to the meeting.

The order of questions shall then permit the first question from each other Councillor to be asked before any subsequent questions from the same Councillor. One question will be taken in turn from the same Councillor unless there are no other questions to be asked.

Every member asking an oral question is permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice provided that it is not substantially the same as a question that was put to a Council meeting during the past 6 months.

The appropriate Member will respond to any questions remaining unanswered at the expiry of 30 minutes in writing. Any question remaining unanswered after 30 minutes will be answered within 10 working days in writing after the meeting by the appropriate Member and appended to the minutes of the meeting.

#### **7 PETITIONS**

- (i) Council to receive any petition from a member of the public who lives, works or studies within the district or from a Councillor on his/her behalf as notified by the deadline of 5pm on Monday 9 April 2018.
- (ii) Council to consider any petition already received that meets the required number of signatures to qualify for a debate by Full Council. (The petition organiser will have 5 minutes to present the petition and then the Council will debate the matter for a maximum of 15 minutes and decide how to respond to the petition).

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Planning Committee	14 February 2018
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**16 ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER - DELEGATION OF POWERS**

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**17 NOTICE OF MOTION**

To consider the following Notice of Motion submitted by the deadline of noon Thursday 5 April 2018.

The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor M Clarke and seconded by Councillor Ms K Wood.

**“This Council agrees that the High Wycombe Town Committee can be granted delegated powers to take decisions in relation to non-executive matters where those delegations are approved by Council; and that the attendance of the Leader of the Council or the Deputy Leader, in their absence, be welcomed at meetings of the High Wycombe Town Committee where any executive decision is proposed.”**

**18 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.2****19 COMMITTEE CHANGES/APPOINTMENTS****COMMITTEE CHANGES**

Currently, the Personnel & Development Committee comprises 8 Members. The Joint Staff Committee has 5 Members (Joint Staff also have staff representatives who attend). A proposal has been submitted by the Chairman of the Personnel & Development Committee for both Committees to have 5 Members on it, with the same membership. With regard to the Staff representation on the Joint Staff Committee, it is also proposed to permit deputies to attend meetings throughout the year where the staff member on the Committee is unable to attend/leaves to allow for flexibility and full membership at all times.

Both Committees are subject to the political proportionality rules for Committee places. The implications of reducing the membership of the Personnel & Development Committee by three seats results in both committees having the same balance proportion of 4 Conservative Councillors and 1 Labour Councillor. It does not affect the overall balance elsewhere.

The proposal is for this change to come into effect for the new Municipal Year, 2018/19. The Leader of the Council has been consulted in relation to this proposal.

**Council is invited to consider the proposal and determine whether to implement it or not.**

**OUTSIDE BODIES**

Councillor M Harris be appointed to the Marlow Bid Company (Globe Park)

**20 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CABINET OR INDIVIDUAL  
CABINET MEMBER**

- i) Making the Longwick-cum-Ilmer Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- ii) Use of additional Government funding to enable installation of a modular adaptation pod with disabled shower room and bathroom to provide essential facilities.

**For further information, please contact Iram Malik on 01494 421204,  
committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk**

## Council Minutes

Date: 22 February 2018

Time: 6.30 - 8.42 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Miss S Brown (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs J A Adey, Mrs S Adoh, K Ahmed, M C Appleyard, M Asif, D H G Barnes, Ms A Baughan, S Broadbent, H Bull, D J Carroll, M Clarke, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, R Farmer, R Gaffney, S Graham, A R Green, G C Hall, M Hanif, M Harris, A E Hill, A Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain JP, D A Johncock, M E Knight, D Knights, Mrs J D Langley, A Lee, Mrs W J Mallen, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, I L McEnnis, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, B E Pearce, G Peart, S K Raja, R Raja, S Saddique, J A Savage, D A C Shakespeare OBE, N J B Teesdale, Mrs J E Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner, Ms J D Wassell, D M Watson, C Whitehead, R Wilson, L Wood and Ms K S Wood.

Honorary Aldermen: R Pushman.

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman requested that all mobile phones be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Honorary Aldermen: J M Blanksby, P Cartwright and EH Collins. Councillors Z Ahmed, A Collingwood, C Etholen, C Harriss, M Hashmi and R Scott.

### 2 MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 December 2017 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Leader of the Council declared an interest in respect of Item 59 of the Cabinet minutes dated the 18 December 2017. The Leader left the room during this section of Item 10 (Cabinet Minutes).

Councillors A Turner, G Hall and D Knights declared for information a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Item 17 of the agenda (Extension Works to Risborough Springs Swim & Fitness Centre – Procurement Process) as they were members of the Town Council. Councillors A Turner, G Hall and D Knights did not withdraw from the meeting and took full part in the discussion and voting.

#### **4 CHAIRMAN`S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that she had undertaken many engagements since the last meeting of the Council and highlighted the following event:

- Afternoon tea with the Mayor & Mayoress of Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

The Chairman informed Members that the above event had consisted of a very pleasant afternoon where she had learnt all about the Guildhall in Windsor, including why the pillars did not touch the building.

#### **5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

##### **Question from Mr R B Colomb to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration**

“In September 2017 the Park & Ride buses, supposed to provide a frequent, reliable, direct service to and from the Town centre were effectively converted into bus routes.

In view of the significant developer contribution WDC made to Bucks County Council as part of its transport contribution, will it now seek a refund?”

##### **Response from Councillor S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration)**

“The section 106 agreement that was secured in relation to the redevelopment of the sports centre site at Handy Cross (Handy X Hub) included a planning obligation on the District Council in its role as landowner and developer, to make a financial contribution to Bucks County Council towards a frequent bus service between the Coachway Park and Ride at Handy X Hub and High Wycombe town centre. The County Council is responsible for agreeing an operational contract with a bus company (Carousel Buses).

The County Council report that passenger numbers have grown only slowly and, after reviewing the first year of operation, made adjustments in provision to reduce operating costs.

All the potential attractors for travel to Handy X Hub are not yet in place, such as new employment uses, the proposed on-site hotel and more regular motorway coach services; therefore the County Council changed the Park & Ride operation, so as to integrate it with other bus services in the area (and thereby reduce operating costs and extend the period over which services may be provided). In recent months (January 2018) WDC has liaised with the County about levels of unreliability in response to concerns expressed by some passengers. County's response was:

“Since the changes were made, passenger numbers are continuing to grow but clearly the exposure to traffic delays and other operational problems is greater

when relying on longer routes to also provide journeys to the Park & Ride site. There have also been problems with driver error and significant congestion issues in the lead up to Christmas but Carousel assure us that these have been addressed.

Given that the park and ride service has to consider a number of travel needs - most passengers were travelling into the town centre and bus station, but there are also trips to the hospital and the railway station - this has meant that some compromises were necessary with the timetable; hence the different service numbers (PR1, PR2 or X80). At times this can be confusing, particularly if the scheduled journey times are disrupted. We are looking at this again and have asked Carousel for options as to how we can offer a simpler park & ride timetable while still keeping within the budget available. They have also been told to focus on improving punctuality in the short term and ensure all buses are "tracking" correctly within the electronic journey system".

Wycombe District Council will continue to monitor that the application of funding complies with the relevant planning obligations and is in discussions with the County Council to ensure that opportunities are taken to improve the services to HXH as far as practicable.

**Supplementary question from Mr R B Colomb to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration**

"It would appear that they are looking to extend the Park & Ride service as the buses are not running to time. I thought the principal of the Park & Ride was to park up and get on a bus for free so you can't get income from pensioners with bus passes. Will you be able to get money from Bucks County Council?"

**Response from Councillor S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration)**

"Not all contractors are yet there. I hope in the future they can park and hop on a bus. We'll be making sure Bucks County Council protect the service and gather money as a primary objective."

**Question from Dr R Peters to the Cabinet Member for Community**

"The draft Council minutes for December record concerns being raised about begging, homelessness, and antisocial behaviour arising from drug/alcohol abuse. I would like to highlight and commend the work of Street Angels and Wycombe Homeless Connection in these areas.

In what ways is the Council supporting these organisations?"

**Response from Councillor G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community)**

"Thank you Dr Peters for your question, which gives me the opportunity to highlight the very significant role played by our voluntary and community sector partners in supporting people in need of help and thereby making all of the towns in our District



safe and attractive places to visit.

My colleague, Cllr Mrs Langley, as the Cabinet Member for Housing, has awarded a grant for a number of years to support the vitally important work of Wycombe Homeless Connection in helping our most vulnerable residents. Last autumn WHC celebrated 10 years of service and only last week assisted 5 people who were sleeping rough on our streets, back into accommodation, a most notable achievement.

Street Angels work closely with our Community Safety service and the Police to ensure that those enjoying our night time economy are given the support they need at the end of their evening out. This is another great example of a voluntary service working late into the night to assist the people who are most vulnerable and also to call emergency services when necessary.

We also work with partners to deliver a Safe Places scheme, where people who feel at risk can be sure of a safe haven to stop in.

I know that Wycombe Police Superintendent, Kevin Brown, will echo me in saying that it is only by working in partnership that we can address and support those in need and I am delighted that we have a true partnership in the Street Community Group, addressing the issues we have with street drinking, begging and anti-social behaviour. WDC is most grateful to the very positive and speedy response from Superintendent Brown following our call for additional support in making the town centre a pleasant place to be in the evenings.

Some of the social issues will take longer to resolve than others as they are often complex but I am confident in saying that steady but significant progress is being made in assisting those who are in need on one hand and deterring those who are simply causing a nuisance or worse on the other.”

#### **Supplementary question from Dr R Peters to the Cabinet Member for Community**

“I am not a member of Street Angels or Wycombe Homeless Connection but have been impressed by ‘The Rock’ which has the goal of social interaction / bringing groups together. Would this be of value to Wycombe District Council?”

#### **Response from Councillor G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community)**

“I am familiar of the work of Deborah Green in Manchester. I’m open to every opportunity that brings cohesion and will look into it and work with yourself.”

## **6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

### **a) Question from Councillor R Raja to the Cabinet Member for Planning**

“It appears to be WDC policy to allow affordable housing targets to be renegotiated downwards after the contracts have been agreed with developers.

If it is the case then is it possible for me to know the circumstances which merit renegotiation and can such practice be justified given that targets of affordable housing have never been met and when the definition of affordability does not make houses affordable by people on modest, low or medium income levels?”

**Response from Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)**

“Thank you for your question Councillor Raja.

As we all know, housing delivery is clearly a national priority at the moment.

Policy CS13 (Affordable housing and housing mix) of our Core Strategy Development Plan Document sets out this Councils policy with regard to the provision of affordable housing. With further detail on the operation of the policy set out in the Supplementary Planning Document on Developer Contributions.

Affordable Housing is defined in The National Planning Policy Framework and where affordable housing is required this is secured by means of a section 106 legal agreement.

The National Planning Policy Framework however makes it clear that such obligations under a S106 legal agreement will not be appropriate if they impact the viability of the development. The delivery of all forms of open market housing, not just affordable, being as I have said a current priority for the country.

As a result during the consideration of a planning application, or even at the point of implementation, the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document provides a process where the viability of the scheme can be independently reviewed. This can result in a development providing reduced affordable housing where there are particular issues, such as soil contamination as occurred at the Gas Works site, which impacts its viability.

However it would be wrong to say that the targets for affordable housing are never met, as many residential schemes do provide such housing (in the form of affordable rent or shared ownership), and indeed some such as the redevelopment at Olympic Way in High Wycombe have delivered 100% affordable housing.

Moving forward we will shortly be submitting our new Wycombe District Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate and Policy DM24 (Affordable Housing) sets out how we will be seeking appropriate levels of affordable housing to meet the needs of our residents moving forward.”

**Supplementary question from Councillor R Raja to the Cabinet Member for Planning**

“A small residential development at Terriers does not contain any reference to affordable housing. This apparently is the result of a financial settlement agreed with the developer in lieu of building affordable houses. How can this be in the best interests of the people of Wycombe?”

**Response from Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)**

“Please provide me with the details – I can’t respond now as I have no background details.”

**b) Question from Councillor M Knight to the Leader of the Council**

“In the light of the collapse of Carillion could you outline what safeguards are in place to protect the public services which Wycombe District Council has contracted out to private companies?”

**Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).**

“Thank you for the question Councillor Knight.

The Council as you know has detailed governance arrangements in place to manage risk including the risk of a failure of our suppliers.

In the light of the collapse of Carrillion we are enhancing our current supplier monitoring system.

As a first stage of this improvement the finance team will conduct a review of the financial standing of relevant suppliers. The Council has access to an on-line financial tool which can issue automated notices when an organisation’s financial circumstances change.

Within that system the finance team will set a series of criteria for each strategic supplier which if breached would trigger a warning notice.

If either the review of the financial standing or the on line system triggers an alert, the finance team will pass the information to the relevant Head of Service to inform their risk assessments and contingency plans.

Additionally, in the coming weeks Heads of Service will be asked to update their business continuity plans to be invoked in the event of failure of one of their strategic suppliers. This is monitored as one of the risks on the strategic risk register.”

**Supplementary Question from Councillor M Knight to the Leader of the Council**

“Risks outweigh the benefits of contracting out to private contractors / developers?”

**Supplementary Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)**

“We are not aware of any issues with suppliers which are likely to impact on service delivery. We are strengthening the robust system we already have in place”

**c) Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Housing**

“What progress is the Council making to reduce the human and economic cost on local residents of rising level of rough sleeping and homelessness?”

**Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)**

“Thank you for your question Councillor Hanif.

The Council has in place a 5 year homelessness strategy (I have a copy for you and can provide to other Members: It is on the website). It is very clear that the Council aims to assist and prevent and relieve homelessness for as many people as possible.

Not all persons rough sleeping wish to accept offers of assistance. However, I can assure you the Outreach Service works tirelessly with us and our partners to assist anyone rough sleeping, seeking assistance.

The Council has also annually provided grant funding of over £120,000, to agencies in order to assist homeless persons and households – Wycombe homeless connection, Wycombe Women’s Aid and Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme.

In relation to the Modular Build, which is subject to planning permission, as a forward thinking Council and not afraid to take on challenges and more to the point a Council looking for ways to improve (as promised by the Leader) living conditions for those most in need of our help.

We are working on plans to increase our temporary accommodation provision, which is of course subject to planning permission from 34 units to 57 by using modular build in a Town Centre location. Thus providing better access to amenities / services than currently exists at Saunderton Lodge, also removing the institutional feel of living at the lodge. We were also constrained as to the number of units at Saunderton Lodge if we had gone for refurbishment.”

**Supplementary Question from Councillor M Hanif to the Cabinet Member for Housing**

“Wycombe District Council, on behalf of residents, spent £295k in 2016/17 housing 84 families and £62k in 2015/16 housing 95 families. How have the costs risen so sharply? Is it poor decision making by your Cabinet?”

**Supplementary Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)**

“Re: 21.02.2018 - There were 8 households in Bed & Breakfast with 75 households in temporary accommodation.

Only Bed & Breakfast invokes a cost: we have 34 units at Saunderton Lodge for which we receive a rental income: with no charge to Wycombe District Council for temporary accommodation provided by our partner Registered Housing Providers.

It is very important to note that this is the lowest number of households in temporary accommodation for over 2 years.

I cannot take the credit for that as Cabinet Member for Housing) I am however, extremely fortunate to work with officer's in the Housing Team, whereby this clearly demonstrates to Members the excellent work carried out by the officers which continues to prevent homelessness wherever possible (just one element of their work.

I want to draw your attention to the Member Seminar - 13<sup>th</sup> March - on the Homelessness Reduction Act: this will help explain the new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness which will come into effect in April this year.

I hope you will be free to attend. Thank you."

**d) Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Leader of the Council**

"I assume you are aware that there is an action afoot to try to establish parish councils in the un-parished areas of High Wycombe Town. Do you agree with me that this would be disastrous and that a Town Council would be much more advantageous for everyone concerned?  
One voice for the town as opposed to many voices with divisions."

**Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).**

"Thank you for the question Councillor Pearce.

This council is responsible for decisions on the outcome of Community Governance Reviews which consider matters such as the creation of parishes. If such a review was to be carried out it would consider a range of options. One of which may be that the town is well served by the current arrangements."

**Supplementary Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Leader of the Council**

"Some time ago West Wycombe was part of the time declared DPI – do you think it would be disastrous if other areas did the same?"

**Supplementary Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)**

"This would be subject to a full Community Governance Review."

**e) Question from Councillor M Asif to the Leader of the Council**

"Is the council ready to deal with one unitary authority for Bucks if that is the decision of the secretary of state for Communities and Local Government?"

### **Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)**

Thank you for your question Councillor Hanif.

“We will deal with whatever decision emerges from central government when it emerges. But as yet, we have had no decision. The announcement of the minded decision in relation to the Dorset County, Bournemouth and Poole unitary areas was made on 7<sup>th</sup> November and just yesterday the first decisions are being taken about the nature and function of the shadow board. The Structural Change Order for that area has yet to be produced by government. In the event of an announcement we will take what action is necessary to respond but even where there is broad consensus, as in Dorset, there is a limit to what can be done before a decision is announced.”

### **Supplementary Question from Councillor M Asif to the Leader of the Council**

“Should Wycombe District Council be worried about its reserves being plundered?”

### **Supplementary Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)**

“This would be for any new Council to make decisions on.”

### **f) Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Housing**

“The Government's own statistics released this year show the number of people in Wycombe accepted as statutorily and unintentionally homeless rose again in 2016-7 to a record 121.

These people were supported through temporary accommodation in 2016-17 which costs the local taxpayer both dearly and needlessly.

What strategy does the Council have to reduce the number of people being made statutorily homeless?”

### **Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)**

“Many of the points I have covered in answering Councillor Hanif’s question are relevant to the question you have raised. I am happy to repeat them if you so wish.”

### **Supplementary Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Housing**

“Is the member aware of the fact that Wycombe District Council has only bothered to use 31% of its £362 million allocation from central government for *discretionary housing payments* to help tenants who are in rental arrears, many of them hit by the Benefits Cap, the Bedroom Tax and the freeze to Local Housing Allowance, pay their rent and avoid a Section 21 eviction notice?”

Given that discretionary housing payments are there provide urgent financial help to people whose benefits do not cover the rent, wouldn't greater use of the allocation payment help lower the number of people unintentionally becoming homeless and therefore reduce the cost to the local authority on private temporary accommodation, not to mention the suffering of the sadly growing number of local people who are made unintentionally homeless every year (53 percent up since 2010-11)?"

**Supplementary Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing)**

"I am very confident we are making good progress and through our Action Plan with the help of valuable partners, we flag up a number of 'green' statuses.

In terms of continuing to prevent homelessness: myself and my officer's accept that we have to work to do and I can assure you that hard work will continue in order to assist our residents:

With relatively low numbers of households in temporary accommodation when compared to nearby authorities and the national average it is clear the progress that has been made and continues / which demonstrates the excellent work of officer's.

For information; according to national statistics at the last recorded period in September 2017, the national average of households in temporary accommodation was 3.59 households per 1,000 households with Wycombe recording a figure of 1.61-less than half the national average. The figures for South Bucks was 2.42, Slough 7.12 and Luton 17.46 by way of comparison. The figure for London was 16.72.

**g) Question from Councillor Ms A Baughan to the Leader of the Council**

"As it looks likely that Bucks County Council will withdraw funding and close Children's Centres across the county - it has been suggested by the BCC Cabinet Member that centres may be devolved to local communities and Parish Councils. Will Wycombe District Council be offering any support, financial or otherwise, to similar initiatives for example to continue to have Children's Centres established in the unparished wards of the District?"

**Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).**

Thank you for your question Councillor Baughan.

"We understand that the buildings could be reused as valuable community assets in some locations. However the County will be delivering from community venues the early years services that were previously delivered from the Children's Centres identified for closure. It does not seem sensible to suggest we may fund and operate a service from a Children's Centre when the same service is still being delivered in the area, regardless of the fact that children's services are not our responsibility but that of our County colleagues.

However, fully appreciate your concern regarding Bucks County Council, so many due to the service. I will ask the Cabinet Member, Councillor Warren Whyte at Bucks County Council for feedback which I will share with you.”

There was no supplementary question.

**h) Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources**

“I am concerned £150,000 is being spent on the Council Chamber at Wycombe District Council. What are the nature of these improvements?”

**Response from Councillor L Wood (Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services)**

“Thank you Councillor Wassell for your question.

The £150,000 outlined in the budget has been requested in readiness for a series of essential maintenance and renewal works to sustain the operational capabilities of this chamber.

The budget has not yet been allocated to particular tasks, as we need to complete our feasibility and capability assessments to determine what works are most essential, and how they can be completed in the most cost effective and operationally efficient way.”

**Supplementary Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources**

“I expected to hear specific details – what a waste of money! Please be more specific.”

**Supplementary Response from Councillor L Wood (Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services)**

“Money has been allocated.

We haven’t made any works to the Council Chamber for 30 years.

We are looking to replace the audio / visual system and also the air handling system which needs to be changed in the next 5 years. Going forward we’ll put forward a full business case which will go to Full Council.”

**i) Question from Councillor B Pearce to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration**

“Now that Costco have withdrawn from their proposal for their new store on Cressex Island, can you tell me what measures are in place to encourage another establishment/business to develop the site?”



Although I with many residents had reservations regarding the infrastructure capability, it is a great disappointment that Costco have withdrawn.

I understand that the said site cannot be used for housing due to measured poor air quality.”

**Response from Councillor S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration).**

Thank you for your question Councillor Pearce.

“The site is allocated in the Local Plan for business use – one of the few sites left in Council ownership with job creating potential.

It’s a prime site and concept plans are already underway for alternative potential commercial uses that would improve the town and district’s offer. The proposals have yet to be tested against the planning policy for the site (and highways capacity), and soft market tested, before the Council seeks a development partner, by means of a competitive commercial process. So it would be premature to expand upon proposals at this stage.

But given the level of unsolicited interest already received from the development market, I expect attractive and revised options for the site to be secured in a relatively short space of time.”

There was no supplementary question.

**j) Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Planning**

“The national picture is one of housing availability being in crisis.

Wycombe has people living on the streets and families in temporary accommodation. Looking at the councils own advice note which requires you to build between 30-40% affordable housing.

Can you explain why the figure given in the Wycombe local plan works out at a 23.5% affordable housing ratio?”

**Response from Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning).**

“Thank you for your question Councillor Ahmed but, in reply, I must start by saying that it doesn’t help to make histrionic comments about the housing situation in Wycombe. Thanks to the good work undertaken by this council, we don’t have thousands of people in temporary rented accommodation or living on the streets. However, I must be careful not to stray into my colleagues patch on housing and so I will focus on your specific question concerning the requirement for affordable homes as laid down in the new Local Plan.

In that respect, it is frustrating that despite numerous member briefings on the new local plan, you still don't seem to understand how the numbers are calculated so let me repeat it again.

We start the calculations through a process called a housing and economic development needs assessment. This calculates the housing need for the District and, within that, the number of affordable homes required which, for the new local plan period, amounts to 3,100 homes. This equates to 23.5% of the objectively assessed need.

So, in preparing the local plan, we have to take into account the fact that not all sites will provide affordable housing as they do not meet the size thresholds which would trigger a developer to provide affordable housing. So in order to achieve the figure of 3,100 affordable homes, we need to set a higher percentage for those developments that will provide affordable homes.

With that in mind, the local plan requires the provision of between 30 and 40% (30% previously developed or as we say brownfield land and 40% greenfield). The actual number to be delivered also takes into account a financial viability assessment which factors in all costs that a development is likely to incur including those arising from other policies in the plan.

However, as I have said, not every development will provide affordable homes and so when you average the number out over the whole plan period, it is expected to deliver 3,100 homes or 23.5% of the objectively assessed need figure of 13,200 homes.

As you will also remember, we have an agreement with AVDC to take our unmet need, so that we are building 10,925 homes in WDC. But please note, we are planning to provide the amount of affordable housing required on the full 13,200 figure.

Please also note that we currently believe that, overall, we will deliver more than that number as we have calculated that sites that already have planning permission and the sites proposed for allocation in the plan would provide approximately 3000 affordable homes.

I hope that clarifies matters for you."

### **Supplementary Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Planning**

"You have stated targets in the current Wycombe Housing Strategic Action Plan, that an average of 402.5 new homes a year will be built and that in the 2 years 2015 –17 71 affordable homes will be built. Has even this pitifully low 9% been achieved?"

## **Supplementary Response from Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning)**

“These are the numbers over the whole period. Figures for 2 years don’t help. We will meet the numbers.”

**Questions 11-13 were not put as the 30 minutes time period had expired. In accordance with Standing Orders, a written reply would be sent to the questioner by the appropriate Member within 10 working days, and would also be appended to the minutes of the meeting.**

### **7 PETITIONS**

No petitions were received by the deadline of 5pm on Thursday 15 February 2018.

### **8 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Leader of the Council explained that the Local Government Act 2003 required the Council to set out a statement of its treasury management strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. Members were informed that this set out the Council’s policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. It was noted that the report set out the Council’s proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for the year 2018/19. The item had been considered by both the Audit Committee and Cabinet.

The proposed recommendation was put to Council.

#### **RESOLVED: That**

- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 be approved.
- The Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for 2018/19 as set out at Appendix A of the report be approved.
- The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2018/19 as set out at Appendix B of the report be approved.

### **9 CORPORATE PLAN**

The Leader of the Council explained that the Council’s current Corporate Plan (approved by Council in December 2015 and published in January 2016) had been in place for two years. Members were informed that within the ‘delivering our priorities’ section it was recognised that as the environment and circumstances that we work in change - and new opportunities (or challenges) arise, there was a need to periodically ‘pause’ and review the ambitions and activities.

It was noted that the refresh process had started in June 2017 with involvement and input from Members to revisit and refine the focus of ambitions in light of the

journey the Council had taken since 2015 – to reflect where the Council was now and where it was going.

The proposed recommendation had been submitted from Cabinet and was put to Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) Members approve the refreshed Corporate Plan as attached to the report at Appendix A.
- (ii) That the Corporate Plan document be included within the Budget and Policy Framework and that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

**10 CABINET**

The Leader presented the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on the 18 December 2017. The Deputy Leader presented item 59 (Ashwells) on page 70 of the agenda as the Leader had to withdraw for that item and the Leader returned after this item to presented the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on the 5 February 2018.

Councillor P Turner explained that Item 59 needed to read with Item 61 as a note had been inserted in the text to clarify that the allocation being recommended would only be required should planning consent be obtained. The Democratic Service Manager, asked Members to take this point of clarification into consideration which they all agreed to do.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18 December 2017 and 5 February 2018 be received, and the recommendations as set out at minute numbers 59 and 67 be approved and adopted (recommendations at minute numbers 64 & 66 had been approved earlier in the meeting. Recommendation at minute number 63 was taken under the Budget item below).

**11 COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2018/19 AND PRESENTATION FROM LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The meeting then specifically turned to the recommendation outlined in minute number 63 of the Cabinet Minutes of 5 February 2018 (Revenue Budget & Council Tax Setting 2018/19) along with the supplement issued to the item in advance of the meeting.

The Chairman explained the process that would be followed.

The Leader of the Council in introducing the Cabinet Member for Finance to make the Budget presentation, explained that the budget this year was forward thinking

and aimed to serve the interests of all residents by ensuring we continue to provide excellent value for money services and improve the district year on year. The Leader stated that she wanted the Council to continue to champion local communities whilst regenerating our District for all to live in, work and enjoy. She also wanted to provide housing for those who need it from first time buyers through to those wanting to downsize. Members were informed that the Leader also wanted to be able to include and listen to the Youth of our District as well as to work with neighbouring Local Authorities. The Leader explained that there were challenging times ahead and that team work was needed.

The Leader expressed her thanks to the Chief Finance Officer and Chief Executive along with the Senior Management Team and the many other officers involved in the budget preparation. The Leader went onto thank all staff for making Wycombe District Council function and the Council's Improvement and Review Commission's cross party Budget Task and Finish Group for their thorough examination of the budget. The Leader asked everyone to remember that the majority of other Councils were increasing Council Tax by the maximum amount and that Wycombe District still has the lowest Council Tax in Buckinghamshire.

The Cabinet Member for Finance rose to give his budget speech beginning with some background to this year's budget. He explained that as local council tax payers everyone had an interest in the continued provision of high standard services across our District at the lowest long term cost. It was noted that this budget sought to address the key challenges and risks facing the Council and how it was planned to fund both the Revenue and Major Projects expenditure during the year ahead.

Members were informed that there were a number of financial challenges facing the Council namely the reduction in the Revenue Support Grant (a £518K decrease in 2018/19 alone) , uncertainty about the future of business rates , to what extent the Council will see negative revenue support grant in the coming years and the impact of inflation. Councillor Watson explained that the Council also set the challenge to become "self – financing" within the medium term – that is to say that the revenue budget would become independent of central government funding, New Homes Bonus and Business Rates. Members were informed that there were also a number of financial risks which faced the Council which included a possible increase in homelessness arising from new responsibilities coming into effect on April 1st, the planned October roll out of Universal Credit and also the potential volatility in retail rentals and the possible need for interim staff – there were also other risks which at this time remained unknown.

Councillor Watson explained that an innovation since last year had been the introduction of the draft budget which was first reported at the 18 December Cabinet meeting – a detailed initial look at the budget enabled Members to reflect upon the year ahead and in particular allowed the Improvement and Review Commission Budget Task and Finish Group the opportunity to scrutinise the numbers, and also discuss them with myself and the S151 officer. It was noted that a series of one on one meetings between Cabinet members, the relevant Head of Service, the S151 officer and Councillor

Watson also took place during January and, as a consequence, the December draft had been amended – mainly within Major Projects.

Councillor Watson explained that as the financial future of the Council was considered he would first remind Members of what had gone before - notably during the period since the Tenant Lead Transfer of the Housing stock to Red Kite the Council had not had to borrow and we have become accustomed to being in a financially advantageous situation and this had meant that neither interest costs nor any Minimum Revenue Provision have had to be charged to Revenue – the benefit of not having any borrowing costs had served to keep the Council Tax flat for most of the last few years. It was noted that looking ahead the Council had ambitious plans for the future and the budget included a £152.5M Major Projects programme over the period including this year and the subsequent five years. Members were informed that the prevailing situation of not having to borrow was now forecast to change from 2021/22.

Councillor Watson explained that £87.5M of projects were planned to be funded from reserves, £20M from borrowing and £45M of projects to be funded from external Grant from Central Government and also from Community Infrastructure Levies and Section 106 Contributions. Councillor Watson stated that he was pleased to say that the Council had already received £20M of the £45M external funding - £19.5M of which was from the Housing Infrastructure Fund - £7.5 million to improve the junction at Kingsmead Road and Abbey Barn Lane in High Wycombe, following the release of Abbey Barn North and South reserve sites - and in addition, £12 million of funding had been awarded to help with new infrastructure that would be needed to support housing growth in Princes Risborough, subject to the local plan being approved.

Members were informed that some of the other areas identified for investment included:

- £4.7m investment in community facilities including car parks, cemeteries, community and sports premises – notably the Princes Risborough Springs Sports Centre.
- £43.2m investment in Economic Development including town centre investment and the regeneration in order to develop the public realm and develop an increased income stream to fund council services in the future - notably enabling a second Aldi, land at Ashwells and a number of Strategic Acquisitions.
- £15.5M investment in Housing – included Temporary Accommodation, a development of park homes at the Bassetbury Triangle, the use of Disabled Facilities Grants and the delivery of Affordable Housing.
- £5.1m investment in IT improvements that would reduce the day-to-day costs of delivering our services and further improve the customer experience for all our residents in the future – the so called Digital First IT Transformation programme.

Councillor Watson explained that with regard to the forecasted return to borrowing the Council would do all that it could to mitigate the impact but did

need to begin to plan for that situation now. Members were informed that as a rule of thumb the purchase of an asset with an economic life of 20 years financed from borrowing would result in an 8% annual charge to the Revenue budget. It was noted that the implication of a future return to borrowing was that the costs charged to Revenue would rise sharply during the coming years – the best way to prepare for this was to increase the council tax now – we need to recognise that the Council was not a business and could not increase its prices sharply when its costs sharply rise – the council was subject to the referendum limit and thus needed to set its council tax whilst considering the longer term and not just the immediate year ahead.

Councillor Watson stated that he was grateful to past and present councillors and officers who have run this council in a “small c conservative” manner for many years and thus had inherited healthy financial reserves which could, if needed be, be called upon in time of economic uncertainty – the Council did not want to be in a similar position to Northamptonshire County Council.

Councillor Watson explained that the background to the Revenue budget was that over the past years the Council had worked hard to deliver the efficiencies required through fostering a culture of innovation and a focus on continuous improvement, engaged in shared services with other councils and obtained the optimum return from the cash held. It was noted that meanwhile the number of council employees had been reduced from over approximately 650 to approximately 250 during the past decade. This had enabled the Council to deliver savings for its 176,000 residents through a range of initiatives including more efficient structures, improved commercialisation, the pro-active use of council assets and the delivery of economic regeneration projects. With regards to 2018/19 the Council had set aside revenue budget for a number of additional purposes including the following:-

1. £60K in the Youth Mentoring project
2. £103k for car park security
3. A £273K grant had been made available to tackle the cost of homelessness.

Members were assured by Councillor Watson that no increase in car parking charges was assumed within the budget.

It was noted that Wycombe was the third largest District Council in terms of tax base but 24<sup>th</sup> out of 200 in terms of council tax collected. Members were informed that in order to fund the budget for 2018/19, the Council was proposing to increase Council Tax by £5 for a band D tax payer – i.e. an increase of 3.8%. It was noted that this would be only the second rise during the past seven years.

Councillor Watson then commented that one might ask what does the council tax increase bring to the local community? He outlined that:

1. It allows the council to maintain its services at a high standard – no reduction in front line services was planned.
2. Invest in the district to enable the locality to remain economically strong.

3. Improve on line access to council services.
4. Deliver a sustainable future for many years to come.

Councillor Watson explained that as a low tax conservative he would prefer not to have to increase the level of the council tax but would point out that the Council Tax, even after this increase, would remain the lowest amongst the four Buckinghamshire district councils and would also remain amongst the lowest 25% in the country – (175/200).

Councillor Watson informed Members that Wycombe District Council was in a financially strong position, he then commended the Budget to Council and asked for the recommendations to be approved. Councillor Barnes seconded the proposal.

The Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Raja, rose to respond to the Budget speech. He explained that before he responded to the budget statement by Councillor Watson, he would like to make it clear that any points he made, which might be deemed to be critical were not directed at any of the officers. Councillor Raja went on to thank, at the outset, a practically new finance team at WDC for having produced a budget with plenty of explanations.

Councillor Raja explained that the Improvement & Review Commission had made 23 recommendations to the Cabinet, after a very lengthy and intense period of reviewing and scrutinizing the budgetary process, yet of the 23 recommendations 8 were merely noted, one was not agreed and two were not required, so roughly 50% of the I & R's recommendations had been discarded. He went onto explain that the High Wycombe Town committee's budgetary exercise had also been thrown in abeyance.

Councillor Raja informed Members that apart from the usual aspirations and numbers the main point of this budget was that it proposed to increase the Council tax by £5 for Band D properties or a 3.8% rise across all bands. It was noted that the £5 was only a small part of the overall increase (6%), which included the precept. Councillor Raja stated that what residents of WDC were entitled to know was what benefits would they get for this £5 increase and why was WDC not arguing for the much delayed revaluation of properties and the establishment of higher bands above 'H'? It was noted that the current council tax assessments were based on valuations from 1991.

Councillor Raja stated that the draft budget (as presented to Cabinet on 5 February) also hinted that based on the 5 year capital programme it was expected that the Council may need to borrow £20M to finance the programme in 2021/22 (page 17 (section 4.2)), but there was no explanation as why this was needed.

Councillor Raja went onto explain that ironically, there was considerable amount of cash in the system: should the leadership not be afraid of keeping these reserves in case a single unitary authority in Bucks leads to these reserves being plundered by the County Council? He stated that Members may also have noticed that throughout the document, the background information explained that: Wycombe



District Council had good reserves (section 5.6) and was 'under-borrowed'. Councillor Raja questioned what the extra £20M of borrowing from 2021/22 was for.

Councillor Raja also noted that Link Asset Services was the new name for Wycombe District Council's 'external treasury management advisors'. His concern was that Wycombe District Council might be being advised (by the consultants) to borrow more simply because it could. Councillor Raja explained that this might be 'good financial management' for an investor, but was questionable for a Council and raised questions about motivation: was the advisor making an extra fee on any borrowing?

Councillor Raja informed Members that the revenue implications of borrowing would be around £1.1M per annum from 201/22 onwards. It was noted that the Council had sat tight on its reserves and did not borrow when the interest rates had been historically low; so much for prudent housekeeping!

It was noted that according to the blurb in the draft budget the Council had adopted the four key priorities, Place, People, Prosperity and Progress (the four Ps). Councillor Raja asked Members to briefly examine what the budget said about the four Ps. Members were informed that the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 stated that the Place priority focused on the environment, towns and rural areas buildings and landscape, it did not say anything about the state of the High Street or Frogmoor in High Wycombe, let alone places in Bowerdean, Micklefield or Castlefield, as it went on to say that the Council wanted people who lived and worked in the area to have an environment that met their needs and also so that the visitors could enjoy all Wycombe had to offer; that is if visitors can find a parking place.

Councillor Raja explained that for the People priority it stated that the Council wanted its children to have the best start in life. Councillor Raja questioned how this was possible for many who would no longer have access to the Children's Centers, thanks to a Tory administration at County Hall or the fact that a growing number of school children cannot get into their local schools or in some cases in any school? Members were informed that according to the Centre for Policy studies a third of the children in Micklefield, Bowerdean, Castlefield and even in Disraeli Ward lived in poverty and many people, even those in work were known to have registered with food banks. What sort of prosperity is this budget offering them?

Councillor Raja went onto explain that the Corporate Plan also said that the Council would work to support integration and promote cohesion. Perhaps Members ought to know of some examples of the Council's work on this front, promoting integration and community cohesion.

It was noted that the Council had another aspiration to "allocate homes fairly to those in greatest need. Well what about people in their mid-30's still living with their parents and does the Council not need to have houses before they could be given? Perhaps the clue was in the text as it referred to "those in greatest need". Perhaps Members could be told of the definition of greatest need?

It was noted that the Corporate Plan also wanted people to be healthy and active. Again a commendable sentiment but what evidence was there that Wycombe District Council would help to improve homes? Are grants going to be made available to residents to make their homes safe and environmentally friendly?

It was noted that the Corporate Plan also wanted to support the creation of new businesses; do cabinet members know that many smaller businesses are deterred by high business rates?

Councillor Raja explained that the budget did nothing for the vulnerable and poor in the community who had suffered cuts to their benefits. The majority of the cuts had fallen on working people in Wycombe. Councillor Raja questioned how could it be assumed that the governing councillors were not totally divorced from the realities of life of many of the people living in Wycombe?

Councillor Raja stated that he looked forward to seeing the governing group's plans for meeting all of the promises made in the supporting documents. Members were informed that it was easy to make promises but the hard part was to deliver on promises and the people of Wycombe were looking for results and not platitudes.

Councillor Raja asked about the elephant in the room or the two elephants: Brexit & Single unitary authority for Bucks, the Budget was pretty silent about both of these mega issues, which would change the way everyone lived and worked for the future.

Councillor Raja stated that the proof of the pudding was in the eating; to him the aspirational clap trap was just wishful thinking or pious words.

It was noted that as the Leader of the Council said in her introduction things had changed and Councillor Raja was sure the people in the Council Chamber who have seen Wycombe evolve over the last half century would agree that things in Wycombe had changed as they had in the rest of the country. Those in Wycombe, now lived in a knowledge based economy, with service and leisure industries in the forefront instead of the manufacturing sector of old. Councillor Raja stated that in his younger days people aspired to have a fridge, fitted carpets, central heating, double glazing, a car but now a days people expected these material comforts coupled with proper public services; thus the Council had to see things in relative terms and note deprivation where it existed.

Councillor Raja explained that the Council needed to see whether the residents were happy with the state of the roads and footpaths, with the lack of sufficient school places for their children and a hospital which lacked an A&E. Our High Street and some of the other shopping centres felt as if all commercial life was draining out of them. Councillor Raja stated that he felt the Budget required improvement.

The Leader of the East Wycombe Independent Group, Councillor Knight, also addressed the meeting and thanked the Head of Finance and his team, and his colleagues on the Budget Task and Finish Group, as well as the Cabinet Member

and his Cabinet colleagues for all contributing to the preparation of the budget presented to Members this evening.

Councillor Knight explained that since joining the council in 2011 there had been a massive reduction in government grant placing unprecedented pressure on local authority finances. At the same time austerity savings had seen budgets slashed across all public services and increasingly we were beginning to see the consequences of those cost savings.

Councillor Knight went on to explain that the emergency services, health services and at a county level our social care and children's services were struggling to meet the demands placed on them within the resources available. It was noted that for eight years a Conservative led government had presided over an economy where vital public services have had their resources cut and local authorities had been put under extreme pressure.

Councillor Knight explained that it was a very, very difficult time to be setting local authority budgets and as Conservative councillors leading the council he was not sure why they put up with it. Councillor Knight stated that he hoped that within the Conservative Party they were sending a clear message to those at the top – enough is enough.

Councillor Knight explained that continuing to reflect back over the last few years, in 2015 he used his budget response to highlight three points; the need to cut waste, the need to make the Councils extensive property portfolio deliver better financial returns and to pursue a Unitary Authority. Councillor Knight stated that he was pleased to see that three years later there had been a considerable shift on all three things – the sudden enthusiasm about a Unitary Authority being perhaps the most remarkable turnaround. Of course, backed into a corner by an aggressively low tax, small government Conservative administration was perhaps a case of desperate times called for desperate measures.

Councillor Knight explained that in 2016 he had spoken about Wycombe District Council needing to create solutions to the impending and worsening housing crisis by using its own land and resources. Members were informed that last year he had expressed frustration at the lack of progress and so he was now pleased to see this beginning to happen – with the proposed replacement of Saunderton Lodge and the release of Ashwells and the former Bassetsbury Allotments. It was noted that the Council was moving slowly in the right direction but were still some way off the vision he cast of the Wycombe District becoming a nationally recognised innovator in the provision of truly affordable housing. Councillor Knight explained that he still longed to see a budget which reflected a more ambitious and creative approach to resolving the chronic shortage of housing which was so damaging, particularly for young people starting out in life.

Councillor Knight explained that in 2017 he had expressed concern about the lack of readiness for the impending roll out of Universal Credit. The impact of the transfer to Universal Credit on the most vulnerable across our nation had been severe and at times devastating. It was noted that at least this year it got a brief mention but that was all. Presently anticipated to be introduced in the District in

September or October this year Members could only guess at what impact it might have on the Revenue and Benefits Team and the demand for discretionary support. Members were informed that some authorities were setting aside millions of pounds in contingencies to ensure the most vulnerable in their communities were looked after. Yes – the Council has healthy reserves but Councillor Knight explained that he would be more reassured to see ring fenced contingencies and a specific commitment in the budget.

Councillor Knight explained that if the transfer to Universal Credit was not managed well, and there was plenty of evidence that it often wasn't, the financial risks it presented to the wider budget was significant. In particular the pressure on the Councils Housing and Homelessness Prevention teams as people faced rent arrears and the consequences of this.

Members were informed that last year saw the council support a freeze in council tax which Councillor Knight had warned would leave the Council less able to support those in the District who needed the Councils help the most. This year the Council was now being asked to support a significant rise of just under 4%. It was noted that a modest rise last year might not have made a great difference but the compound effect over five years would have increased the Councils budgets significantly in the longer term.

Councillor Knight explained that the Conservative mantra of being the party of low taxes was all well and good but years of successive tax freezes and savings cuts eventually catch up with you. So this year the Council was asking its residents to shoulder a big hike in their Council Tax because of last year's much feted freeze. No doubt with District elections coming up in May 2019 the Council can anticipate another zero rise next year.

Councillor Knight stated that he had some sympathy with the ruling group having to put together a balanced budget while being put under pressure to save, save, save by their national Conservative government. It was noted that there wasn't exactly a lot of room for manoeuvre when everything had been cut to the bone. But equally household budgets were tight – and it was not fair on residents to offer a tax freeze one year only to have it cranked up the next year.

Councillor Knight explained that budgeting for hard pressed families, young people and pensioners was increasingly difficult and the Council should be planning ahead to avoid making rises that were higher the rate of inflation.

For that reason Councillor Knight stated he could not support the budget.

Other Members also made a number of remarks in respect of the Budget proposals.

The Cabinet Member for Finance made some closing remarks and asked Members to support his proposed recommendations. The Budget was then put to the recorded vote.

In accordance with subsection (5) of the Council's Standing Order 16 (Voting) the voting of the Members in respect of these Council Tax setting decision was recorded as follows:

In favour of the recommendations:-

Councillors Mrs J Adey, Shade Adoh, M Appleyard, D Barnes, S Broadbent, Miss S Brown, H Bull, D Carroll, R Farmer, R Gaffney, G C Hall, M Harris, A Hussain, M Hussain, Maz Hussain, D Johncock, D Knights, Mrs J Langley, T Lee, Mrs W Mallen, N Marshall, H McCarthy, I McEnnis, R Newman, Mrs C Oliver, B Pearce, G Peart, S Saddique, D Shakespeare, N Teesdale, A Turner, D Watson, C Whitehead, R Wilson, Miss K Wood and L Wood.

Against:- Councillors K Ahmed, A Baughan, M Knight and Ms J Wassell.

Abstentions:- Councillors M Asif, M Clarke, S Graham, A R Green, M Hanif and R Raja

In Favour:- 36

Against:- 4

Abstention:- 6

(Councillors Mrs L Clarke, A Hill, S K Raja, J Savage, Mrs J Teesdale and P Turner were not present when the above vote was taken.)

**RESOLVED that the Council:**

- i. That the recommendations contained in Minute 63 of the Cabinet Meeting held on 5 February 2018 be approved and adopted; and
- ii. Approved the formal Council Tax Resolution as set out in Appendix A (and set out below);
- iii. Noted the Head of Finance and Commercial's report;
- iv. Noted the statement by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the robustness of the budget estimates and level of reserves as set out in Appendix B; and
- v. Noted the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the Council attached at Appendix C. The rules of the 2018/19 scheme remains unchanged and is the same as what was originally approved in 2013/14.

1)

(A) 68,083.50 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) England) Regulations 2012, as its Council Tax Base for the year.

(B)

Parish	2018-19
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton	1,208.17
Bradenham	231.56

Chepping Wycombe	6,415.93
Downley	1,973.67
Ellesborough	440.98
Fawley (Parish Meeting)	144.84
Great & Little Hampden	164.28
Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh	492.92
Great Marlow	719.64
Hambleden	843.36
Hazlemere	4,001.40
Hedsor (Parish Meeting)	81.56
High Wycombe Town	22,669.83
Hughenden	3,993.46
Ibstone	145.96
Lacey Green	1,249.37
Lane End	1,423.53
Little Marlow	801.03
Longwick-cum-Ilmer	682.86
Marlow Bottom	1,522.44
Marlow Town	6,674.86
Medmenham	517.52
Piddington & Wheeler End	265.95
Princes Risborough	3,546.12
Radnage	384.72
Stokenchurch	1,955.49
Turville	217.99
WestW'- Parish Council	545.86
Wooburn and Bourne End	4,768.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>68,083.50</b>

The amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amount of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items (i.e. Parish precepts) relate, are shown above.

2) That the Council calculates the following amounts for 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011):

- a) £85,978,373 being the aggregate expenditure which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act (including the General Fund and Parish Precepts).
- b) £73,577,685 being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.

- c) £12,400,688 as its council tax requirement for the year including Parish Precepts being the amount by which the aggregate expenditure at 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate income at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act.
- d) £182.14 as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, being the council tax requirement at 2(c), divided by the Council Tax Base for the year 68,083.50 at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act.
- e) £3,073,929 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- f) £136.99 as the basic amount of its Council Tax for dwellings in its area, excluding Parish Precepts, being the amount at 2(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2(e) above by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act.
- g) The amounts given by adding to the amount at 2(f) above the amounts of the Parish Precepts for the relevant Parish divided in each case by the Council Tax Base for the Parish at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in each Parish is:

<b>2018/19 Basic Council Tax £</b>		
<b>Parish / Town Area</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>WDC + Parish</b>
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton	15.02	152.01
Bradenham	30.83	167.82
Chepping Wycombe	55.20	192.19
Downley	49.66	186.65
Ellesborough	42.26	179.25
Fawley	0.00	136.99
Great & Little Hampden	19.16	156.15
Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh	91.29	228.28
Great Marlow	17.18	154.17
Hambleton	37.94	174.93
Hazlemere	71.19	208.18
Hedsor	0.00	136.99
High Wycombe Town	19.50	156.49
Hughenden	52.99	189.98
Ibstone	47.96	184.95
Lacey Green	20.79	157.78
Lane End	106.75	243.74
Little Marlow	62.99	199.98
Longwick-cum-Ilmer	40.35	177.34
Marlow Bottom	24.96	161.95
Marlow Town	51.24	188.23
Medmenham	38.26	175.25
Piddington & Wheeler End	83.66	220.65

Princes Risborough	99.87	236.86
Radnage	71.87	208.86
Stokenchurch	40.50	177.49
Turville	25.23	162.22
WestW'- Council	84.63	221.62
Wooburn and Bourne End	73.19	210.18

This is the sum of the District Council's band D tax and the individual Parish/Town/Special Expenses band D taxes for each parish area. Hedsor and Fawley issue nil precepts.

The amounts given by multiplying the basic amounts for each Parish 2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

Parish / Town Area	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton	101.35	118.24	135.12	152.01	185.79	219.57	253.36	304.02
Bradenham	111.88	130.53	149.17	167.82	205.11	242.40	279.70	335.64
Chepping Wycombe	128.13	149.48	170.84	192.19	234.90	277.60	320.32	384.38
Downley	124.44	145.17	165.91	186.65	228.13	269.60	311.09	373.30
Ellesborough	119.50	139.42	159.33	179.25	219.08	258.91	298.75	358.50
Fawley	91.33	106.55	121.77	136.99	167.43	197.87	228.32	273.98
Great & Little Hampden	104.10	121.46	138.81	156.15	190.85	225.55	260.25	312.30
Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh	152.19	177.55	202.92	228.28	279.01	329.73	380.47	456.56
Great Marlow	102.78	119.91	137.04	154.17	188.43	222.69	256.95	308.34
Hambleton	116.62	136.06	155.49	174.93	213.80	252.67	291.55	349.86
Hazlemere	138.79	161.92	185.05	208.18	254.44	300.70	346.97	416.36
Hedsor	91.33	106.55	121.77	136.99	167.43	197.87	228.32	273.98
High Wycombe Town	104.32	121.71	139.10	156.49	191.25	226.03	260.81	312.98
Hughenden	126.66	147.76	168.87	189.98	232.20	274.41	316.64	379.96
Ibstone	123.30	143.85	164.40	184.95	226.05	267.15	308.25	369.90
Lacey Green	105.18	122.71	140.25	157.78	192.84	227.90	262.97	315.56
Lane End	162.50	189.58	216.66	243.74	297.90	352.06	406.24	487.48



Little Marlow	133.32	155.54	177.76	199.98	244.42	288.86	333.30	399.96
Longwick-cum-Ilmer	118.23	137.93	157.64	177.34	216.75	256.15	295.57	354.68
Marlow Bottom	107.97	125.96	143.96	161.95	197.94	233.92	269.92	323.90
Marlow Town	125.49	146.40	167.32	188.23	230.06	271.88	313.72	376.46
Medmenham	116.83	136.30	155.78	175.25	214.19	253.13	292.08	350.50
Piddington & Wheeler End	147.10	171.62	196.13	220.65	269.68	318.71	367.75	441.30
Princes Risborough	157.91	184.23	210.54	236.86	289.49	342.13	394.77	473.72
Radnage	139.24	162.45	185.65	208.86	255.27	301.68	348.10	417.72
Stokenchurch	118.33	138.06	157.77	177.49	216.93	256.37	295.82	354.98
Turville	108.15	126.17	144.19	162.22	198.27	234.31	270.37	324.44
WestW'-Council	147.74	172.38	196.99	221.62	270.86	320.11	369.37	443.24
Wooburn and Bourne End	140.12	163.48	186.83	210.18	256.88	303.59	350.30	420.36

3) That it be noted that for the year 2018/19 the main precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with s40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

	<b>Bucks County Council £</b>	<b>Police &amp; Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley £</b>	<b>Bucks &amp; Milton Keynes Fire Authority £</b>	<b>Total Preceptors £</b>
Band A	860.69	121.52	41.80	1,024.01
Band B	1,004.14	141.77	48.77	1,194.68
Band C	1,147.59	162.03	55.73	1,365.35
Band D	1,291.04	182.28	62.70	1,536.02
Band E	1,577.94	222.79	76.63	1,877.36
Band F	1,864.84	263.29	90.57	2,218.70
Band G	2,151.73	303.80	104.50	2,560.03
Band H	2,582.08	364.56	125.40	3,072.04

4) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts of the District's and preceptors requirements, in accordance with s30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets amounts of the council tax for the year 2018/19 for each category of dwelling as follows.

<b>2018/19 Council Tax £</b>			
	<b>WDC &amp; Parishes</b>	<b>Total Preceptors</b>	<b>Total Council Tax</b>
Band A	121.43	1,024.01	1,145.44
Band B	141.67	1,194.68	1,336.35

Band C	161.90	1,365.35	1,527.25
Band D	182.14	1,536.02	1,718.16
Band E	222.61	1,877.36	2,099.97
Band F	263.09	2,218.70	2,481.79
Band G	303.57	2,560.03	2,863.60
Band H	364.28	3,072.04	3,436.32

The council tax for each category of dwelling by parish is as follows.

Parish / Town Area	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton	1,125.36	1,312.92	1,500.47	1,688.03	2,063.15	2,438.27	2,813.39	3,376.06
Bradenham	1,135.89	1,325.21	1,514.52	1,703.84	2,082.47	2,461.10	2,839.73	3,407.68
Chepping Wycombe	1,152.14	1,344.16	1,536.19	1,728.21	2,112.26	2,496.30	2,880.35	3,456.42
Downley	1,148.45	1,339.85	1,531.26	1,722.67	2,105.49	2,488.30	2,871.12	3,445.34
Ellesborough	1,143.51	1,334.10	1,524.68	1,715.27	2,096.44	2,477.61	2,858.78	3,430.54
Fawley	1,115.34	1,301.23	1,487.12	1,673.01	2,044.79	2,416.57	2,788.35	3,346.02
Great & Little Hampden	1,128.11	1,316.14	1,504.16	1,692.17	2,068.21	2,444.25	2,820.28	3,384.34
Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh	1,176.20	1,372.23	1,568.27	1,764.30	2,156.37	2,548.43	2,940.50	3,528.60
Great Marlow	1,126.79	1,314.59	1,502.39	1,690.19	2,065.79	2,441.39	2,816.98	3,380.38
Hambleden	1,140.63	1,330.74	1,520.84	1,710.95	2,091.16	2,471.37	2,851.58	3,421.90
Hazlemere	1,162.80	1,356.60	1,550.40	1,744.20	2,131.80	2,519.40	2,907.00	3,488.40
Hedsor	1,115.34	1,301.23	1,487.12	1,673.01	2,044.79	2,416.57	2,788.35	3,346.02
High Wycombe Town	1,128.33	1,316.39	1,504.45	1,692.51	2,068.61	2,444.73	2,820.84	3,385.02
Hughenden	1,150.67	1,342.44	1,534.22	1,726.00	2,109.56	2,493.11	2,876.67	3,452.00
Ibstone	1,147.31	1,338.53	1,529.75	1,720.97	2,103.41	2,485.85	2,868.28	3,441.94
Lacey Green	1,129.19	1,317.39	1,505.60	1,693.80	2,070.20	2,446.60	2,823.00	3,387.60
Lane End	1,186.51	1,384.26	1,582.01	1,779.76	2,175.26	2,570.76	2,966.27	3,559.52
Little Marlow	1,157.33	1,350.22	1,543.11	1,736.00	2,121.78	2,507.56	2,893.33	3,472.00
Longwick-cum-Ilmer	1,142.24	1,332.61	1,522.99	1,713.36	2,094.11	2,474.85	2,855.60	3,426.72
Marlow Bottom	1,131.98	1,320.64	1,509.31	1,697.97	2,075.30	2,452.62	2,829.95	3,395.94
Marlow Town	1,149.50	1,341.08	1,532.67	1,724.25	2,107.42	2,490.58	2,873.75	3,448.50
Medmenham	1,140.84	1,330.98	1,521.13	1,711.27	2,091.55	2,471.83	2,852.11	3,422.54
Piddington & Wheeler End	1,171.11	1,366.30	1,561.48	1,756.67	2,147.04	2,537.41	2,927.78	3,513.34

Princes Risborough	1,181.92	1,378.91	1,575.89	1,772.88	2,166.85	2,560.83	2,954.80	3,545.76
Radnage	1,163.25	1,357.13	1,551.00	1,744.88	2,132.63	2,520.38	2,908.13	3,489.76
Stokenchurch	1,142.34	1,332.74	1,523.12	1,713.51	2,094.29	2,475.07	2,855.85	3,427.02
Turville	1,132.16	1,320.85	1,509.54	1,698.24	2,075.63	2,453.01	2,830.40	3,396.48
WestW'-Council	1,171.75	1,367.06	1,562.34	1,757.64	2,148.22	2,538.81	2,929.40	3,515.28
Wooburn and Bourne End	1,164.13	1,358.16	1,552.18	1,746.20	2,134.24	2,522.29	2,910.33	3,492.40

5) That in accordance with section 52ZB of the Act it is determined that the Council's relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2018/2019 is not excessive.

## 12 STANDARDS COMMITTEE

In the absence of the Chairman the Vice Chairman of the Committee Councillor M Clarke rose to present the minutes of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 9 January 2018 be received and the recommendation as set out in minute number 44 be approved and adopted.

## 13 IMPROVEMENT & REVIEW COMMISSION

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement & Review Commission held on 10 January 2018 be received.

## 14 AUDIT COMMITTEE

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 25 January 2018 be received.

## 15 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the High Wycombe Town Committee informed Members that the Special Expenses Budget 2018/19 recommendation had not made it into the Cabinet report.

Councillor Ms J Wassell explained that the match-funding question had been raised under the Special Expenses Budget 2018/19 item because High Wycombe did not have a Town Council but instead had the High Wycombe Town Committee which she felt seriously disadvantaged the wards involved. The Chairman of the High Wycombe Town Committee informed Members that there had been discussions in the past but that Members had believed it was not in the best interest of residents to have a High Wycombe Town Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the High Wycombe Town Committee held on 23 January 2018 be received.

## **16 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 15 November 2017 and 17 January 2018 be received.

## **17 EXTENSION WORKS TO RISBOROUGH SPRINGS SWIM & FITNESS CENTRE - PROCUREMENT PROCESS**

The Cabinet Member for Community, Councillor G Peart, referred Members to the report which could be found on pages 112-116 of the agenda. It was noted that research conducted on behalf of the Council had identified that there was already latent demand for leisure facilities at RSSC. The local plan proposed the building of around 2500 additional homes in the Princes Risborough area. Members were informed that the resulting increase in population would add to that demand. Councillor G Peart went on to explain that the Council intended to sign a DA with its current leisure management contractor PFPL so that PFPL could directly manage the building works from design through to construction of the enlarged health and fitness facilities at RSSC.

Members were informed that officers believed the most appropriate procurement route was to:

- (i) non-competitively sign a DA with PFPL, which would provide an agreed sum of money to develop and manage the works on the Council's behalf;
- (ii) To enter into a Deed of Variation varying the Leisure Operator Agreement to allow for the improvement works to be carried out and varying the services to allow for the new facilities. There would also be a surrender and re-grant of leases on completion to take into account any changes in the plans for the facilities.

During debate, Councillor Mrs L Clarke stated that she felt this was exactly the right thing to be happening in Princes Risborough. Councillor Marshall stated that he supported the principal but questioned how the Council would ensure fully competitive bidding. Councillor Peart explained that this would be a completely transparent process and whilst the building element was not technically difficult being open whilst the works took place was difficult. It was noted that the Council therefore needed to use a contractor that was used to people being present on site from a behavioural point of view.

Councillor P Turner commented that the proposal would be subject to planning and asked for advice about members of the Planning Committee voting on this item. It was noted that 'subject to planning' should be inserted to the resolution but also that as this item was focussing on the procurement process and not any planning considerations, Members were able to take part in the decision. . It was noted that the resolution should be amended to also encompass 'subject to legal input'. .

The proposed recommendation was put to Council.

**RESOLVED, Subject to planning and the Council's Legal Team reviewing the wording and process, the following be agreed:**

- To provide an exemption from Contract Standing Orders ("CSO's") to allow the non-competitive award of a Development Agreement with a value of £1.2m to allow Places for People ("PFPL") to complete development works at Risborough Springs Swim and Fitness Centre ("RSSFC").
- To delegate authority for entering into a Development Agreement, Deed of Variation and any associated legal documents in relation to the existing Leisure Operator Agreement to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the District Solicitor, Head of Finance and Commercial Services with the Cabinet Member for Community Services.
- To delegate authority for the surrender and re-grant of the lease to PFPL for RSSFC, and amendment as required to the ground lease for RSSFC with Princes Risborough Town Council to the Major Projects & Property Executive in consultation with the District Solicitor, the Cabinet Member for Growth and, Regeneration, the Head of Community Services and the Cabinet Member for Community Services.

**18 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.2**

There were none.

**19 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CABINET OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER**

The urgent action taken by Cabinet or individual Cabinet Member as set out in the summons was noted.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Peter Druce	- Democratic Services
Tanya Brown	- Democratic Services
Ian Hunt	- Democratic Services Manager
Karen Satterford	- Chief Executive

## COUNCIL

Thursday 22 February 2018

### Agenda Item 6

#### Questions from Members

##### Unanswered Questions – Responses sent subsequent to Meeting

###### 11. Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council

At the cabinet meeting on 5 February 2018, the cabinet amended the special Expenses budgets for the town of High Wycombe.

Whilst the cabinet minutes note that the cabinet member for finance and the leader of the council assured town committee members that they would openly consider a virement if the resultant £8K reduction in contribution to Special Expenses reserves proved problematical.

My question is does she feel happy about ignoring the wishes of the Town Committee again, and can she offer anything more than reassurance to openly consider?

The Cabinet considered the recommendation from the High Wycombe Town Committee and noted their Band D requirements and the overall impact of any change on the budget. We took into account the timing of the HWTC meeting and the budget requirement. However given that the amount that will be raised is still in excess of their budget requirement by £4k we feel that keeping a review of the overall position is fair and as I said in Cabinet and I repeat now. We will keep the position under review and if necessary then a virement for the £8k will be considered.

###### 12. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Youth & External Partnerships

The future of Wycombe's Youth Centres appear to be uncertain due to County Council cutbacks. Can Wycombe District Council provide any assistance to enable these centres to become sustainable?

We will do all that we can within our remit to provide and engage with young people, and I am pleased to tell you that includes establishing a new youth council for the district and working closely with Thames Valley Police to better engage with young people and understand their safety concerns. I have also secured £60,000 to invest in a project to mentor those local young people most at risk of disadvantage and exclusion, which will start in the new financial year.

We believe that services for young people are important, but Wycombe District Council is not in a position to step in and fund County Council services.

**13. Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Environment**

Is the Cabinet Member aware of the very good work being undertaken by the organisation Revive the Wye?

They recently held a litter and rubbish clearing event which engaged the public.

I am well aware of the work of Revive the Wye, and am supportive of the good work that they do. It is a partnership organisation, and WDC supports the partnership with an officer attending their meetings on a regular basis. We worked very closely with them on our mayor river corridor improvements in our parks over the last few years.

We continue to work with them regularly through the year in particular Roger Wilding who leads volunteers working on our sites at Desborough, The Rye, Kingsmead and Hughenden Parks.

Projects include

- removal of Himalayan Balsam, and other invasive species along the river corridors.
- Habitat improvements
- Habitat monitoring and surveys
- Rubbish removal from water courses on our land with collection and disposal by our grounds contractor.

# Agenda Item 8

## MODERNISING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Officer contact:** Catherine Whitehead Ext. 3980  
Email: [catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk)

**Wards affected:** All

## PROPOSED DECISION

Subject to Cabinet approval, Members are recommended to agree that:

- (i) the wording of the representations to be made to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government in relation to his 'minded to' decision on single tier arrangements for Buckinghamshire be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader;
- (ii) an allocation from the corporate contingency as reasonably necessary be made to contribute towards the four District Councils duty to raise awareness amongst residents and organisations in the District about the opportunity to make representations; and
- (iii) a Member group on Modernising Local Government be re-established to act as a consultative body on the wording of representations and awareness raising activity.

## Reason for Decision

To respond to the announcement of the Minister and to seek to secure the best arrangements for the delivery of services to the residents of the Wycombe District.

To ensure that suitable resources are available to ensure that residents and others are aware of the opportunity to make representations and to ensure that the representations are informed.

### Corporate Implications

1. This report has some financial implications which will be determined individually as work progresses.
2. The resource allocation is also being used to ensure that appropriate legal advice is available to the four Districts on the proposed decision.

## Executive Summary

3. This report was due to be considered at the Special Cabinet meeting held on Monday 16 April 2018.
4. This report seeks members approval for the method by which the wording of the representations to be made to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government. It also seeks to ensure that sufficient resources are available to enable those representations to be properly informed and to ensure that residents and others are aware of the opportunity to make representations.



## **Background and Issues**

5. Members will recall that on 17th January 2017, the Council of Wycombe agreed to submit a proposal to the then Minister for Communities and Local Government for a single tier arrangement for the existing two tier part of the County of Buckinghamshire to comprise of two new Councils one in the North covering the current area served by Aylesbury Vale District Council and one in the South covering the areas served by Wycombe, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils.
6. Members will also recall that in September 2016 the County Council for the current two tier area submitted a proposal for a single tier arrangement which comprised of a single council covering the area currently administered by Buckinghamshire County Council.
7. The Minister delayed consideration of both proposals until after the general election which took place in June 2017 and further until 12th March 2018 when he announced his intention to support a single tier council but to have only one council covering the whole of the current administrative area of the County Council. The statement of the Minister is attached at Appendix A.
8. The statement sets out that the Minister will not make a decision until after a period of representations has concluded which will continue at least until 25th May 2018. The Minister further announced that this would be a new Council.
9. There is no decision on the future of Local Government in Buckinghamshire and it is not anticipated that any decision will be made until there is further detail agree about any single tier arrangements. Nevertheless the Council has been given the opportunity to make representations and in order to do so arrangements need to be put in place to enable the wording of those representations to be agreed.
10. Throughout the period in which the submission was prepared a working group of Members received information and presentations about the progress of the work being carried out across the four Districts to prepare the Strategic Options Case, the stakeholder engagement and the submission. It is suggested that this working group should be reinstated to consider proposed representations.
11. In order that final adjustments to any wording can be made quickly and in order to comply with the timetable set out by the Minister it is proposed that the Chief Executive have the ability to finalise the wording in consultation with the Leader.
12. Throughout the earlier work leading up to the preparation of the submission and beyond Wycombe District Council has continued to work closely with the Leaders of the four Districts of Buckinghamshire and there has been a clear consensus that the interests of the residents of Buckinghamshire would be better served by the proposal for single tier arrangements set out by the District Councils. It is proposed that we continue to work with the other District Councils and to develop our responses together. It is therefore necessary that there is an ability to have some flexibility to amend the wording up to the last minute if necessary.

13. The four District Councils have agreed to jointly procure some legal advice about the proposed decision of the Minister. The legal advice has made it clear that Wycombe District Council along with the other District Councils has a responsibility to ensure that residents and others are aware of the opportunity to make representations. Some resource is therefore being allocated from contingency to ensure that awareness raising can be carried out.

### **Conclusions**

14. The Chief Executive will ensure that Wycombe District Council is able to make appropriate representations and will consult with the Modernising Local Government Members Working Group and the Leaders of the four District Councils for Buckinghamshire as appropriate. (If appropriate, e.g. if a particular option is favoured and, in any event, the reason for the proposed decision.)

### **Next Steps**

15. The proposed approach and wording of the representations to be made to the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government will be presented to the Member Working Group on Modernising Local Government and also to the four Leaders of the District Councils for consideration and agreement.

### **Background Papers**

Council Report 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Submission of the District Councils to the Minister

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY**

I am today announcing how I am minded to proceed in response to the locally-led proposals that I have received for improving local government in Buckinghamshire. Currently in the administrative county of Buckinghamshire, there is a two-tier structure of Buckinghamshire County Council and the district councils of Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, High Wycombe, and South Bucks.

There is broad local consent for change in Buckinghamshire, though there have been two alternative approaches for how precisely it should be configured. In September 2016 and January 2017, I received locally-led proposals for replacing the current structure, in one case with a single new unitary council and in the other case with two new unitary councils – one for the area of Aylesbury Vale and the other for the remainder of the current county area.

Having carefully considered all the material and representations I have received, I am minded to implement, subject to Parliamentary approval and further discussions, the locally-led proposal to replace the existing five councils across Buckinghamshire with a single council for the area.

I am satisfied that this new single council, if established, is likely to improve local government and service delivery in the county, generating savings, increasing financial resilience, facilitating a more strategic and holistic approach to planning and housing challenges, and sustaining good local services. I am also satisfied that across Buckinghamshire as a whole there is a good deal of local support for this new council, and that the area of the council represents a credible geography.

Whereas, I am equally satisfied that establishing two councils for the current county area is unlikely to improve local government in the area, generate significant savings, or provide the capacity to sustain major services or to address planning and housing challenges. I believe the areas of the two councils would not represent a credible geography or clear local identity, and that there is significantly less local support for two councils than for a single council. Accordingly, I am not minded to proceed with the proposal for establishing two councils.

Notwithstanding, I am clear that in relation to establishing a single council further steps are needed to secure local consent amongst the local partners, and I hope this ‘minded to’ announcement will facilitate the necessary discussions to deliver this local agreement.

Before I take my final decision, there is now a period until 25 May 2018 during which those interested may make further representations to me, including that if a proposal is implemented it is with suggested modifications. The final decision would also be subject to Parliamentary approval.

## Cabinet Minutes

Date: 12 March 2018

Time: 7.00 - 8.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor D H G Barnes (in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor S Broadbent	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D J Carroll	- Cabinet Member for Youth and External Partnerships
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor G Peart	- Cabinet Member for Community
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

### By Invitation

Cllr Shade Adoh	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr Zia Ahmed	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Strategy and Communications
Cllr Ron Gaffney	- Chairman of the Improvement & Review Commission
Cllr Gary Hall	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment
Cllr Mark Harris	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Cllr Matt Knight	- Leader of the East Wycombe Independent Party
Cllr Rafiq Raja	- Leader of the Labour Group
Cllr Sarfaraz Khan Raja	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Community
Cllr Saeed Saddique	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Cllr Alan Turner	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning

### **Also Present**

Councillors M Clarke, M Davy, T Green, T Lee & P Turner

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms K S Wood (Executive Leader of the Council) and L Wood (Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services)

### **71 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman for the Meeting Councillor D Barnes (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Engagement & Strategy) deputising for Councillor Ms Wood (Leader of the Council) referred to the joint statement of Wycombe, Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils which expressed their extreme disappointment in the Secretary of State's 'minded to' decision in respect of the formation of one unitary authority for Buckinghamshire.

The District Councils did not believe that this decision was in the best interests of local residents, businesses, community groups, parish councils and various other stakeholders across the county, based on engagement carried out, it was not believed that it had strong local support.

The Chairman indicated that given his declared interest in item 8 (minute 79) – Handy Cross Hub – Proposed Disposal of Site – he would re-order the agenda taking item 9 (minute 78) – DesBox & HQube Funding first to be followed by Handy Cross Hub for which he would leave the chamber.

## **72 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5 February 2018 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## **73 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor D Barnes declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 (minute 79) Handy Cross Hub – Proposed Disposal of Hotel Site, and withdrew from the chair and chamber during the consideration of this item.

## **74 SLATE MEADOW DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning) presented this report which represented the Development Brief for Slate Meadow, one of the five sites reserved in the Council's Core Strategy 2008 as a location for future development (Policy CS8).

The Development brief featured a considerable number of amendments effected as a result of comments received during the extensive public consultation and liaison group meetings. Where changes had not been made in response to public suggestions, explanations 'why not' were featured.

Members made a number of points and received clarification on a number of queries as follows:

- The Development Brief was being put in place now so that the Council had robust guidance in place before developer applications were received;
- In respect of the Transport Measures 4.7 featured in the Brief and specifically in regards to the Stratford Drive / Brookbank T junction this was currently in fact NOT working over capacity and could cover the traffic movements from up to 200 more housing units;
- The mention of 200 units in respect of this junction did not mean that figure would necessarily be delivered at the site, the Brief (as with all such briefs) did not indicate specific numbers;

- Members expressed concern regards the possible flooding of developed units despite the considerable Environment Agency input to the Brief's development; and
- The fact that precise infrastructure could not be outlined at this stage without the developer contributions being assessed, which would not occur until applications were received and processed.

The Cabinet Member for Planning asked that the amendments in respect of 4.7 be noted and that delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning to proof read the Development Brief before final publication in respect of minor editorial changes and corrections.

The Cabinet Member also placed on record his thanks for the work of officers and the Liaison Group members in delivering this important document.

The following decision was made as land at Slate Meadow was reserved for future development under the Council's Core Strategy. Cabinet has previously agreed that the reserve sites need to be released for development to meet the current development needs of the District, particularly for housing.

The development brief contained detailed planning guidance that would be a material consideration when planning decisions were made on planning applications in this area. The guidance was site specific and therefore more detailed than the current policy framework in the Development Plan. The brief would help co-ordinate future development and the provision of infrastructure. It was therefore important to the quality of the final development to have an up-to-date development brief.

**RESOLVED** That (i) the Slate Meadow Development Brief be adopted as planning guidance for the area, with

(a) The first sentence of Paragraph 4.7 of the Site Development Brief be amended to read:

"The Stratford Drive/Brookbank T-junction currently operates within capacity." and the words "and is likely to require junction improvements" be deleted.

And (b) The second sentence of Paragraph 4.7 of the Site Development Brief be modified to read:

"an assessment in relation to the site access into the site from Stratford Drive was carried out by WYG Transport in 2015 and confirms that the T-junction is suitable to serve 150 units." and

(ii) delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning to tidy the Development Brief before final publication in respect of minor editorial changes and corrections.

It was requested by the Members concerned, that two of the Cabinet Members were to be noted as abstaining from voting in respect of this resolution.

## **75 TERRIERS FARM DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

The report before Cabinet set out the consultation that has taken place in relation to the Terriers Farm Development Brief and provided an assessment of the consultation responses received during the most recent consultation period.

The development brief has been drawn up following extensive work analysing the planning issues and opportunities for future development in this area which was conditionally released as a housing site under policy H2 of the Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 and was reserved for development within the Council's Core Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Planning wished to place on record the skilled chairing of the Liaison Group meetings by Councillor Matt Knight, whilst the options considered and chosen in respect of the two entrances / exits to the site onto the A404 were outlined.

Again Members received clarification on a number of issues:

- Amendments were to be made to the final brief in respect of the landscaping at the boundary of the Ladies Mile and the North / South corridor, establishing this layout of this important green infrastructure ahead of development;
- Strict implementation of the Council's policy in respect of affordable housing within the development would be carried out;
- The history of ownership of the cricket pitch / green space areas and the plans within the brief for these were outlined; and
- Acknowledgement that the Brief represented a balance between the development of much needed housing alongside equal emphasis on the protection of the green infrastructure so loved by residents.

The Cabinet Member for Planning asked that delegated authority again be given to the Head of Planning to proof read the Development Brief before final publication in respect of minor editorial changes and corrections.

Again the Cabinet Member placed on record his thanks for the work of officers and the Liaison Group members in delivering this important document.

The following decision was made as this land at Terriers Farm was reserved for future development under the Council's Core Strategy. Cabinet had previously agreed that the reserve sites needed to be released for development to meet the current development needs of the District, particularly for housing. In this case the Brief not only covered the released reserved site but also additional land considered necessary and appropriate to be included within the brief to secure an appropriate form of development.

The development brief contained detailed planning guidance that would be a material consideration when planning decisions were made on planning applications in this area. The guidance was site specific and therefore more detailed than the current policy framework in the Development Plan. The brief would help co-ordinate future development and the provision of infrastructure. It would therefore be important to the quality of the final development to have in place this up-to-date development brief.

**RESOLVED** That (i) the Terriers Farm Development Brief be adopted as planning guidance for the area with the 2 changes to the paragraphs on Green Infrastructure as presented by the Cabinet Member the precise wording to be delegated to the Head of Planning and Sustainability; and

(ii) delegated authority also be given to the Head of Planning to proof read and amend the Development Brief before final publication in respect of minor editorial changes and corrections.

## **76 PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL POLICY**

The Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy had previously been developed and adopted by the Council, the policy statement in the Report aimed to update the policy and provide options available to assist residents in accordance with local health priorities.

The policy applied to all forms of mandatory and discretionary financial assistance provided by the Council for the purposes of private sector housing renewal. It had regard to the powers and duties set out in the Housing Act 2004, the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and Government guidance issued under this legislation.



The four district Councils in Buckinghamshire had consulted to broadly align discretionary assistance available across the county to reduce variations across Buckinghamshire, whilst maintaining the ability to adapt to local variations and individual cases where necessary.

The Cabinet Member for Housing presenting the Report also mentioned that Wycombe District Council was one of a small handful of councils nationwide flagged up recently by the NHS's Professor Keith Willett, one of England's top urgent care doctors, for introducing successful local initiatives.

Professor Willett used Wycombe District Council's Healthy Homes on Prescription initiative as a good example of a local authority helping frail residents and simultaneously reducing costs to the public purse.

Members were reassured that the scheme was well publicised and directed to would be patients / residents as a matter of course.

The following recommendation was made as Local Authorities had statutory duties to develop appropriate policies to deal with deficiencies in the condition of housing stock in the area. This policy sets out formally, in one policy document, how the Council would use the powers available to it in order to meet these duties.

The Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy had been refreshed following a collaborative project involving the four district Councils with the intention of aligning discretionary financial assistance available across Buckinghamshire

### **Recommendation to Council**

That (i) the Private Sector Housing Renewal policy covering all forms of mandatory and discretionary financial assistance, be adopted by the Council; and

(ii) delegated authority be given to the Head of Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to make minor amendments to the policy.

## **77 2017/18 SERVICE PERFORMANCE: Q3 (OCTOBER – DECEMBER)**

Cabinet received a summary of performance out-turns for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, noting amongst the statistics included the reduction in the number of measurements more than 5% away from target from 19% last year at this point to only 7% this year.

The proposed provision of additional resources by Northgate under their contract to resolve the key exceptions in respect of Housing Benefit / Council Tax Benefit claims and processing changes of circumstances during the next quarter, was noted.

The following decision was made in order to review performance as at 31 December 2017 to ensure that the Council is performing at the appropriate level.

**RESOLVED** that the summary of the year to date service performance out-turns (October – December 2017) be noted.

## **78 DESBOX & HQUBE FUNDING**

Members noted that DesBox was a proposed small studio workspace development, forming part of the Council's Baker Street area renewal initiative. DesBox was approved by Cabinet in July 2017, based on an initial estimate of its cost.

HQube was a proposed small workshop development, forming part of the Council's Hughenden Quarter regeneration scheme. HQube was approved by Cabinet in June 2017, based on a preliminary design and cost.

Detailed project work-up on both designs and their competitive tendering for contractors' prices had resulted in changes to the original appraisals, requiring fresh Cabinet decisions.

The aim was to minimise groundworks. However, building regulations had now caught up with this construction trend which were no longer recognised as 'temporary structures'. This meant that requirements for proper foundations, more insulation and the full impact of fire regulations have increased construction costs. It was also clear that both the DesBox and HQube schemes could not be split into two phases – all the groundworks would have to be constructed in one go (and subsequent stacking of containers onto a partially occupied site was not practical). The financial implications of this were set out in the Confidential Appendix.

The following decisions were made as the earlier assumption that DesBox could be phased had proved to be untenable, whilst the Upper Site residential disposal would be completed after HQube needed to start on site. The decisions maintained the development programme.

**RESOLVED** That (i) the release of the approved capital budget for Phase 1 DesBox and the supplementary estimate and virements as set out in para 3 in the Financial Implications section in the Confidential Appendix subject to the deliverability and confirmation that the value engineering proposed will be acceptable;

(ii) the use of monies already in the Capital Programme to provide interim development finance for HQube, pending cross-financing from the sale of the Upper Site, Bellfield Road for

residential development, as set out in para [ 4 ] in the Financial implications section in the in the Confidential Appendix; and

(iii) delegation be given to the Corporate Director, Head of Finance & Commercial Services and Major Projects Executive and the Cabinet Members for Finance and Economic Development & Regeneration, the authority to enter into construction contracts for DesBox and HQube, as set out in paras [1 & 3] Confidential Appendix.

**Councillor S Broadbent took the chair for this item**

**79 HANDY CROSS HUB - PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF HOTEL SITE**

Members noted that the consented masterplan for Handy X Hub included a 150 bed hotel on the motorway frontage (part of 'Phase 3'). There was currently strong investor/operator interest in the site. The recommendation in the report was in order to capitalise upon this, whilst the economy remained reasonably buoyant, by proceeding with a simple freehold sale.

The following decision was made as there was a need to break up the site ownership whilst the Scheme of Delegation limit was below the indicative level of capital receipt referred to in Para [2] in the Confidential Appendix to the report.

**RESOLVED;** That (i) the freehold interest in the hotel site at Handy X Hub be disposed; and

(ii) delegate authority be given to the Major Projects & Estates Executive, in consultation with the Head of Finance & Commercial Services and their respective Cabinet Members, to agree terms for the disposal and to complete the transaction.

**Councillor D Barnes returned to the chair for this item**

**80 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

Cabinet received the following files on actions taken under delegated powers:

Community	C/07/18 – C/09/18
Economic Development & Regeneration	EDR/01/18
Planning & Sustainability	PS/03/18

**81 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER EXEMPT DELEGATED POWERS**

Cabinet received the following files on exempt actions taken under delegated powers:

Economic Development & Regeneration Sheet Nos: EDR/10/18 - EDR/14/18

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

- Susan Bolter - Corporate Director (Growth & Regeneration)
- Karen Satterford - Chief Executive
- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Peter Druce - Democratic Services
- Penelope Tollitt - Head of Planning & Sustainability

## Standards Committee Minutes

Date: 20 March 2018

Time: 6.00 - 6.55 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor C Etholen (in the Chair)

Councillor K Ahmed, Parish Councillor Mr A Cobden, Councillor A R Green, G Houalla, Councillor R Newman, Nolan and Councillor J A Savage, Councillor A D Collingwood and Councillor H L McCarthy

### 49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from M Clarke, D Carroll and Parish Councillor Mrs H Stearn (Hughenden Parish Council).

### 50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Parish Councillor Nolan declared at Item 9 of the agenda (Minute 57 below) that he was a member of Lane End Parish Council and was aware of the subject matter of the complaint reported in that item.

### 51 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 9 January 2018 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 52 INTIMIDATION IN PUBLIC LIFE – REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE

A report was submitted which requested that a review undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) be noted. The review was available at the link on page 8 of the Agenda.

The report stated that the CSPL published its review on Intimidation in Public Life in December 2017 with its findings and recommendations set out within the review. The recommendations included a variety of provisions, summarised below:

- social media companies taking greater responsibility to remove illegal material appearing on their sites;
- political parties and their leaders exercising a greater duty of care towards candidates members and supporters and taking action to address unacceptable intimidation by demonstrating leadership in accordance with the Nolan Principles;

- the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) should produce accessible guidance for Parliamentary candidates giving clear advice on behaviour they may encounter which could be a criminal offence, and how to react to it;
- Government holding a consultation on a potential new electoral offence of intimidating candidates, and legislate to remove the requirement for local candidates to have their addresses published on ballot papers and for Returning Officers not to have to disclose the home addresses of those attending election counts;
- MPs to co-operate with the Police to address security threats;
- the NPCC to ensure local forces are properly trained to effectively investigate social media offences and work with the CPS to produce guidance on behaviour encountered in campaigning and identify criminal behaviour and act accordingly;
- for all in public life to uphold the highest standards of conduct, refraining from highly personalised attacks and reporting intimidatory behaviour;
- Press regulation bodies to have a code of conduct discouraging unacceptable language likely to incite intimidation and only use stories from journalists who subscribe to the same code; and
- for Council Monitoring Officers to highlight the circumstances in which the law allows certain sensitive information connected with Disclosable Pecuniary Interests to be withheld from publication.

It was noted that the Monitoring Officer had already actioned the final bullet point above by including an article in a recent edition of Members' Update.

The Monitoring Officer stated that the review had been driven by the CSPL's concern regarding intimidation in public life and the perceived threat to representative democracy in the UK. Members were requested to note the CSPL's interest in this issue nationally and that it would follow up progress on implementation of its recommendations.

In considering the report a Member disagreed with the recommendation seeking to change the law to address the issue of how candidate details were published. He felt that it was important for voters to be aware of addresses and to know if the candidates were also local residents. The Monitoring Officer indicated that the CSPL would be aware that a balance needed to be struck between democratic publicity and ensuring safety in public duties and life and that this recommendation was for Government to consider legislation, rather than an immediate change in the law.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

## **53 COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

A report was submitted which asked Members to note that the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee would respond to the forthcoming consultation on Local Government Ethical Standards and that other stakeholders were invited to respond as well if they so wished.

The report stated that in January 2018 the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) published a stakeholder consultation on Local Government Ethical standards, with a response date of 18 May 2018. The range of consultation questions posed (attached at Appendix A of the report) related to such issues as the code of conduct for local Councillors, investigating and decisions on allegations, declaring interests and conflicts of interest, sanctions for Councillor misconduct, whistleblowing, improving standards, and intimidation of local councillors.

The meeting was informed that responses had been invited from local authorities, their Standards Committees, Monitoring Officers, parish and district councillors, Independent Persons and other stakeholders having an understanding and/or interest in local government.

A Member requested that the response to the consultation to be formulated by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee be circulated to the Standards Committee prior to being submitted. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that it would be.

**RESOLVED:** That

(i) the report be noted;

(ii) the final response to the consultation be circulated to the Committee prior to submission.

#### **54    PROTOCOL BETWEEN WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

A report was considered which explained the proposed protocol between WDC and Thames Valley Police (TVP) to be applied to situations where a need may arise for referral of a complaint regarding a Councillor's conduct to the Police, because of a possible offence under the Localism Act 2011.

The draft protocol was attached as an appendix to the report and approval was sought. Monitoring Officers across Buckinghamshire had liaised with TVP and agreed the document in principle.

A Member enquired as to what would have happened if such an eventuality had arisen, in absence of the protocol and was informed that the action taken would have been in line with the proposed protocol.

Another Member expressed concern that the Protocol did not extend far enough, and that in its current form was too narrow and should address instances of all criminal offences, not just Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests.

The Monitoring Officer acknowledged the possibility of instances of other criminal activity arising and confirmed that a wider encompassing protocol would need to be formulated in consultation with the Police.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft protocol be approved.

## **55 INDEPENDENT PERSON APPOINTMENTS**

A report was submitted which sought approval of further steps to recruit to the role of an Independent Person to serve on the Committee following the death of one of the Independent Persons, creating a vacancy which needed to be filled.

Members were informed that the vacancy had been advertised but regrettably no applications for the role had been received. Subsequently the Monitoring Officer had been in contact with colleagues across Buckinghamshire in an attempt to fill the role. Buckinghamshire County Council has also been currently undertaking a recruitment exercise for a single vacancy, with three candidates under consideration and an appointment imminent for the single vacancy. At least one BCC candidate has expressed interest in applying for the Wycombe role.

The Monitoring Officer also noted that whilst the term of office of the existing Independent Person was not time limited he had indicated his willingness to serve for the next 5 years. Once the vacancy had been recruited to, the Council recommendation would also include re-confirmation of his current appointment until May 2023.

It was confirmed that a further report would be presented to the June meeting of this Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That;

- (i) The report be noted;
- (ii) Further steps as set out in the report to recruit to the vacancy be approved.

## **56 ANNUAL REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The Annual Report of the Standards Committee 2017/18 was submitted for approval which was attached as an appendix to the report. Whilst full Council approval was not required, the report would be included within the minutes to be noted by Full Council in the usual way.

The Monitoring Officer informed the meeting that the proposed Annual Report had taken into account the format of the previous annual reports which had been submitted to Council prior to the standards regime being changed in 2012. Annual reports had been discontinued under the replacement provisions enacted by the Localism Act 2011. However, in October 2017 the Standards Committee had followed the recommendation of the Audit Committee that this practice be reinstated in accordance with CIPFA guidance.

Members debated the layout and format of the Standards complaints listed at page 34 of the agenda. One member asked whether it may be advisable to include a reference to the right to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act should the public wish to have more details on an individual complainant/complaint. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that this format was commensurate with that



adopted by most Standards Committees, striking a balance between publishing sufficient information about complaints whilst not divulging any confidential information. Including specific details about FOIA rights in this context could unrealistically raise public expectations that more information would be disclosable on request, when in fact based on the current law it may not be possible to publicly disclose more information about individual complaints. The Monitoring Officer therefore advised against this.

**RESOLVED:** That

- (i) the report be noted;
- (ii) The Annual Report of the Standards Committee to be approved.

## **57 QUARTERLY UPDATE ON STANDARDS COMPLAINTS**

Parish Councillor Mr Nolan declared he was a Lane End Parish Councillor, and was aware of the complaint under consideration.

The quarterly update on standards complaints was considered. This provided an overview of complaints received regarding member conduct since January 2018.

The report stated that since the last report the only outstanding complaint which was then at stage 1 had now been completed as set out in the attached appendix to the report. It was also confirmed that another prospective complaint had been subsequently received, but that the complainant had been advised that as the complaint was substantially on the same issue it would not be taken forward for investigation. Therefore the matter was not pursued any further by the complainant and was not included in the list in the appendix.

At the present time there were no additional outstanding complaints.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

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Chairman

### **The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Iram Malik - Democratic Services Officer  
Julie Openshaw - District Solicitor

# Improvement and Review Commission Minutes

Date: 14 March 2018

Time: 7.00 - 8.12 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor R Gaffney (in the Chair)

Councillors K Ahmed, M C Appleyard, Miss S Brown, H Bull, M E Knight, Mrs W J Mallen, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, J A Savage, C Whitehead and R Wilson, M Hanif and H L McCarthy

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Mrs L M Clarke OBE, C Etholen, A E Hill and R Raja

## **42. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed all Members to the Committee meeting.

He noted that a briefing note had been previously circulated to all members regarding Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The Chairman confirmed that Cllr Julia Langley Cabinet Member for Housing did not need to attend the meeting as this information had been sufficient. A copy of the briefing note would be circulated with the minutes of the meeting for information.

## **43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **44. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Review Commission held on 10 January 2018 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## **45. UPDATE AND DISCUSSION ON THE BUDGET TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Vice-Chairman of the Budget Task and Finish Group, Councillor Alex Collingwood, provided an update on the second phase meeting of the group.

It was reported that due to the timing of the budget that it had not been possible to bring the phase two recommendations to the Commission. These had been reported directly to Cabinet at its meeting on 5 February.

The Vice Chairman of the Budget Task and Finish Group explained that the Group had considered freezing Council Tax however future risks had also been measured.

It was acknowledged that Council Tax would need to be increased to consider the longer term view.

The Chairman of the Commission noted that discussion would be undertaken regarding the timing of the production of the draft budget.

#### **46. UPDATE ON THE RIVER WYE TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Hugh McCarthy provided an update on the status of the Remaking the River Wye Task and Finish Group.

It was reported that the cost of the project would be high however there was the opportunity to obtain external funding from DEFRA to help restore the river. Regarding the environmental impact it was noted that the culverts stopped fish from moving further up the river and being recolonised with fish. If undertaken then remaking the river would be part of the Phase seven masterplan.

An economic assessment was currently being considered and the outcome was expected to delay the final report. This was now expected to be presented to Cabinet in September/October. There was also joint working being undertaken with the Revive the Wye group and the High Wycombe Society to gauge public opinion.

Members made a number of points and received clarification on queries which included the following:

- Establishing the river through the town centre could make amends for previously made planning decisions.
- The District Council would not be undertaking a consultation at this time. However it was noted that it was important to gauge public opinion and an independent group would provide the best approach in this matter.
- It was suggested to use builder sponsorship to help finance the project as done in other towns. It was noted that Sheffield had provided a good example of what could be done to create positive change.
- It would be difficult to balance the economic benefits to justify the expected high financial costs.
- A report would be provided to the Commission in advance of Cabinet so that members could consider the report and provide feedback on the recommendations.
- Pro bono work from the team at Sheffield City Council was being investigated and it was suggested that an officer from Sheffield could provide a presentation to the Commission.
- The existing culverts were now past their 25 year life expectancy and there would be a need to future proof the scheme.

- The River Wye was an important chalk stream and home to brown trout.

The Chairman of the Commission confirmed that the final report from the Remaking the River Wye Task and Finish Group would be brought to the Commission in advance of Cabinet.

#### **47. COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME & CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Chris Whitehead provided an update on the status of the Policing Task and Finish Group. There had so far been two meetings and it was agreed that the brief was to question, 'Is there a problem with anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the district and if so what can we do about it?'

The following points were noted:

- Statistics were required but these had been difficult to obtain.
- At the past two meeting problems had been discussed with Community Service officers at WDC, Environmental Health, and James Boulton from Wycombe Homeless Connection.
- Future meetings would be attended by Superintendent Kevin Brown, Stan Jones Chair of Neighbourhood Action Groups and Red Kite.
- There had been difficulty in contacting the Chief Constable.
- ASB was a broad topic and included various different and complex issues. Due to these complex problems other agencies would be involved. However the Chairman of the TFG noted that this was one of the weaknesses of the system as not all the agencies provided joined up working and no one was ultimately responsible.
- Due to the different agencies involved it was noted that some recommendations may be directed to external bodies.

Councillor Whitehead confirmed that the final report would be presented to the Commission in June or September.

In response to a query it was reported that the TFG were liaising with officers and the Community Safety Partnership arrangements would be considered as part of the investigations and monitoring. Some members of the Commission were concerned at the lack of policing on the streets and the effect on crime and ASB. Councillor Whitehead explained that the TFG were only considering ASB and other problems with crime could be considered another time. It was suggested that the Police Crime Commissioner also be invited to a future meeting, however Councillor Whitehead explained that the Group were speaking to operational officers at this time. It was suggested that there could be a correlation between ASB and mental health issues and Councillor Matt Knight offered to attend a meeting to discuss this aspect if required.

It was noted that the definition of ASB needed to be defined and who was ultimately responsible. Also the Wycombe District Council ASB Policy would need to be actively monitored. It was reported that the level of policing and resource issues would need to be considered as part of the Groups investigations.

The Chairman of the Commission noted that the Task and Finish Group had been undertaken as a result of the Motion at Full Council. He suggested that the Chief Constable and Police Crime Commissioner be invited to attend a TFG meeting. He thanked Councillor Whitehead, the Group and the officers for all their work so far.

**48. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION**

There were no Councillor Calls for Action.

**49. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

There were no supplementary items.

**50. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

**51. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Chairman thanked all the Members, especially his Vice Chairman (Cllr Collingwood) and the officers, for their invaluable support and contribution during the Council year. He confirmed that he and Cllr Collingwood would be standing for election as Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Commission respectively for another term of office.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Jemma Durkan - Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Catherine Whitehead - Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy.

# JNC Staffing Matters Committee Minutes

Date: 22 February 2018

Time: 5.00 - 5.25 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ms K S Wood (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs L M Clarke OBE, R Raja, J A Savage and R Wilson,

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

\* Denotes Standing Deputy

## **LOCAL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

## **APPLICATION**

### **24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **25 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the JNC Staffing Matters Committee be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

### **27 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of minute 5 as it contains exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7, Part 1, Schedule 12A (as amended), more particularly as follows:-

Minute No 28 – Head of Service Recruitment.

Information relating to any individual (Paragraph 1, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972).

[The distress that could be caused to the individual is not commensurate with the benefits of disclosure to the public.]

## 28 HEAD OF SERVICE RECRUITMENT

The Committee considered proposals relating to the recruitment processes for the posts of the Head of Housing and Environment, and Head of Regeneration and Investment.

Members noted the strategic need to recruit to both posts, and supported the Corporate Director's proposals.

The Committee also noted the proposed timetable for the processes.

**RECOMMENDED:** That the Corporate Director (Growth & Regeneration) be authorised to start the process of recruitment for a Head of Housing and Environment, and a Head of Regeneration and Investment on the timescale outlined in paragraph 9 of the report.

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Chairman

### **The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Susan Bolter	- Corporate Director (Growth & Regeneration)
Ian Hunt	- Democratic Services Manager
John McMillan	- Head of HR, ICT & Customer Services
Karen Satterford	- Chief Executive

# Licensing Committee Minutes

Date: 28 March 2018

Time: 7.04 - 8.20 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor A E Hill (in the Chair)

Councillors Ms A Baughan, M Clarke, S Graham, A R Green and N B Marshall.

In attendance: Councillor M Hanif.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: C B Harriss, D Knights, I L McEnnis, R J Scott and A Turner.

## 1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 12 November 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

## 3 REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Members considered the report on the Review of the (Draft) Statement of Licensing Policy and noted it had been five years since the last review. They noted that only a few changes had been suggested most notably that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 had brought changes to the Designated Public Places Order and had now become, as referred to at paragraph 3.11 of the policy, a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) which was currently under review. It was proposed that a power would be created which would prohibit at any time, consumption of alcohol or having an open alcohol container within the restricted area of the town centre. If a person who, without reasonable excuse, continued to drink intoxicating liquor in their possession when asked to stop by a police officer or an authorised person or failed to surrender anything in the person's possession which was believed to be alcohol or a container of alcohol, they would commit an offence under the legislation and was liable, on summary of conviction, to a fine (standard scale £500), or if in receipt of a Fixed Penalty Notice to a penalty of a maximum of £100. The legislation also gave powers to police officers to dispose of any open can of alcohol once it had been surrendered.

The proposed revised PSPO would be subject to a consultation and had to be agreed by Cabinet before it was adopted later in 2018.

Members expressed some concern that this could potentially move the issue to areas out of the town centre, particularly from the Frogmoor area. Concern was raised that people were beginning to congregate in the children's play area behind Desborough Street.



It was noted that PSPO's were just one method of enforcement. Police had powers of dispersal which could be carried out anywhere. Public Order Offences were another method of enforcement. It was noted that pressure should come from people / residents reporting incidents to the police as they had the relevant powers.

It was confirmed that licensed premises would be exempt from any PSPO.

If a premise was found to be selling alcohol either inappropriately or unlawfully, and reported to the WDC Licensing Team, site visits would be carried out to investigate further and for appropriate action to be taken.

It was proposed that the White Cider Initiative, which had generally been very successful, referred to in the policy be amended to create an accreditation for responsible retailers who agreed not to sell super strength alcohol products. This would also include other forms of alcohol than white cider but would exclude craft speciality products. It would be seen as a 'pat on the back' of those adhering to the scheme.

It was noted there had been a number of incidents of illicit alcohol or cigarettes being found on licensed premises which had prompted a number of review applications to be considered. Therefore paragraph 3.13 had been added to the policy to clarify that review applications would be considered in those circumstances and that the sale of unlawful alcohol and cigarettes would be a serious matter.

As a result of compliance checks on the issue of child sexual exploitation carried out at hotels within the district, specific reference to a licence holder's responsibilities had been added at paragraph 3.16.

Some concern was raised in relation to modern day slavery as Members and Licensing Team members had recently received training on this issue. It was noted that this was rare in the taxi industry but that should any suspicions be aroused in relation to modern day slavery, the police should be notified as they were the responsible body to look into any suspicious, reported activity.

Provisions within the Immigration Act 2016 came into force in April 2017 which prohibited premises and personal licences being issued to anyone who did not have the right to live and work in the UK. The Home Secretary (Home Office Immigration) had also become a responsible authority who could comment on licence applications or request licence reviews. These matters were referred to in paragraphs 3.35 to 3.37 and 3.43 to 3.44 of the draft revised Policy. Members suggested that in reference to "Appendix 2 – List of Consultees Section 5 Licensing Act 2005", the following two bodies be added:

Home Office (Immigration)  
Public Health Team, Bucks County Council

It was noted that while the Licensing Team was not required to see original documents in terms of Right to Work, it was rare that forged documents were seen.

It was finally noted that even though it was unusual to be requested to classify films, it had been done in the past and therefore it was proposed to include this within the Scheme of Delegation.

Following some discussion, the following amendments were agreed:

- Paragraph 3.13 should read “...Where illicit goods, such as tobacco, have been found the authority shall consider....”
- Paragraph 3.35 should read “...licences cannot be issued to an individual who does not have permission to work in the UK, or is not entitled to undertake work relating to the carrying on of a licensable activity”.
- Paragraph 7.2; wording should be substituted with – “Any party aggrieved by decisions of the licensing authority may make a written appeal to the Clerk of the Justices, Wycombe and Beaconsfield Magistrates Court, Milton Keynes Magistrates Court, 301 Silbury Boulevard, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK9 2AJ. The procedure on appeals is set out in paragraph 7.3 below.”
- Appendix 2 – List of Consultees Section 5 Licensing Act 2003; the following two bodies should be added –
  - Home Office (Immigration)
  - Public Health Team, Buckinghamshire County Council

With these changes agreed, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the draft policy for the purposes of a consultation exercise.

**RESOLVED:** that the draft policy be subjected to a consultation exercise.

#### **4 TRAINING**

Members received training from Ms Caroline Steven, WDC Licensing Team Leader, Mr Brian Whittall, WDC Licensing Officer and Mrs Kiran Khanna, WDC Principal Solicitor (Licensing).

#### **5 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS (IF ANY)**

There were none.

#### **6 URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**

There were none.

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Chairman

#### **The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

- |                 |   |                                    |
|-----------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Kiran Khanna    | - | Principal Solicitor                |
| Caroline Steven | - | Licensing Team Leader              |
| Brian Whittall  | - | Licensing Officer                  |
| Liz Hornby      | - | Senior Democratic Services Officer |

## Personnel and Development Committee Minutes

Date: 5 March 2018

Time: 6.00 - 6.18 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor M Harris (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs S Adoh, M Hanif, Mrs W J Mallen and S K Raja.

### 26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from G Hall, S Saddique and Mrs J Teesdale.

### 27 MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel & Development Committee held on 4 October 2017 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none

### 29 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018/19

A report was submitted which sought approval of the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2018/19, with a recommendation to Full Council for its endorsement.

The Statement was a summary of the Council's current policies and practices, relevant contractual national and local terms. There was also a statutory requirement to include within the statement the remuneration of its Chief Officers, incorporating such details as pay, fees, allowances, benefits and pension entitlements.

The report stated that this year's statement broadly contained the same information with the relevant pay related updates having been included. These were shown as tracked changes for ease of reference.

Members were informed that the report having just been considered at the Joint Staff Committee prior to this meeting had received the support of those members present, and as such they were content in proceeding with the proposed changes within the updated Pay Policy Statement for the current year.

One Member enquired with regards to paragraph 3.3 of the Policy Statement, which related to the equal pay review which had been undertaken in November 2016. It was confirmed that in the comparison of salaries on a regional basis, Wycombe District Council had fared well, featuring within the upper quartile of the public sector market and around the median of the private sector market. It was also noted that some 10 specific posts where there had been some difficulty in recruiting were selected for benchmarking and salaries were broadly comparable with the comparator median.

Another question was asked as to staff appraisals and as to the actions that could be taken to assist those who had fallen short of meeting their work objectives/expectations. The presenting officer confirmed that in such cases managers would put into place an improvement plan in order to work with the relevant individuals to address the issues. It was also highlighted the Workforce Report which was usually published in the autumn of each year, provided a breakdown of the different assessment ratings.

It was acknowledged that the outcome of the proposed 2% salary increase for 2018 and 2019 was still awaited as the two unions GMB and Unison had rejected the Employer's offer, and that the outcome of a strike ballot would be known after 9 March. A general discussion also took place regarding Modernising Local Government and the possible impact on staff terms and conditions of employment.

Following some debate it was;

**RESOLVED:** That the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2018/2019 be approved.

### **30 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the next meeting take place on Wednesday 20 June 2018 at 6pm.

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Chairman

#### **The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Iram Malik	- Democratic Services Officer
John McMillan	- Head of HR, ICT & Customer Services
Jo Whiteley	- Human Resources Manager (Operations)

# Planning Committee Minutes

Date: 14 February 2018

Time: 6.30 - 9.57 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor P R Turner (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs J A Adey, M Asif, Ms A Baughan, S Graham, C B Harriss, D A Johncock, A Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, Ms C J Oliver, S K Raja, N J B Teesdale, A Turner and C Whitehead.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor: A E Hill.

## LOCAL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor R Scott

## APPLICATION

17/06581/FUL

## 84 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17 January 2018 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman subject to the amendment of two officer's job titles.

## 85 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 86 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**RESOLVED:** that the reports be received and the recommendations contained in the reports, as amended by the update sheet where appropriate, be adopted, subject to any deletions, updates or alterations set out in the minutes below.

## 87 17/05605/FUL - TIMBER YARD, MAIN ROAD, WALTERS ASH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Members voted unanimously in favour of the motion to approve the application.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be approved.

The Committee was addressed by Ms Gloria Leflaive on behalf of the Naphill and Walters Ash Residents Association in objection and Mr Jake Collinge, the agent on behalf of the applicant.

Councillor S Raja did not vote on the item due to joining the meeting during the item.

**88 17/05825/FUL - BUMPERS FARM, ILMER LANE, ILMER, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP27 9RE**

Members noted the further clarification received from the Highway Authority set out in the Update sheet.

Following a full debate, Members voted on the motion to defer the application to allow further discussion with the applicant. This motion was carried.

**RESOLVED:** that the item be deferred to allow officers to request that the applicant:

- a) further investigate alternative access arrangements;
- b) further investigate moving the location of the transformer to a less intrusive location as suggested in the comments of the landscape officer;
- c) investigate the provision of a more immediate and robust landscaping scheme;
- d) provide transformer “noise in service” levels and background noise information, and
- e) to provide photographs or video of the type of vehicles that would be used to bring plant and materials to the site.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor C Harriss, the local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Mr James Butler in objection and Ms Louise Leyland, the agent on behalf of the applicant.

**89 17/06581/FUL - LAND REAR OF 7 HIGH STREET, MARLOW, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, SL7 1AY**

Members noted in the revised response from the Highway Authority that the car parks and town centre on-street bays were now operating at peak capacity. While they concluded that the proposal would not result in a highway safety issue, it would be for the Planning Authority to consider if the under provision of off-street car parking would result in an amenity issue.

Anecdotally Members’ shared experiences of parking in the Marlow Town centre and noted that the car parking situation had been deteriorating over time and that town centre parking was now often at capacity. In response to this it was further noted that the Council had commissioned Parking Matters to undertake a review of parking which would include Marlow. Parking Matters were due to report at the end of April.

Following a full debate, Members voted in favour of the motion to refuse the application.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be refused for the following reason:

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the development would fail to provide adequate on-site parking facilities to cope with predicted demand.

Since the Marlow Parking Review was published in 2016, the provision of additional development in the town had taken public car parking occupancy

over 100% at peak times. The Liston Road public car park opposite was already constantly operating very close to maximum capacity and at maximum capacity at peak times, resulting in queues, delays in vehicles parking and visitors being unable to park. This would further exacerbate this situation resulting in inconvenience to patrons using the car park to access the shopping and other town centre facilities in the immediate vicinity and would consequently impact on the economy of the town.

Alternatively as there was nowhere for displaced parking to be readily accommodated nearby this would be likely to give rise to displaced car parking on the residential streets beyond the town centre; the town centre having controlled short stay on-street parking. This would increase the on-street parking stress which would lead to a loss of residential amenity and inconvenience for local residents and their visitors.

As such the development was contrary to Policies G8 (Detailed Design Guidance and Local Amenity) and T2 (On-Site Parking and Servicing) of the Adopted Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 (as saved, extended and partially replaced); and Policies CS19 (Raising the Quality of Place-Shaping and Design), CS5 (Marlow), CS20 (Transport and Infrastructure) of the Adopted Core Strategy Development Planning Document and the Buckinghamshire Countywide Parking Guidance (adopted Sept 2015).

The Committee was addressed by Councillor R Scott, the local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Martin Blunkell of the Marlow Society in objection.

**90 17/07148/OUT - 8 - 10 WELLINGTON AVENUE, PRINCES RISBOROUGH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP27 9HY**

Members voted in favour of the motion to approve the application.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be approved.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor A Turner, the local Ward Member.

**91 17/07242/FUL - LAND OPPOSITE 14 OLD KILN ROAD, FLACKWELL HEATH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

Members voted in favour of the motion to approve the application.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be approved.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor D Johncock, the local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Parish Councillor Caroline Leonard of the Chepping Wycombe Parish Council in objection and Mr Alan Hooper, the agent on behalf of the applicant.

**92 17/07081/FUL - 32 FENNELS WAY, FLACKWELL HEATH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP10 9BY**

Following a tied vote and the Chairman exercising his Casting Vote, the Committee voted against the motion to refuse permission for the additional two reasons of overdevelopment and parking issues. The Committee then voted unanimously in favour of the motion to refuse the application in line with officer's recommendation.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be refused.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor D Johncock, the local Ward Member.

Councillor M Asif excused himself from the meeting following this item.

**93 17/07500/FUL - CLEMATIS COTTAGE, LOWER ICKNIELD WAY, GREAT KIMBLE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP17 9TX**

Following a motion for deferral which Members voted against, Members then voted in favour of the motion to refuse the application in line with officer's recommendation.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be refused.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor C Harriss, the local Ward Member.

**94 PRE-PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING / INFORMATION SESSION**

The Committee noted there was an error in that the 17 March was quoted as being the next pre-committee training/information session where it should be Wednesday 7 March 2018. They noted that a request had been received from Red Kite to present amended redevelopment proposals for one of their sites in Castlefield and that it would take place on Wednesday 7 March 2018 at 6.00pm in Committee Room 1.

However, it was agreed that should this session be cancelled, then the next Committee meeting would start at 6.30pm.

**95 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS FOR SITE VISITS**

**RESOLVED:** That in the event that it was necessary to arrange site visits on Tuesday 6 March 2018 in respect of the agenda for the meeting on Wednesday 7 March 2018, the following Members be invited to attend with the relevant local Members:

Councillors: Ms A Baughan, S Graham, C B Harriss, D A Johncock, N B Marshall, Mrs C Oliver, N J B Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner and C Whitehead.

**96 DELEGATED ACTION AUTHORISED BY PLANNING ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

The Delegated Actions authorised by the Planning Enforcement Team were noted.

**97 FILE ON ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**



The file on actions taken under delegated authority since the previous meeting was circulated for the Committee's attention.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Mrs L Hornby	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Ms T Krykant	Planning Solicitor
Mr P Miller	Technical Officer
Mr A Nicholson	Development Manager
Ms S Penney	Principal Development Management Officer
Mr C Power	Development Management Team Leader

# Planning Committee Minutes

Date: 7 March 2018

Time: 7.00 - 8.38 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor P R Turner (in the Chair)

Councillors M Asif, Ms A Baughan, S Graham, C B Harriss, A E Hill, D A Johncock, A Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, Ms C J Oliver, S K Raja, N J B Teesdale, A Turner and C Whitehead.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Mrs J A Adey.

## LOCAL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor B Pearce

## APPLICATION

17/08452/FUL

## OBSERVING

Councillor M Hanif

## 98 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 14 February 2018 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 100 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**RESOLVED:** that the reports be received and the recommendations contained in the reports, as amended by the update sheet where appropriate, be adopted, subject to any deletions, updates or alterations set out in the minutes below.

## 101 17/07568/FUL - LAND REAR OF 24 MARKET SQUARE, PRINCES RISBOROUGH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

The Committee voted in favour of the motion to approve the application.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be approved.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor A Turner, the local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Parish Councillor Andy Ball on behalf of the Princes Risborough Town Council in objection and Mr Matthew Maier, the architect on behalf of the applicant.

**102 17/07914/FUL - 90 CRESSEX ROAD, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP12 4TZ**

The Committee voted unanimously in favour of the motion to delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Sustainability to grant planning permission subject to the removal of the front dormer window or to refuse planning permission if this action could not be agreed.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be delegated to the Head of Planning and Sustainability for the reasons give above.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor A Hill, the local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Tariq Bhatti in objection and Mr Fehzan Mehdi, the applicant.

**103 17/08210/FUL - 50 NEW ROAD, TYLERS GREEN, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP10 8DL**

The Committee voted unanimously in favour of the motion to approve the application.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be approved.

The Committee noted the written representation submitted by Councillor Ms K Wood, the local Ward Member.

Councillor C Harriss excused himself from the meeting following this item.

**104 17/08452/FUL - THE SQUIRREL, SQUIRREL LANE, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP12 4RZ**

The Committee voted in favour of the motion to refuse the application for the reasons stated in the main report.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be refused.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor B Pearce, the local Ward Member.

**105 PRE-PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING / INFORMATION SESSION**

The Committee noted that no requests had been received and therefore no pre-Committee training/information session would be held. The Chairman agreed that the next Committee meeting could therefore start at 6.30pm.

**106 DELEGATED ACTION AUTHORISED BY PLANNING ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

The Delegated Actions authorised by the Planning Enforcement Team were noted.

## 107 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS FOR SITE VISITS

**RESOLVED:** That in the event that it was necessary to arrange site visits on Tuesday 3 April 2018 in respect of the agenda for the meeting on Wednesday 4 April 2018, the following Members be invited to attend with the relevant local Members:

Councillors: S Graham, D A Johncock, T Lee, N B Marshall, Mrs C Oliver, N J B Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner and C Whitehead.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Mrs L Hornby	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Mr R Martin	Development Management Team Leader
Mr P Miller	Technical Officer
Mr A Nicholson	Development Manager
Ms S Penney	Principal Development Management Officer

# Agenda Item 16

## **ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER – DELEGATION OF POWERS**

**Officer contact:** Karen Satterford

Matt Rae

DDI: 01494 – 421242

**Wards affected:** All

Email: matt.rae@wycombe.gov.uk

### **PROPOSED DECISION**

That the Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy Services and the Democratic Services Manager be appointed Deputy Electoral Registration Officers (DEROs) and the Constitution be updated accordingly.

### **Executive Summary**

1. The Council's responsibilities for the registration of electors are discharged by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) and in certain circumstances must be carried out by the ERO personally. The Chief Executive is the Council's ERO.
2. The Council can appoint Deputy Electoral Registration Officers (DEROs) who can carry out the powers and duties of the ERO on his/her behalf.
3. ERO's main tasks are to maintain and manage the electoral register, absent voters list and register of overseas electors. In their guidance on Individual Electoral Registration (IER), the Electoral Commission (EC) suggested that it was useful to appoint deputies to undertake ERO functions, such as hearings of registration applications, objections and reviews. The EC further advise that the ERO should ensure that deputy arrangements are in place in case they are unable to act personally.
4. To this end, it is recommended that the Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy Services and the Democratic Services Manager be appointed as Deputy EROs, and the Constitution be amended to reflect this accordingly.

### **Corporate Implications**

5. The Council must appoint an ERO in accordance with section 8(2) (a) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA1983) and under section 52(" of the Act the ERO's powers and duties may be performed by a duly appointed deputy. The local Authorities (Function and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 list section 8(2) of the RPA1983 as one of the functions that are not to be the responsibility of an authority's executive. In accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 the council may delegate its function under section 52(2) of RPA1983 to the ERO.

### **Financial Implications**

6. There are no financial, resource or property implications.

### **Equalities Implications**

7. Improvement of the electoral arrangements of electors.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

8. The arrangements for elections and electoral registration underpin all the Council's activities and priorities.

### **Consultation**

9. No consultation has taken place.

### **Options**

10. The Council is obliged to decide formally whether or not to delegate powers.

### **Conclusions & Next Steps**

11. If the delegation of powers are approved, the deputies will be appointed and the Constitution will be updated accordingly

### **Background Papers**

None.

# COUNCIL SEATING PLAN 2017/2018

		13 C Harriss					
		14 N Teesdale					
		15 M Clarke					
		16 R Wilson					
		17 A D Collingwood					
		18 H Bull					
		19 Mrs J E Teesdale					
		20 R J Scott					
			42 Mrs C Oliver				
			43 R Newman				
			44 D A C Shakespeare				
			45 C Whitehead				
			46 H McCarthy				
12 Maz Hussain	41 N Marshall				47 T Lee	21 Mrs L Clarke OBE	
11 A Hussain JP	40 I L McEnnis				48 B Pearce	22 J A Savage	
10 D A Johncock	39 Mrs G A Jones				49 R Farmer	23 P A Turner	
9 Mrs J D Langley	38 Mrs W J Mallen				50 M E Knight	24 A E Hill	
8 Mrs J A Adey	37 M Davy				51 Ms A Baughan	25 C Etholen	
7 G Peart	36 A Turner				52 Ms J Wassell	26 M Harris	
6 D H G Barnes	35 Mrs S Adoh				53 M Abdullah Hashmi	27 M Appleyard	
5 Miss K S Wood	34 G Hall				54 M Asif	28 S K Raja	
4 D M Watson	33 M Hussain JP				55 M Hanif	29 R H Gaffney	
3 S Broadbent	32 Z Ahmed				56 K Ahmed		
2 L Wood	31 S Saddique				57 Rafiq Raja		
1 D J Carroll	30 D Knights				58 S Graham		

59	60
DSO	Councillor Miss S Brown
DS Manager	Vice-Chairman
Chief Executive	Councillor A R Green
Chairman	Corporate Director