



Cabinet agenda

Date: Tuesday 12 July 2022

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: The Oculus, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury HP19 8FF

Membership:

M Tett (Leader), Cllr A Macpherson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing), G Williams (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment), S Bowles (Cabinet Member for Communities), S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Transport), J Chilver (Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources), A Cranmer (Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services), C Harriss (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure), P Strachan (Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration) and M Winn (Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Regulatory Services)

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Agenda Item

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1 Apologies

2 Minutes

5 - 26

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2022.

3 Declarations of interest

4 Hot Topics

5 Question Time

Question from Councillor Robin Stuchbury to Councillor Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration and Councillor Steven Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport

As part of the Buckingham Transport Strategy and the A421 Corridor, Buckingham Town Council will be starting the process of developing and updating the neighbourhood plan in line with current development plans. Will the Council and the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration be consulting and working in partnership with the Town Council at the earliest opportunity on a feasible route for the A421 Corridor sharing detailed advice bearing in mind previous historical discussions relating to the A421 & A413 Roundabout and the Council's legal obligations including carrying out site visits and ensuring the needs of local residents will be taken into account ?

Question from Councillor Susan Morgan to Councillor Chilver, Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources and Councillor Tett, Leader of the Council

"The Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee on 5 July referred this matter back to Cabinet to consider the results of the public consultation before any decision was confirmed. In my opinion, the consultation itself was flawed. Only a small boundary of houses surrounding the Bucks CC Sports and Social Club were asked to take part in the public consultation and yet, residents from a much wider area are affected by this decision. It's noted in the report that while Stoke Mandeville Parish Council were consulted they have yet to make a legal and formal decision in support/against development on this land. In the emerging Stoke Mandeville Neighbourhood Plan this site is listed as Local Green Space and for the first 2 years after closure residents were allowed to access this space until it was fenced off in March 2020. However, the Leader stated at the last Cabinet meeting that this land was not, nor had ever been, public open space. Cabinet should make sure that this land is formally changed in the emerging Stoke Mandeville Neighbourhood Plan before making a decision or this will hugely affect any planning decision.

Cabinet is requested to consider a proposal given to residents by Stoke

Mandeville Parish Council at their last meeting, to come up with a new business plan by September, incorporating the additional 700 houses that have been built since the club closed, and delay any decision on this land until October 2022 to give the residents an opportunity to either prove or disprove whether this is a viable option? This would also give the Cabinet Member time to complete a more detailed comprehensive public consultation.”

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14	Proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club Land This item is subject to a decision of the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee and will only be required if Cabinet needs to consider recommendations following a call-in request.	243 - 282
15	Highways Term Maintenance Contract - Award	283 - 290
16	Exclusion of the public (if required) To resolve that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act. Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	
17	Confidential appendix - Proposed residential development at the site of the former BCC Sports and Social Club land	291 - 294

- 18** **Confidential appendix for Highways Term Maintenance Contract** **295 - 306**
- 19** **Date of next meeting**
13 September 2022 at 10am

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Cabinet minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday 7 June 2022 in The Oculus, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury HP19 8FF, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 12.10 pm.

Members present

M Tett, Cllr A Macpherson, G Williams, S Bowles, S Broadbent, J Chilver, A Cranmer, C Harriss, M Winn and G Hall

Others in attendance

P Drayton, D King, R Matthews, R Stuchbury, S Wilson and S Morgan

Apologies

P Strachan

Agenda Item

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor P Strachan.

2 Minutes RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2022 be approved as a correct record.

3 Declarations of interest

There were none.

4 Hot Topics

The following topics were raised:

Leader

The Leader referred to the recent Platinum Jubilee weekend where a hundred street parties were held in Buckinghamshire and the Council had waived the fee for temporary road closures. In addition activity packs had been sent out to schools and care homes, 60 events had been organized by libraries and a schools competition had been held for the best platinum jubilee cake which had been judged by Lorraine

Kelly (ambassador for Bucks Swans) and the Chief Executive.

Reference was made to the cost of living crisis including pressures on energy prices from the Ukrainian war. The Government had announced a raft of measures to help with this. In September there would be a one-off disability cost of living payment of £150 to people claiming disability benefits like Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and pensioners would get £300. Households in council tax bands A to D should receive a £150 rebate and the Council was also supporting some households in Bands E to H who were income poor. Energy customers would also receive a £400 grant from October 2022. The government would be giving a £650 one-off payment for those households on means-tested benefits. An additional £2.4 million had also been given through the Household Support Grant which the Helping Hands Team were distributing as quickly as possible and providing support to residents.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change

The Cabinet Member apologised to residents about missed bins, issues with reporting problems with unacceptable call centre waiting times and then no follow up collections in the South of Buckinghamshire. Veolia, inherited from the previous contractors, unbalanced and long rounds that made it difficult to rectify misses and blocked roads leading to higher than expected missed bins over the last year and a half. During May 2022, the introduction of the new rounds had seen a change of bin collection day for 90% of residents. The Council were aware that these changes would and were causing some disruption as residents and crews got used to the new arrangements. One issue was that the previous contractor had not passed on intelligence to new crews with more complicated collections such as narrow roads, blocks of flats, premises with security codes. To mitigate the forecast impacts of the round reorganisation Veolia were currently operating with 30% more drivers and loaders than business as usual, building extra resilience to support crews if required. This 30% figure includes 6 additional vehicles and crews dedicated to supporting the new rounds and collecting any outstanding work and reported missed collections. The Cabinet Member thanked staff for working so hard over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources

In relation to the above waste issue the Cabinet Member reported that a further six call handlers were taking Southern Waste calls in the Customer Service Centre and a further four in the Waste Team for escalated cases. However due to the high volume of calls and their complexity the wait times were in excess of what the Council expected, which was due to the failure from Veolia to rectify multiple missed misses. Senior Management and back office teams were also assisting with call taking to help address the spike in calls. The Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Finance reported that they had double the amount of calls each day which combined with a peak in calls regarding revenue and benefits relating to rebates and council tax bills. Further improvements would be looked at including using webchat and other technologies.

Cabinet Member for Transport

The Cabinet Member referred to the Emerald way route which formed the wider Buckinghamshire Greenway walking and cycling route from Brackley to the Colne Valley. To tie in with and commemorate the upcoming Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the cycleway would be rebranded the Platinum Way. The proposed scheme would provide an upgraded route along Rabans Lane, through Fairford Leys and into the Town Centre, which would be more in keeping with Aylesbury Garden Town aspirations. The proposed route would pass through Somerville Park, providing a more attractive traffic-free option to Fowler Road. In some areas, works such as dropped kerbs could be required as well as improved and additional crossings. The routing would include quieter roads and the planting of additional trees and shrubs to create a welcoming and greener route. There would be some footway widening and improved wayfinding signage as well as additional lining. The Cabinet Member thanked Chiltern Rangers and local communities for the planting of 1000 bulbs which would be undertaken during National Tree Week in the Autumn.

Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services

The Cabinet reported that of 500 children in care in Buckinghamshire, 200 were in foster care with 125 carers. However, Buckinghamshire Council was always identifying opportunities to recruit more foster carers particularly since covid where some carers no longer provided foster care support.

Cabinet Member for Communities

Following the recent half term break the Council had administered 12500 vouchers to eligible pupils including Ukrainian and Afghan families. With regard to community safety Operation Sceptre had taken place to help reduce knife crime in the Thames Valley through community engagement events with amnesty bins in Aylesbury and High Wycombe. The Cabinet Member also mentioned that Heart of Bucks offered grants to help reduce crime and disorder. Credit was paid to Service Director Claire Hawkes and her team and Councillor Mark Winn for their work on settling Ukrainian families in Buckinghamshire. Community Boards were also helping settle families and some Boards (Aylesbury, Haddenham and Waddesdon, Wendover and Villages and Wing and Ivinghoe) had set up a friends and family hub on 19th May. The Leader reported that Buckinghamshire was the best Council in terms of matching hosts with refugees and he thanked residents for all their help and support.

Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Regulatory Services

The Cabinet Member reported that a new hostel called Bridge Court in Desborough Road, High Wycombe was now finished and comprised 58 one-bed modular apartments. The opening would take place in September/October and in the meantime staff training would take place as well as putting white goods into the apartments. The Cabinet Member also thanked Environmental Health for all their checks carried out for the settlement of Ukrainian families.

Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

The leisure centres were now back to full capacity since the pandemic.

5 Question Time

Question from Councillor Stuart Wilson to Councillor Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

“Application of Legacy Authority Planning Policies to Former Wycombe Area for Little Marlow Lakes Country Park and Burnham Beeches SAC SPD

Natural England have given late consent to the Slate Meadow Reserved Matters planning application (21/07006/REM) to mitigate Burnham Beeches SAC recreational impacts through a payment due under the Burnham Beeches SAC Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SAMMS), November 2020. This contravenes the application of the SAMMS policy which clearly states: **“This Supplementary Planning Document solely applies to the south and east planning areas of Buckinghamshire Council. Whilst the 5.6km zone... takes in part of the western area of Buckinghamshire, the Wycombe Local Plan has its own mitigation strategy for growth in the western planning area. [Paragraph 1.2.1] It does not apply to the former Wycombe District Council area which now forms part of Buckinghamshire Council. This is because the former council agreed its own avoidance and mitigation measures with the government’s conservation advisors”. [Paragraph 2.2.6]**

Can the Cabinet Member categorically confirm today that:

- a) the Burnham Beeches SAC SAMMS SPD does not apply in any way to development sites in the former Wycombe Area in accordance with recent mandatory planning training on legacy Local Plan policies?
- b) that Planning Officers have not and will not seek to apply this specific SAMMS SPD to development sites in the former Wycombe Area?
- c) that Natural England will be advised by Planning Officers to withdraw their consent immediately to the Slate Meadow 21/07006/REM application until such time this may be given or refused in accordance with the relevant Wycombe Local Plan policies and its own previously stated preferences?
- d) that the long overdue report on Little Marlow Lakes Country Park will be presented to the next Cabinet meeting on July 12th, 2022?

RESPONSE from Councillor Strachan (provided at the meeting by Councillor G Hall)

- a) Habitats Regulations Assessment needs to consider the most up to date evidence at each stage of decision making. Whilst the Burnham Beeches Supplementary Planning Document [BB SPD] expressly does not apply to the Wycombe (west) area, that does not prevent contributions towards the Burnham Beeches Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy [BB SAMMS] being secured in relation to planning applications in the Wycombe (west) area.

All that it means is that the council cannot use the BB SPD as *justification* for the contribution. Nothing in the BB SPD seeks to preclude a contribution

from other parts of the council's administrative area. Instead, the BB SPD is merely making clear which areas its supplementary planning *guidance* applies to.

The council's appropriate assessment identifies the need for mitigation and there is no reason why the council cannot (irrespective of the BB SPD) conclude that a contribution towards the BB SAMMS would constitute appropriate mitigation. In particular, the Council is obliged to take into account any change of circumstances since the BB SPD was prepared. Given that all the funding for the BB SAMMS has not been secured (as a result of the withdrawn Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan), it can properly be said that a contribution to the BB SAMMS from a planning permission in the Wycombe (west) area would deliver mitigation.

- b) The council as competent authority for the Habitats and Species Regulations has a duty to protect such designated habitats and species. Habitats Regulations Assessment relies on the most up to date evidence. Outline permission 18/05597/OUT was granted 27 June 2019 and the BB SPD was adopted on 22 November 2020.

Policy BE1g of the Wycombe Local Plan requires Slate Meadow to:

BE1g) *Mitigate recreational impacts at Burnham Beeches SAC.*

Fulfilling policy BE1g policy, BB SAMMS is capable of mitigating the recreational impacts of Slate Meadow and is correct do so as set out in my answer to question 1. The weight to be attached to specific mitigation proposed for sites in the former Wycombe area will be a matter for planning committee when considering all of the evidence.

- c) Natural England is the government's advisor for the natural environment and is a statutory consultee of this council as competent authority for the Habitats regulations. Its consideration of the application for Slate Meadow 21/07006/REM, is wholly at its discretion and cannot be restrained or restricted by the council.
- d) As has previously been indicated in earlier responses, a paper is currently being prepared for Cabinet's consideration to explore the appropriate next steps for Little Marlow Lakes Country. There are a number of technicalities which must be considered before presenting a report to Cabinet so whilst I am not in a position to guarantee a report in July, I can assure Cllr Wilson that all best endeavours are being used to report as soon as possible.

Question from Councillor Robin Stuchbury to Councillor Peter Strachan, Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

"Buckinghamshire Local Plan

At the Council meeting on 27 April 2022, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration (Councillor G Williams at that time) informed Members that they would have the opportunity to be involved with the oversight of the Local Plan, which would include Member briefings and scrutiny and oversight from the cross party Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee.

Could the Cabinet Member please advise whether a separate cross party Working Group, standing Committee or Local Plan Select Committee will be established to enable the wider membership of the Buckinghamshire Council, including local Councillors, to question key and important elements of the development plan as it is being developed?"

RESPONSE from Councillor Strachan (provided at the meeting by Councillor G Hall)

"At present we have an active Local Plan Member Working Group which meets quarterly where key issues and topics are considered and discussed and appropriate direction given to officers on particular and relevant subjects. Whilst we have no intention at this stage to alter the Working Group membership, we welcome involvement in the Local Plan from the wider group of Buckinghamshire Council Members. In order to continue to allow suitable scrutiny of the progress (or preparation) of the Local Plan we will continue to bring regular papers to the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee whereby members of that committee and other members will have the opportunity to consider and question the Local Plan progress. In addition we held 'all-councillor' briefings on the Local Plan in autumn 2020 and we will consider, as part of the local plan preparation, holding similar events open to all members as work on the plan progresses."

Question from Councillor Penny Drayton to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

"New Household Waste Collection Service

Since the change of contracts for waste services at the start of May 2022 there have been a huge number of complaints from residents across the whole of the South of the County. This includes missed collections, issues with not being able to report problems, automated responses and no follow up collections. Some residents have reported not having had a collection since the new contract began.

Could the Cabinet Member please advise what is being done to resolve these issues and ensure they do not continue? I would be grateful if the answer could include: an explanation of why bin collections are being missed, what assurances can we offer residents, and how they can raise the issue if their collection is missed to ensure that the data received is correct? There needs to be accountability."

RESPONSE from Councillor Williams

The contract with Veolia commenced in September 2020 in the former Chiltern and Wycombe area, then, in November 2021 the former South Bucks area joined to create a contract covering the entire South of Buckinghamshire.

Veolia, inherited from the previous contractors, unbalanced and long rounds that made it difficult to rectify misses and blocked roads leading to higher than expected missed bins over the last year and a half. The current changes to bin collection rounds in the former Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks district areas are vital to rebalance and make the rounds more efficient and sustainable going forward, they are also contractually required.

During May 2022, the introduction of the new rounds have seen a day change for 90% of residents. We knew that these bin collection changes would and are causing some disruption as residents and crews get used to the new bin collection days. However, the benefits that the new collection rounds will bring to the service far out way the short-term issues and pain that we are unfortunately seeing.

To mitigate the forecast impacts of the round reorganisation Veolia are currently operating with 30% more drivers and loaders than business as usual, building extra resilience to support crews if required. This 30% figure includes 6 additional vehicles and crews dedicated to supporting the new rounds and collecting any outstanding work and reported missed collections.

We also knew that there would be more calls coming into the customer contact centre so have deployed a further six additional call handlers taking Southern Waste calls in the Customer Service Centre and a further four in the Waste team for escalated cases. However due to the high volume of calls and their complexity the wait times are in excess of what we expected, which is due to the failure from Veolia to rectify multiple missed misses.

CSC teams are doing a sterling job under some extremely challenging circumstances trying to resolve increasingly very frustrated customers, which is impacting on their morale.

However, to mitigate against the huge volume of calls coming into the CSC we have:

- Senior Management and back-office teams assisting with call taking to deal with spikes in call volumes.
- Improvements to the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) to play position in queue for customers.
- Improved call insight - The progress chasing data is now provided monthly by Service/Topic to all Customer Service Account Managers and service areas reps, and this helps to drive improvements.
- Targeted messages on IVR to manage demand and expectation.
- CSC staff has been offered toil and overtime to assist out of hours with Contact us Forms

- Call back facility offered in queue
- Webchat deployed on waste pages to assist customers online

For a change of this scale, we knew that over the first 2 to 3 weeks there would be a large number of missed bins due to new crews servicing unfamiliar rounds, especially unrural and semi-rural settings, where collection points are not as straight forward as urban areas. The missed bin numbers set out below show that happened, but improvements are now starting to happen with fewer missed bins and I expect these improvement to continue week on week.

Unfortunately, there are still several examples where Veolia crews are not learning from their previous errors and there are pockets of significant disruption leading to residents having more than one missed bin and no waste collected for a couple of weeks. This is not acceptable, and we are working closely with Veolia on a daily basis to strongly contract manage the situation and ensure that they continue to drive improved performance from their crews. To mitigate these very unfortunate cases the additional support vehicles are being deployed to clear these missed misses and our Waste Team are doing an excellent job of coordinating the reports that are coming in directly from residents via the website, call centre and councillors. I apologise to those residents that have and are experiencing multiple missed bins and I can assure them that we are doing everything we can to ensure that Veolia don't let these happen again.

Missed Bin Statistics

- Pre-Round re-org - 436
- Week 1 Re-org - 2198
- Week 2 Re-org - 3611
- Week 3 Re-org - 1680
- Week 4 Re-org – 1105 (projected – update prior to submission) only 3 days

The preferred way for residents to report a missed bin is via the Council website, which needs to be done within 24 hours, as the missed bin reports directly link into the Veolia collection system. The rounds have been designed so that the next day's work is geographically adjacent to the previous day's work, which allows for greater efficiency and for the crew that missed any bins to rectify and then 'learn' the miss for the next week.

So, when a report is completed within the 24 hour period, over 50% of missed bins are corrected on the same day or by the next day and the majority of the other reported misses collected within 2 days. It is very much "the earlier the better" in terms of reporting missed collections.

Although the level of missed bins is higher than we would expect under BAU conditions, we are assured by Veolia that they are working hard to continue to improve the collection rounds so that missed bins dramatically reduce and residents can experience excellent service standards.

6 Forward Plan (28 Day Notice)

The Leader introduced the Forward Plan and commended it to all Members of the Council and the public, as a document that gave forewarning of what Cabinet would be discussing at forthcoming meetings.

RESOLVED –

That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.

7 Harmonisation of Strategies, Policies and Charges

Following vesting day the new Council had inherited a significant number of statutory duties, together with the five former Council's existing strategies, policies, plans, reviews, schemes and statements. These were key to service delivery or to provide clarity to residents, Members, staff or other stakeholders by outlining what the Council would do, how and why.

The Government's transitional regulations stipulated three key dates by which 15 of the new council's statutory policies had to be harmonised and implemented by 1 April 2022, although the Homelessness Strategy had not been agreed until 27 April 2022. These were detailed in Appendix A to the Cabinet report together with the statutory deadline set for harmonisation. All other policies including any statutory ones not listed in Appendix A continued to have effect (over the geographical area they previously applied) as if made by Buckinghamshire Council, until they are substituted/replaced.

There were no timescales set by the regulations for the new Council to prepare substitutes/replacements for these. For these policies the council was left to consider the practical impacts on the delivery of services if policies were not harmonised and existing statutory plans continue, although there was also a need to consider whether these existing arrangements complied with any specific legislative requirements of that service.

The Cabinet report also included information:

- on the 50 strategies and policies that had been harmonised (Appendix B).
- that work was progressing on the local plan development documents under Section 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which was on track to be harmonised by 1 April 2025.
- on work being done to harmonise fees and charges. Although there was no blanket obligation to do so, legal advice received during the transition had stated the Council should consider if the differential area charges for the same or similar service could pose a reputational and legal risk of residents raising lawsuits especially if there was a prolonged continuation of differential charges after vesting day. Some charges would remain different if there were specific and valid reasons, for example, the council cemeteries operated differently with different arrangements in place for the services that were provided.
- at Appendix C on fees and charges yet to be harmonised and the current

- expected timescales for harmonisation, where this was known.
- at Appendix D on a further 70 strategies and policies the council was planning to harmonise or update by April 2023.

The Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Regulatory Services reported that the body piercing and skin colouring report would be split into two reports; one fees and charges and the second one adoption of byelaws, the latter would need to be agreed at Full Council in September 2022. The report relating to stray dogs and pest control would now be taken as a Leader report. Cabinet Members thanked officers for the work undertaken to harmonise policies.

RESOLVED –

That the strategies, policies, and charges that have been harmonised since 1 April 2020, and those expected to be reviewed before April 2023, be NOTED.

8 Buckinghamshire Electric Vehicle (EV) Action Plan 2022-27

Transportation currently contributed 51% of carbon emissions in Buckinghamshire, with 65% of these generated by cars. The uptake of EVs in Buckinghamshire was higher than the national average (0.9% of population owned an EV, versus 0.6%), reflecting the relative affluence of the population, and was shown in Appendix 1.

The Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan 20203 included ambitious targets for phasing out internal combustion engines across various vehicle types including buses, taxis and fleet. The most challenging being the banning of the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030, vans by 2035, and HGVs by 2040.

In light of the Government's targets a draft Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Strategy had been produced for the Council by consultants Jacobs in 2020. However, progress on adoption of the strategy had been delayed due to the COVID pandemic. To reflect rapid changes in the EV market, and in order to extend the scope of the original strategy to include buses and the Council's vehicles in line with the Council's adopted Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy 2021, an update to the work had been commissioned as the previous work undertaken had been very technical. That original work would be maintained as a standalone background research document known as the 'Electric Vehicle Study 2022'.

A shorter 'EV Action Plan' had been developed from the evidence in the Study, as well as input from Council officers, feedback from Members, and assistance from the Energy Saving Trust who administer the multiple government EV charge point funding streams.

The Study and Action Plan were considered key in supporting the continued uptake in EVs across Buckinghamshire and the delivery of key targets in Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy 2021.

The Cabinet report also included information on the Action Plan's objectives, short

term actions/objectives (to 2024/25) and on medium term actions/objectives (to 2025/27). In the short term it was intended to double the number of EV charging spaces across Buckinghamshire, compared to February 2022 (this would equate to 175 new parking bays by 2023/4), focusing on coverage in areas currently without access to a charge point. In the medium term it was intended to continue to provide and extend a high quality, efficient and comprehensive publicly available EV charging network across the council area, and to support the delivery of 1000 charging spaces across Buckinghamshire by 2027. The Cabinet Member referred to feedback from the Energy Savings Trust who provided feedback to Councils on action plans who had commented that the target was realistic and achievable. The Council had agreed a new capital funding allocation of £200k per annum for four years. There were further funding opportunities from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) to provide innovative trials for on street charging. Other technologies were also being looked at such as hydrogen.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change reported that providing the right infrastructure for electric vehicles was critical to achieving the carbon neutrality target for 2050 and reducing vehicle emissions and improving air quality.

The Leader asked about the infrastructure for rural areas and the Cabinet Member responded that they would work with town and parish councils to look at innovative ideas and also to increase provision of home charging. One of the aspects of the LEVI bid was to look at terraces that had no off street parking and looking at cable gullies in pavements and wireless charging through lampposts or street bollards. At home charging would also be addressed through the Local Plan. In the last Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan all new developments would have to have charging points (10 houses) and car parks would need to provide charging points. Storage would also be a factor.

The Leader asked another question about cars overstaying in electric vehicle charging spaces and using them as a parking facility. The Cabinet Member referred to a penalty charge if cars overstayed.

In answer to a question regarding electricity generation the Council's energy from waste plant provided a considerable amount of energy. Reference was also made to the fact that some charging points may also have solar panels as well.

RESOLVED –

That the Buckinghamshire Council's Electric Vehicle Action Plan (EVAP) 2022-2027 be ADOPTED.

9 Budget Monitoring Outturn 2021/22

Cabinet received a report that set out the Revenue and Capital outturn position for Buckinghamshire Council for the financial year 2021/22. This would be subject to external audit and to continued pre-audit quality checks. Portfolio revenue and capital entries had been concluded, although work was ongoing to quality assure the final position. It was anticipated that any movements would be offset by corresponding use of reserves.

The Revenue outturn position for 2021/22 was a favourable variance of £2.2m, 0.5% of Portfolio budgets. This was an improved position from the Quarter 3 forecast, where a favourable variance of £0.9m (0.2%) had been forecast. The main drivers for this increase in favourable variance were:

- (i) an improved position in the Health and Wellbeing portfolio of £0.8m, due to £0.5m additional clawbacks of Direct Payments following successful migration of providers, and £0.3m from maximisation of Covid-19 grants, in particular the workforce and retention grant.
- (ii) An improved position in the Finance, Resources, Property & Asset portfolio with efficiencies realised in travelling expenses and webcasting costs, plus an increase in legal costs recovered.

On 29 March 2022, Cabinet had approved the principle of transferring unused contingency budgets at year end to an earmarked reserve to help mitigate heightening risks around inflation from global, political and economic turbulence, the potential impact of future funding reform, reform of Adult Social Care and the ongoing effect of Covid-19. The forecast at that time was that £6.2m of contingency budgets would not be required. However, a further £1.5m had been held back in order to mitigate any further risks that might arise during the final quarter. These potential pressures had been managed within the Portfolios and so a further £1.5m was now available to transfer to the proposed new earmarked reserve.

The overall favourable variance of £2.2m was also proposed to be transferred to the reserve, giving a total of £9.9m. This would considerably help to address the increased financial risks and pressures already being experienced within 2022/23, whilst also providing an opportunity to review the robustness of all budgets from 2023/24 onwards as part of the Medium Term Financial Planning process.

Inflation was a key risk for the Council at the current time and the Cabinet report contained detailed information on how this would impact on the Council, with upward pressure on wages, pressures within the supply chain for particularly housing/property costs and transport costs, risks that suppliers could withdraw from contracts in areas such as Client Transport and Home Care. Construction inflation was especially concerning as it was currently running at 20% and would affect the Council's capital programme with increased cost of delivery of capital schemes; which in turn would impact on the level of future financial borrowing required and on revenue budgets in terms of interest payable. In addition, budgets such as repairs and maintenance expenditure would be impacted by an increase in raw material costs.

Although it was anticipated that the exceptionally high inflation rates would be temporary, HM Treasury estimates for financial year 2023 were still very broad, ranging from 1% to 6.4%. For each 1% change in inflation, the estimated cost was £4.6m annually in revenue and £5.2m across the 4 year capital programme. Although the revenue budgets for 2022/23 contained some contingencies that would provide an element of mitigation, a prudent provision for risk at outturn was recommended.

The Appendix provides further detail for each Portfolio and information about performance relating to overdue debts and late payments of commercial debt.

£13.2m of savings were incorporated into the approved 2021-22 Revenue budgets. The table below shows performance against those targets. Overall there had been a shortfall of £0.5m (£0.5m Q3) which had been fully considered and taken into account when approving the 2022/23 budget.

The final outturn position on capital slippage was £18.7m that was 9.5% of budgets. This was an improved position from the Q3 forecast of £22.5m (11.7%) and brought the outturn to within the Council's target of 10% of budgets. Focus would remain on challenging the robustness of capital budgets, and as part of the MTFP process, the profile of capital expenditure would be reviewed to ensure that realistic budgets based on achievable timescales were set. Further details for each portfolio were at **Appendix 1**.

The Leader referred to the unused contingencies which the Council no longer required and also commented that the underspend could be used to offset new pressures for this financial year. He also welcomed the £12.8 million savings which had been achieved through efficiencies.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the outturn for the financial year 2021/22 and the associated risks and opportunities, be NOTED.**
- (2) That the transfer of £9.9m arising from the unused contingencies (£7.7m) and a favourable outturn variance (£2.2m) to earmarked reserve be APPROVED, to mitigate heightening risks around the financial implications associated with increased inflationary pressures, global turbulence, Local Government Finance reform and Adult Social Care reforms.**
- (3) That the carry-forward of slippage on capital schemes where budget is required on approved capital projects in future financial years be APPROVED.**

10 Q4 Performance Report 2021-22

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources, Property and Assets introduced the report which comprised the following two items:

- The performance report, which provided details of the key performance measures reported through the corporate performance framework for 2021/22. The report also includes several indicators without targets for this year, that were being monitored to establish a baseline level of performance and monitor trends. Commentary was provided for each indicator explaining what was being measured, explaining the narrative behind each outturn and detailing improvement actions.
- The performance scorecard, which provided information on four key elements of performance for the Council covering Finance, Customer Service, Performance and Human Resources indicators. These were arranged in four

quadrants.

Within the performance report and performance scorecard, outturns that were performing at or better than target were classified as Green, those which are within 5% of the target are Amber and those which are more than 5% of the target are Red. At the end of Quarter 4, 93 indicators had outturns reported with a Red, Amber or Green status. Of these, 66 were Green (71%), 7 were Amber (8%) and 20 were Red (22%). This compared to Quarter 3 where 62 are Green (69%), 12 are Amber (13%) and 16 are Red (18%).

Cabinet Members then provided comprehensive explanations for the performance marked as red where performance was more than 5% off the target for each of their portfolio's, these were as follows:

Leader

- **Unemployment Claimant Rate** – The indicator compared the Buckinghamshire Claimant Rate with the National Claimant Rate of those claiming 'out-of-work' benefits as a proportion of the working age population. Pre-Covid-19, Buckinghamshire's Claimant Rate tracked at 55% of the National Rate and this had been set as the target for this measure. Buckinghamshire's Claimant Count Rate was 2.9%, which was lower than the National Claimant Count Rate of 4.3%. This equated to 67% of the national rate but was above the 55% target. Buckinghamshire's claimant count rate was one of the lowest in the country (7th lowest of all 38 LEP areas), however, the Wycombe Parliamentary Constituency area had a rate that exceeds the national average (4.4%). The report included information on the initiatives underway (both nationally led and locally led) to help move people off the claimant count and into work. There was a shortage of labour at the moment in particular social workers and planners for local government, film industry and the hospitality sector.

Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment

- **% of waste collected for recycling, reuse, composting or anaerobic digestion from household sources (household collection and Household Recycling Centres)** – target of 60% against a current value of 44.12%. Performance for Q3 2021/22 showed a drop from Q2 and was lower than the same period in 2020/21. This was due to a marked drop in organic material (food waste) sent for anaerobic digestion or composting affecting Q2-3, due to disruptions to kerbside collections arising from driver shortages. While Buckinghamshire's performance had fallen and was below the South East average (46%), it remained above the England average (42.3%). Q4 outturns (not yet validated) were projected to be much improved at around 53%.
- **Percentage of Missed Bin Collections** – the current figure was value 0.24%, which was up on previous quarters and above the target of 0.15%. The upturn in missed collections was related to an increase in unplanned staff absence amongst the South team (Veolia) due to Covid-19 during January, which resulted in delayed and incomplete rounds. Although relief staff had been deployed, they often lacked the same level of local knowledge. Performance

consistently improved during February and was below target (good) throughout March, which had been attributed to a decline in unplanned staff absence towards the end of Q4.

Cabinet Member for Communities

- **% of total economic recovery spend across all Community Boards compared to profiled spend** – this figure showed a current value of 29.33% against a target of 100%. This indicator measured a priority area of spend for the Community Boards total budget. Having reduced the funding available to Community Boards and given the Boards had more autonomy over how they spent their funding, these measures were no longer relevant. New performance indicators were currently being developed for Community Boards.

Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure

There were no indicators for this portfolio area marked as red where performance was more than 5% off the target.

Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services

- **% of assessments completed in 45 working days** – target was 84% – during Q4 the percentage of children's assessments completed within 45 working days had been 74%. The overall number of children that the social care service was working with rose by 22% in the year ending March 2022. As a result, the number of assessments starting rose by 30% between 2020/21 and 2021/22. During Q4, there was an average of 585 assessments started each month, compared to 489 started during Q4 in the previous year. In response to this increased demand, capacity within the service had been increased leading to improved performance during Q3. During Q4 the percentage of children's assessments completed within 45 working days was 74%, which was positive given the increase in demand highlighted.
- **% of children with Initial Child Protection Conferences completed within 15 working days of the strategy discussion** – the target was 85% against a current value of 76% (34% in Q2, 61% in Q3). Additional resource had been put in place to support the administration of ICPCs, and capacity within the service had increased to help manage the rise in demand. This had led to continued improvement in performance in Q4, during March 84% of ICPCs had been completed on time.
- **% of Children in Need seen within 4 weeks** – target was 90% - at the end of March 2022, 80% of children on a CIN plan were seen within 4 weeks. This was a decrease from 88% at the end of December 2021. The overall number of children that the social care service was working with had risen by 22% in the year ending March 2022 and the increased activity has also resulted in a rise in the number of children on CIN plans (a 28% rise). Of the 1,318 children on a CIN plan at the end of March 2022, 96% were seen within 6 weeks. Managers were working closely with social workers to manage visits week by week to ensure visits took place as soon as possible. Recruitment activity was also being prioritised to ensure resources were available to manage the

increased demand.

Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources

- **Average % of phone calls in Customer Service Centres abandoned before being answered** – target was 10% - Q4 performance was 11.3% against a target of 10%. This was a reduction in performance against Q3 of 6.1 percentage points. The higher abandonment rate was due to the normal annual billing exercise undertaken during Q4 which generated a high number of Council tax enquiries. Excluding Revenues and Benefits, the abandonment rate for Q4 had been 9.3%.
- **Average call wait time** – target was 3 minutes – Q4 average call wait time was 9 minutes and 4 seconds (Q3 – 2 minutes, 27 seconds). The Wycombe and Aylesbury Revenues and Benefits system had been suspended during Q3 to allow a new system to be implemented. This had created a backlog plus a number of issues as the new system bedded in during Q4. The average call wait time excluding Revenues and Benefits had been 2m 49s.
- **Staff voluntary turnover % (BC - rolling year)** – target 12% - Q4 performance was 14.5% (Q3 at 13.6%). There had been a reduction in voluntary turnover during the pandemic compared to pre-pandemic quarters. Turnover rates had consistently increased as the economy continued to recover and as the labour market changed. Turnover was monitored on a monthly basis.

Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

- **% of service users due an annual review that receive their review** – target 61% - Q4 performance was 55%, which had been impacted by the Omicron variant during Q3 and Q4, and by increased safeguarding activity during the year. Additional agency resource had been brought in to support the completion of Annual Reviews that were overdue on 1 April 2022, to allow long-term teams to continue to undertake reviews that were due to be undertaken during April 2022 to March 2023.
- **% of births that receive a face-to-face New Birth Visit within 14 days by a health visitor in the quarter** –target of 90% with a current value of 69.3% (69.9% in Q3, 79% in Q2). The proportion of visits had decreased due to staff shortages within the Aylesbury and Wycombe teams. The majority of visits (94%) have taken place within 21 days. There had not been any significant changes to the proportion of children with no recorded visit which has remained at less than 2% across the contract year. Information was provided on improvement actions being taken to improve future performance.

Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Regulatory Services

- **Number of applicants with/expecting children who have been in non-self contained Bed & Breakfast accommodation for longer than 6 weeks** – there was one family affected against a target of 0. For Q4, one family who had been in non self-contained B&B accommodation for longer than 6 weeks had been moved to B&B accommodation on safety grounds. The family was now in alternative self-contained accommodation.
- **Number of households living in temporary accommodation for over 12**

months – the current value was 85 (86 in Q3, 78 in Q2) against a target of 32. Numbers had increased due to a change in how they were recorded. The target would be reviewed going forward. In addition, there had been a significant upturn in demand for TA compared to pre-pandemic levels which meant some households were spending longer in TA due to the supply of social housing.

- **% of homelessness decisions taking over 56 days** – the target was 40% but the current value was 55% (50.7% in Q3, 52% in Q2, 57.7% in Q1). There had been a significant upturn in applications – over 4,000 applications in 2021/22 compared to 1,918 in 2020/21. This increased case load had a knock-on impact on decision times and the ability of the housing service to try and prevent people from becoming homeless. Improvement actions included changing some procedures and stronger performance monitoring, and the recent recruitment of new Homelessness Advisers although the new recruits would require training and development.

Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

- **% of enforcement appeals allowed** – the current value was 50% (28.5% in Q3, 25% in Q2) and the target 20%. Cabinet Members noted that the results were affected by low numbers of appeals. In the last quarter, 4 out of 8 appeals had been allowed. The 12 month rolling appeal performance was 31% of appeals allowed (7.5 out of 24). The position would continue to be monitored closely and appropriate action taken, if necessary.

Cabinet Member for Transport

- **% of gullies cleaned against the cyclical gully programme** – the target was 88% against a current value of 83%. The last quarter had continued to be a challenge in terms of the difficulties in delivering this programme due to a greater number of driver and operator absence issues and the severe storms in February had also caused further delay as the gully crews were deployed on emergency measures, with the gully boom inoperable in such high winds.
- **National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction on the condition of road surfaces** – In 2021 Buckinghamshire had scored a satisfaction score of 20%, which was down from 24% in 2020. This was below the cohort regional average of 22%. All members of the agreed cohort (which was used for benchmarking in this and previous samples as they were similar authorities and as such a suitable comparison) had reduced scores in this indicator year on year. Whilst Buckinghamshire's score dropped by 4%, the NHT average dropped by 5%. This was likely to be because the level of satisfaction was influenced by external factors most importantly the severity of the winter.
- **NHT Public Satisfaction Survey: (KBI 15) % of customers satisfied with their local Rights of Way Network** – In 2021, Buckinghamshire scored a satisfaction score of 54% against a South East 2021 average score of 57%. This was down from 2020 (scored 58%) and was the worst in the South East region alongside Kent, Southampton, Medway and East Sussex. Milton Keynes scored highest with 61%. The reason for the poor performance had been attributed to the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown periods, which had seen an increase in

footfall damaging footpaths. There had also been an increase in complaints of trespassers from landowners, and associated preventative measures taken by landowners obstructing footpaths. Furthermore, path volunteers were stood down during Covid-19, which had meant some maintenance tasks could not be completed. The Council had successfully bid for funding to recruit a new Rights of Way Officer to reduce the current backlog of outstanding issues on the network.

- **Major transport schemes: % of profiled spend achieved** – current value of 93.97% against target of 100% - after a delay to the start of works, good progress had been made on site on the A41 project. Both Westhorpe and ABLIS continued to experience significant delays due to external design approvals and significant optioneering requirements respectively. The Crest Road project had been completed onsite and the Princes Risborough project had delivered significant accelerated in year spend. Total year end spend would continue to be monitored, it was anticipated there would be less than 10% slippage.

RESOLVED –

- (1) **That the Council's performance for the Quarter 4 period 2021-22 be NOTED.**
- (2) **That the actions being taken to improve performance, where required, be NOTED.**

11 Enterprise Zone Memorandum of Understanding Update

The Aylesbury Vale Enterprise Zone (AVEZ) had been established in 2016 under the government's Enterprise Zone policy to attract and develop new business investment and promote growth in three key locations in the Aylesbury Vale area. It had begun as a partnership between 4 parties (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council).

A Year 5 evaluation of the EZ had been undertaken in early 2021 and a new Implementation Plan had been prepared for the period 2021-26. The first 5 years (2016-21) had focused on EZ set up and establishment of development within the zone. The next period would focus on accelerating site development and providing greater business, skills, and inward investment support.

AVEZ had been set up as an informal partnership under a Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix 1) that was signed in 2017 and lasted for 4 years. In December 2021 it had changed its name to Buckinghamshire Enterprise Zone following agreement with government.

A MOU was a statement of serious intent that was entered into voluntarily by the respective parties. It had moral force but did not create legal obligations, unless it was expressly stated that it was to be a legally binding document. Now expired, the original MoU held little weight and the EZ relied on the goodwill of the parties to

continue working together, as they had done. The absence of a MoU could be problematic if there was an issue or disagreement between partners.

Given the passage of time and new local government and policy context since the original MoU it was important to refresh it with a new agreement to govern the EZ. Buckinghamshire Council officers had worked with EZ/LEP staff to review the MoU to identify the main provisions to be retained, updated, or removed in creating a new MoU.

The Cabinet report at paragraphs 2.6 to 2.14 the financial provisions of the MOU including the basic principle that the Council should not be made financially worse off by loss of business rates receipts under the EZ arrangements than without the EZ designation. This included information on business rates including from new developments, and 'ringfencing', income retention and sharing 'surplus' income (proposing to change this from a 70:30 split in favour of the EZ to a 50:50 split with the Council), when surplus income would be drawn and the priority order for investment of retained business rates. The MoU's intent was that a 'Surplus' payment to BC or BLEP would arise only once EZ priority infrastructure interventions/commitments identified in the Implementation Plan, or other priority interventions approved by the EZ Board, had been funded.

The EZ Board supported the view that neither the LEP nor Council should take out a 'Surplus' payment at this time, enabling the EZ to continue investing in projects to maximise the potential to generate additional business rates, floorspace, jobs and GVA growth. It was recommended that during the next 5-year EZ Implementation Plan period there is no distribution of 'Surplus' income as the EZ continues to create a critical mass of development to contribute to the economic recovery and growth of Buckinghamshire.

The Cabinet agenda also included a number of confidential appendices on the Aylesbury Vale EZ 5 Year Business Plan (April 2021), the original EZ agreement (September 2015), the updated draft terms of reference (December 2021), and the AVEZ Business Rates Relief Policy.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendations that have been agreed by the Aylesbury Vale Enterprise Zone Board be SUPPORTED, to:

- (i) Refresh the Memorandum of Understanding to reflect changes in governance since the EZ's inception.**
- (ii) Change the split of surplus income generated by the EZ from 70:30 (Bucks LEP : Bucks Council) to 50:50 to reflect the Council's 50% share of uplift on business rates.**
- (iii) Not activate the EZ MoU provision for distribution of 'Surplus' income in the period up to March 2026 to enable the EZ to maximise use of funding to maintain momentum and accelerate development of the EZ sites and support other relevant initiatives for the recovery and growth of the**

Buckinghamshire economy.

12 Proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club Land

The former Bucks CC Sports and Social Club was located off Lower Road in Stoke Mandeville. It was approximately 3.7 hectares in size. The Site currently comprised a closed club house surrounded by open land which had formerly been used as sports pitches and tennis courts. The former Sports and Social Club Land had remained unused for some years and as it currently stood represented a drain on the Council's resources in ensuring public safety while enforcing security.

The proposal was for the demolition of all existing structures and the Outline Planning Application set the scene for the future development in seeking consent for the construction of up to approximately 100 residential units with a re-provision for open space for day-to-day use and included in excess of the LPA's statutory requirement that 30% of that number be affordable accommodation. Consent was also sought for improving the main access to lower road and extending the main estate road to provide Booker Park School with a new second vehicular access point that would greatly relieve congestion adjacent to the existing school entrance.

The scheme had been revised following pre-app advice and then again following consultation with Stoke Mandeville Parish Council and SMPC's retained architects. There would likely be further detailed refinements, but the hope was that the quantum of development was now fairly settled. The specific uses of the residential units were not referenced in this application as they would be dealt with as reserved matters once the mix of accommodation was agreed.

The Stoke Mandeville site was also identified as the preferred location for a new primary electricity substation which was part of Bucks Council's HIF investment programme and was targeted to bring in substantial HIF funding, that would hugely benefit the Council and Buckinghamshire residents and supported the future growth of Aylesbury by alleviating any existing grid capacity constraints. A separate planning application to deal with this would be submitted soon by UK Power Networks.

An Outline Planning Application was intended to preserve the flexibility of future design and composition of the development and represents a good opportunity to provide mainly affordable and key worker homes in an ideal location due to the proximity with Stoke Mandeville Hospital. This same specific location provided a rare prospect to include a provision for bespoke and adaptable housing for the special exigent needs of clients of both adults and children's services.

The Cabinet agenda also included a confidential appendix on the indicative financial implications of the development. The Cabinet Member referred to the pre-planning public consultation and although the report was not yet finalised sufficiently to attach as an appendix to the report it was clear that there was local resistance to the loss of open green space. This was considered by the meeting and it was important to emphasise that there had been no public right of access and these plans would

bring the site back into community use with over 40% of open green space. This could include a full size football pitch to the south of the site designated as community sports provision. The Leader confirmed that the site never had public open space and it was previously a private club. In addition to the football pitch there was also a garden square within the development. The Cabinet Member in summing up said that this report would bring a range of benefits in delivering on the Council's affordable housing commitments, bringing the site back into community use with new sporting facilities and improving local traffic flows. Part of the manifesto commitment was to look at surplus property from the legacy councils to see which sites could be used for affordable and key worker housing. The local Parish Council and local Members also supported the planning application.

A Cabinet Member referred to the local public feeling against the planning application but again emphasised that this site had never had green open space and in fact new green open space had been included in the planning application. Key worker housing was crucial to fill vital public service jobs particularly with the additional cost of living crisis and this development was also next to Stoke Mandeville Hospital. Housing affordability was a key issue in Buckinghamshire. The Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Regulatory Services had previously referred to the increase in homelessness. Cabinet Members welcomed the report.

RESOLVED –

That approval to submit an Outline Planning Application for the proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club land be AGREED.

13 Wycombe Air Park and Aero Airways Associations Ltd (AAA lease)

The report provided details of a linked transaction that would provide the Council with the opportunity to procure a major development and employment project on 24 acres of land ("Area A" in the report) immediately to the south of Wycombe Air Park. This would enable the development of a comprehensive and permanent film studio scheme subject to receipt of planning and would bring forward employment development on Site B in accordance with the August 2019 adopted Wycombe District Local Plan ("WDLP"), subject to receipt of a satisfactory planning permission and the securing of vacant possession to all the site.

The overall transaction would generate rental income for the Council that would support the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan. In addition, the Council would receive a significant capital receipt that would contribute to the capital receipts target to fund priority capital projects of the Council. Aside from the financial and economic benefits of the transaction to the Council, it would also provide a capital receipt to AAA; enable the return of Booker Gliding Club ("BGC") to Wycombe Air Park and a cessation of legal proceedings between AAA and the Council without further costs.

The Cabinet agenda included a confidential appendix on the detailed financial terms

of the transaction.

RESOLVED –

That, subject to the necessary planning permission being granted, authority be delegated to the Service Director for Property and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources, the Service Director for Legal and Democratic Services and the Section 151 Officer to:

- (i) Authorise and undertake necessary outstanding due diligence, agree final terms for both a lease re-gear with AAA and a Collaboration Agreement for the disposal of Site B (“the principal transaction”) and exchange and complete relevant legal documentation for the reasons detailed in the Cabinet report and in the confidential appendix.**
- (ii) Authorise and undertake necessary outstanding due diligence, agree final terms for the sale of Site B to the current proposed investor/developer or an alternative party (“the associated transaction”), and to exchange and complete relevant legal documentation for the reasons set out in the Cabinet report and the confidential appendix.**

18 Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held at 10am on Tuesday 12 July 2022.



Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet/Leader forward plan

The local authorities (executive arrangements) (meetings and access to information) (England) regulations 2012

This is a notice of an intention to make a key decision on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council (regulation 9) and an intention to meet in private to consider those items marked as 'private reports' (regulation 5).

A further notice (the 'agenda') will be published no less than five working days before the date of the decision meeting and will be available via the Buckinghamshire Council website ([Cabinet agendas](#) / [Leader decisions](#)).

All reports will be open unless specified otherwise.

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Cabinet 12 July 2022				
Buckinghamshire Levelling Up Framework Buckinghamshire Levelling Up Framework		Councillor Martin Tett Sarah Ashmead		24/3/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Biodiversity Net Gain The report provides an overview of the new requirement to provide biodiversity net gain as part of the planning system, introduces the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document for adoption, and sets out a proposal for Buckinghamshire Council to run a Biodiversity Net Gain scheme.		Councillor Gareth Williams Ian Thompson		15/2/22
Children and Education Select Committee review of recruitment and retention of social workers The Children's and Education Select Committee set up a small review group to investigate Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers. This report details their key findings and recommendations to Cabinet.		Councillor Mark Dormer Kelly Sutherland		8/6/22
Corporate Performance Indicators 2022-2023 This report will set out the proposed corporate performance indicators for 2022-23, highlighting the suggested targets and any changes for the year ahead.		Councillor John Chilver Matthew Everitt		22/4/22
Highways Term Maintenance Contract - Award To agree the contract award for the Term Maintenance Contract (TMC) for the Highway's Service.		Councillor Steve Broadbent Kevin Goad	Part exempt (para 3)	8/6/22
Q1 Budget Monitoring Report 2022-23 Quarterly report		Councillor John Chilver Richard Ambrose		8/6/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Town & Parish Charter To agree the Town and Parish charter		Councillor Steve Bowles Hannah Thynne		22/4/22
Cabinet 13 September 2022				
Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Partnership To agree Buckinghamshire Council representation on the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Partnership (BLMK ICP)		Councillor Angela Macpherson Gill Quinton		16/6/22
Buckinghamshire Education Strategy 2022 - 2027 The Buckinghamshire Education Strategy is a refresh of the Education and Skills Strategy that was approved in 2018. Following initial collaboration and engagement and a public consultation process, the Education Strategy has been shaped and developed with a focus on 5 key priority areas in order to further improve educational provision for children and young people in Buckinghamshire.		Councillor Anita Cranmer Simon James		8/6/22
Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership (BOB ICP) Joint Committee Approval for the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS) to establish an Integrated Care Partnership through a Joint Committee		Councillor Angela Macpherson Gill Quinton		8/6/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Highways Term Consultancy Contract - Award To agree the contract award for the TCC (Term Consultancy Contract) for the Highway's Service.		Councillor Steve Broadbent Kevin Goad	Part exempt (para 3)	8/6/22
Horns Lane, High Wycombe Delivery options for development of 50 residential houses	Booker, Cressex & Castlefield	Councillor John Chilver John Reed	Part exempt (para 3)	30/6/22
Kingsbury & Market Square, Aylesbury The regeneration of two historic town centre spaces. The aim is to make these spaces more accessible and attractive, giving priority to pedestrian use.	Aylesbury North	Councillor John Chilver, Councillor Peter Strachan John Reed	Part exempt (para 3)	22/4/22
SEALR (South East Aylesbury Link Road) Update Project update for the South East Aylesbury Link Road.	Aylesbury South East; Wendover, Halton & Stoke Mandeville	Councillor Steve Broadbent Richard Lumley	Part exempt (para 3)	25/5/22
Woodlands In Principle CPO Seeking authority to proceed with an In-Principle CPO (compulsory purchase order) process	Aston Clinton & Bierton	Councillor John Chilver John Reed	Part exempt (para 3)	17/1/22
Woodlands strategy for negotiated acquisition Recommendations to Cabinet regarding the freehold interest in the Woodlands development site.	Aston Clinton & Bierton	Councillor John Chilver John Reed	Part exempt (para 3)	17/1/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Cabinet 11 October 2022				
Adult Social Care Update To provide an update on the current challenges and issues in relation to adult social care services in Buckinghamshire		Councillor Angela Macpherson Clare Capjon		16/6/22
Aylesbury Garden Town HIF & HIF Programme Board Annual Report The annual report to Cabinet regarding the progress of the Aylesbury HIF programme and the associated projects.		Councillor Martin Tett Robin Smith	Part exempt (para 3)	12/11/21
Director of Public Health Annual Report 2021-2022 To approve the Director of Public Health Annual Report (DPHAR) 2021-2022 which addresses cardio vascular disease and its impact on inequalities in Buckinghamshire.		Councillor Angela Macpherson Dr Jane O'Grady		16/6/22
July 2022 Leader Decisions				
Aston Clinton - Traffic Calming Vertical traffic calming and speed limit reduction	Aston Clinton & Bierton	Councillor Steve Broadbent Daniel Pearson		19/3/20

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Aylesbury Garden Town Framework and Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document – Draft for Consultation The Aylesbury Garden Town Framework and Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document is a requirement of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan to support the delivery of the Aylesbury Garden Town. The Supplementary Planning Document sets out the strategic infrastructure delivery schedules for the physical, green and social infrastructure required for the Garden Town. It also outlines the funding and delivery programme.	Aylesbury East; Aylesbury North; Aylesbury North West; Aylesbury South East; Aylesbury South West; Aylesbury West	Councillor Peter Strachan Simon Meecham		25/11/21
Aylesbury Grid Reinforcements - New Primary Decision relating to progressing the Aylesbury Grid Reinforcement scheme design in South West Aylesbury.	Aylesbury South East; Wendover, Halton & Stoke Mandeville	Councillor Martin Tett David Johnson	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	3/5/22
Aylesbury New Primary Grid Connection - An Approach to Capacity Allocation Report outlining the approach to the allocation of capacity from the Aylesbury New Primary Grid Connection.	Aston Clinton & Bierton; Aylesbury South East; Stone & Waddesdon; Wendover, Halton & Stoke Mandeville	Councillor Martin Tett David Johnson	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	3/5/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Aylesbury Vale Area Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document - For Consultation Decision to approve the Draft SPD and for it to go to a public consultation		Councillor Peter Strachan Simon Meecham		7/12/21
Bierton Traffic Calming Public consultation is to be carried out on a traffic calming scheme along the A418 through Bierton. The proposals include; narrowings, chicanes, build-outs, and pedestrian, cycle, and bus stop improvements. Public consultation and the delivery of a traffic calming scheme was secured as a s106 obligation of the nearby Kingsbrook development.	Aston Clinton & Bierton	Councillor Steve Broadbent Christine Urry		25/5/22
Budget Adjustments to the Approved Capital Programme To approve changes to the Approved Capital Programme		Councillor John Chilver Sue Palmer		14/9/20
Business Case for the recommissioning of The Vines (respite service for Children and Young People) To agree the Business Case for the recommissioning of The Vines - a six bedded unit providing residential short breaks to disabled young people aged 11 – 19 years old with behaviours that challenge which is due for renewal on 1st April 2022. This is for a 2 year contract with one year extension.		Councillor Anita Cranmer Tracey Ironmonger	Part exempt (para 3)	18/8/21

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
D-AGT1 Aylesbury Garden Town - South Aylesbury - Supplementary Planning Document D-AGT1 South Aylesbury is an adopted mixed use allocation in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. The Local Plan requires a site-specific Supplementary Plan Document for this allocation; in the form of masterplan to set out clear and detailed advice for place-making. This key decision is to seek the Leaders approval to consult the public on the draft masterplan.	Wendover, Halton & Stoke Mandeville	Councillor Peter Strachan Simon Meecham		1/11/21
Fleet Trading Account budget To confirm details of the 2022/23 Fleet Trading Account budget, which is a zero balanced budget and therefore can't be included in the full council decision taken in February that confirmed other revenue budgets.		Councillor Steve Broadbent Andrew Clarke		24/3/22
Gerrards Cross Waiting Restrictions Report to be written with recommendations upon the conclusion of a statutory consultation on waiting restrictions proposed in Gerrards Cross.	Gerrards Cross	Councillor Steve Broadbent Ricky Collymore		12/7/21
Hackney Carriage Tariffs To agree the maximum hackney carriage tariffs that can be charged to passengers across the Council area		Councillor Mark Winn Lindsey Vallis		25/5/22
Hackney Carriage Tariffs Post-Consultation decision To agree the maximum hackney carriage tariffs that can be charged to passengers across the Council area; decision required if objections received		Councillor Mark Winn Lindsey Vallis		16/6/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Haddenham Parking Restrictions Scheme proposing to introduce parking restrictions on Tibbs Road, Haddenham.	Bernwood	Councillor Steve Broadbent Daniel Pearson		24/3/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
High Wycombe Transport Strategy and High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Consultation Request for agreement to conduct public consultation on the draft High Wycombe Transport Strategy and High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) once engagement has been undertaken with local members.	Abbey; Booker, Cressex & Castlefield; Chiltern Villages; Downley; Flackwell Heath, Little Marlow & Marlow South East; Hazlemere; Penn Wood & Old Amersham; Ridgeway East; Ridgeway West; Ryemead & Micklefield; Terriers & Amersham Hill; The Wooburns, Bourne End & Hedsor; Totteridge & Bowerdean; Tylers Green & Loudwater; West Wycombe	Councillor Steve Broadbent Joan Hancox		14/5/21

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Highway Safety Inspection Policy Update to the existing Highway Safety Inspection Policy		Councillor Steve Broadbent Keith Carpenter		30/6/21
Household Waste Collection Policy Document South Bucks Area To make minor changes to waste collection policies in the south of Buckinghamshire to harmonise the service delivered.		Councillor Gareth Williams Martin Dickman		20/7/21
Interim Tree Risk Management Strategy Approval of an interim tree risk management strategy with respect to trees that Buckinghamshire Council manages		Councillor Gareth Williams David Sutherland		5/10/20
Ivinghoe Double Yellow Lines – Parking Restrictions Proposal to introduce Waiting Restriction (Double Yellow Lines) on High Street, Ivinghoe.	Ivinghoe	Councillor Steve Broadbent Oladapo Azeez		16/6/22
Ivinghoe Freight Strategy - Weight Restriction Proposals on introducing a 7.5 tonne weigh restriction zone in the Ivinghoe Area	Ivinghoe; Wing	Councillor Steve Broadbent Ricky Collymore		2/3/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Modern Slavery Statement This report reflects activity carried out in the previous financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22, demonstrating the steps taken by the Council to address modern slavery in its operations and supply chains and future actions.		Councillor Steve Bowles Dr Jane O'Grady		8/6/22
Network Hierarchy Review Our Network Hierarchy drives our maintenance operations. It is important that the hierarchy reflects the needs, priorities and actual use of the network and that this is kept up to date. This review will update the hierarchy and suggest amendments to reflect changes to the use of the network since it was adopted and last updated.		Councillor Steve Broadbent Keith Carpenter		25/11/21
Putlowes Waiting Restrictions Proposals to introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions along Putlowes Drive and from the A41/Putlowes Road junction to the Waddesdon Greenway accesses have been put forward to encourage compliance with highway Code Rule 242 to not leave vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road; and 243 which prohibits parking anywhere you would prevent access for Emergency Services; and in front of an entrance to a property.	Stone & Waddesdon	Councillor Steve Broadbent David Cairney		16/6/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Russet Street/Worcester Street, Berryfields, Aylesbury – Prohibition of Motor Vehicles Traffic Regulation Order Proposal to introduce a 'Prohibition of Motor Vehicles' Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on Russet Street/Worcester Street, Berryfields, Aylesbury.	Stone & Waddesdon	Councillor Steve Broadbent Ryan Osama		16/6/22
Sexual and Reproductive Health Services To agree the business case for the recommissioning of the sexual health service. This service provides a range of information, guidance and services with respect to sexual and reproductive health services, genito-urinary medicine and contraception services.		Councillor Angela Macpherson Adam Johnson, Teresa Martin	Part exempt (para 3)	17/1/22
Station Road, Quainton - Proposed Traffic Calming Build Out Barwood Homes propose to fully fund and construct a Traffic Calming Build Out on Station Road, Quainton. This is to facilitate the widening of the existing footway to 1.5m beside No.17 Station Road. Works would be carried out via a Section 278 Legal Agreement.	Great Brickhill	Councillor Steve Broadbent Darryl Bonsor		22/10/21
Support to the Provider Market To seek approval for support to ensure the care market continues to be able to respond to the needs of Buckinghamshire residents.		Councillor Angela Macpherson Tracey Ironmonger	Part exempt (para 3)	6/4/21

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
Temporary staffing contract award Decision required on the award for the award of a contract for temporary staffing, interims and specialist contractors		Councillor John Chilver Lorna Fisher	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	4/4/22
Tingewick Road Area of Buckingham Proposed reduction in the speed limit for Tingewick Road Area of Buckingham	Buckingham West	Councillor Steve Broadbent Ian Thomas		15/2/22
August 2022 Leader Decisions				
Burcott Lane, Bierton Waiting Restrictions Report on a Statutory Consultation proposing waiting restrictions in Burcott Lane, Bierton. A recommendation will be made in the report after taking the responses received into account	Aston Clinton & Bierton	Councillor Steve Broadbent Ricky Collymore		3/5/22
Community Prevention Service To agree the recommissioning of the Community Prevention Service.		Councillor Angela Macpherson Gemma Workman	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	14/3/22
Domiciliary Care Procurement Vehicle Decision to go out to tender to procure domiciliary care services for adults in Buckinghamshire.		Councillor Angela Macpherson Erica Boylett	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	2/3/22

Item and description	Wards affected	Councillor(s) / contact officer	Private report? (relevant para)	Date notified
December 2022 Leader Decisions				
CYP Integrated Therapies Recommission of the Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Integrated Therapies service		Councillor Anita Cranmer Marie-Claire Mickiewicz	Part exempt (para 3)	30/6/22
CYP Integrated Therapies Strategy Sign off of CYP Integrated Therapies Strategy		Councillor Anita Cranmer Marie-Claire Mickiewicz	Part exempt (para 3)	30/6/22
February 2023 Leader Decisions				
All-age Autism Strategy To agree the All-age Autism strategy for Buckinghamshire		Councillor Angela Macpherson Simon Brauner-Cave		11/5/22

Individual Leader decisions (in consultation with the Cabinet Member) are not discussed at meetings – a report is presented to the Cabinet Member and the Leader will decide whether to sign the decision.

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this forward plan, please get in touch with the contact officer. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team in good time ahead of the decision deadline date. This can be done by telephone 01296 382343 or email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk. You can view decisions to be made and decisions taken on the council's website.

The council's definition of a 'key decision' can be seen in part 1 of the council's [constitution](#).

Each item considered will have a report; appendices will be included (as appropriate). Regulation 9(1g) allows that other documents relevant to the item may be submitted to the decision maker. Subject to prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, this information will be published on the website usually five working days before the date of the meeting. Paper copies may be requested using the contact details below.

*The public can be excluded for an item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt (private) information as defined in part I of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972. The relevant paragraph numbers and descriptions are as follows:

Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual

Paragraph 2 - Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Paragraph 4 - Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority

Paragraph 5 - Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings

Paragraph 6 - Information which reveals that the authority proposes:

(a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or

(b) to make an order or direction under any enactment

Paragraph 7 - Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

Part II of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that information falling into paragraphs 1 - 7 above is exempt information if and so long, as in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. Nothing in the regulations authorises or requires a local authority to disclose to the public or make available for public inspection any document or part of a document if, in the opinion of the proper officer, that document or part of a document contains or may contain confidential information. Should you wish to make any representations in relation to any of the items being considered in private, you can do so – in writing – using the contact details below.

Democratic services, Buckinghamshire Council, The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP19 8FF 01296 382343
democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

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Report to Cabinet

Date: 12th July 2022

Title: **Social Worker Recruitment and Retention – Select Committee Report**

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Anita Cranmer, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services & Education

Contact officer: Katie Dover, Senior Scrutiny Officer
Catherine.dover@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: None specific

Recommendations:

The Children’s and Education Select Committee recommends the following to Cabinet:

Recruitment:

1. Overhaul of the approach, understanding and procedures of HR for recruitment
2. Introduction of a new strategy to promote the benefits and advantages of working at Buckinghamshire
3. Consideration of the introduction of an additional payment for permanent staff to be paid 1/3rd after Year 1 and 2/3rd after Year 2, with costs offset by fewer agency staff
4. Improvements to career development opportunities and progression within Buckinghamshire Council

Retention:

5. Dedicated HR resource integrated into these two teams and sitting alongside them
6. Improve and upgrade technology (hardware and software) to increase efficiency

7. Investigate the Introduction of an additional payment for permanent staff to be paid 1/3rd after Year 1 and 2/3rd after Year 2, with costs offset by fewer agency staff
8. Introduction of core skills training for line managers immediately on appointment, potentially through an extension of the AYSE Academy
9. Improved career development path both within and outside of current roles
10. Further investigation into pastoral care and support, including supervision sessions and the introduction of a buddy/mentor scheme
11. Introduction of 360° reviews across all levels and teams including HR support
12. Introduction of administrative support staff to assist with time consuming administrative functions and non-core responsibilities
13. Corporate Director to gather feedback, views and experience of IT from frontline staff to identify areas for improvement of existing software and the introduction of new technology hardware
14. Improved communication and cascading of information of benefits and support available

Additional key recommendations:

15. Consider a review to investigate the effectiveness of HR support across services
16. Expansion of the ASYE Academy
17. Continue to examine other counties with 'Good' and 'Excellent' OFSTED ratings to see what can be learned and which procedures and approaches could be adopted
18. Weekly report to the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director detailing average caseload per social worker (including highest and lowest level), changes in total team numbers together with historic data for comparison and direction of movement to identify trend with the trend trailing two weeks to smooth intra-day movement*

(*unless this report already exists)

Reason for decision: For Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the Children's and Education Select Committee, with a view to improving the success of the recruitment and retention practices relating to social workers at Buckinghamshire Council.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 A rapid review group was set up in November 2021 by the Children's & Education Select Committee to investigate the issues relating to the difficulties of recruiting and retaining both trainee and qualified social workers. It was noted that this was both a local and national issue and related to the demand for social worker

exceeding the available supply. In order to explore the issues relating to this thoroughly, the rapid review group undertook research and interviewed senior officers, social workers and their managers to explore areas that might be addressed to ameliorate the situation at Buckinghamshire.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 The recruitment and retention of social workers has been a key issue for local authority Children's Services departments for over ten years and has been well documented by various national organisations with statistics relating to the issue published annually by central government.
- 2.2 Through interviews and research the review group assessed such influencing factors as competition, pay and employment packages, agency versus permanent recruitment, development opportunities, welfare issues and quality of leadership.
- 2.3 From the early stages of the review the group decided that the focus should be on the child protection area of social work as there had been a 60% increase in child protection workloads since the Covid pandemic. Turnover rates of staff in child protection were particularly high and agency workers although relied upon to fill team vacancies, created a substantial impact on the permanent staff when they left.
- 2.4 The group gained the views of social workers and officers which highlighted areas of need detailed in the recommendations, which included career progression, thorough support for social workers through supervision and good management, the need for a closely aligned HR function, and a review of IT and administrative support to encourage more streamlining of processes.
- 2.5 Appendix 1 provides further context to the Select Committee's recommendations. Cabinet is asked to consider these recommendations and provide a response.

3. Legal and financial implications

- 3.1 These will be considered as part of the Cabinet's response.

4. Corporate implications

- 4.1 These will be considered as part of the Cabinet's response.

5. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

Not applicable.

6. Next steps and review

- 6.1 As noted above, Cabinet will provide a response to the Select Committee recommendations at its meeting on 12th July 2022. The Children's and Education Select Committee will then receive an update after 6 months and 12 months to monitor the implementation of these recommendations.

7. Background papers

None

8. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 8.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by email; democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk



Children's & Education
Select Committee
Review on Recruitment & Retention
of Social Workers

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Introduction

In November 2021, the Children's and Education Select Committee considered there was an urgent need to form a rapid review group to investigate Social Worker recruitment and retention at Buckinghamshire.

I agreed to chair this group and was joined in this by three other colleagues, Cllrs Karen Bates, Patricia Birchley and Rachael Matthews.

The aim of the review was to focus on the issues relating to the problem of recruiting and retaining enough training and qualified social workers in Buckinghamshire. This has been a subject of much concern for local authorities nationally for over 10 years and has been experienced in varying degrees in different areas of the country depending on varying local and national factors.

Social work is often an extremely demanding career and particularly so during and since the Covid pandemic. Our social workers are to be highly valued and supported for the work they do to support the people of Buckinghamshire.

I hoped that by leading the rapid review group and undertaking a thorough investigation into the issue of social worker recruitment and retention that we would be able to contribute to and build on the Council's and Directorate's efforts into improving the numbers of social workers in our workforce.

I would like to extend my thanks to my colleagues on the review group as well as all the Council Officers we spoke to with particular thanks to Richard Nash, Corporate Director for Children's Services.

Cllr Mark Dormer, May 2022



Councillor Mark Dormer



Councillor Karen Bates



Councillor Patricia Birchley



Councillor Rachael Matthews

Executive Summary

The following findings were reached for the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams:

- There is a national shortage of quality staff, both permanent and agency
- Caseloads in Buckinghamshire are high, but not out of kilter with the national picture
- Demand is high which is leading to longer hours worked than the service and the council would expect
- The HR support needs of these teams have changed and therefore require reorientation to provide a different and higher level of support
- The implications of the COVID pandemic are having a significant impact on the service in terms of increased caseloads and we see this gathering momentum
- The group has full confidence in the service leader Richard Nash
- The ASYE Academy is a significant asset for recruitment and retention in Buckinghamshire
- The service needs to do more to help develop the skillsets of first Line Managers
- Additional injections of money will not alleviate the challenges faced
- Improvements in technology, software and hardware would increase efficiency and reduce workload
- Measures and procedures can be introduced swiftly which will have positive material impact in the short and long-term at negligible cost

Initially the intention of the rapid review group was to consider Social Worker Recruitment and Retention across Children's Services. However, it became apparent very early on in the evidence gathering, that the key focus of our review should be the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams, where turnover of staff and use of agency social workers is highest and work pressures are intense. The review group was advised that there had been a 60% increase in Child Protection work since September 2020 therefore our key findings and recommendations are focussed on these two teams.

Recommendations for Child Assessment and Child Protection teams:

Recruitment:

1. Overhaul of the approach, understanding and procedures of HR for recruitment
2. Introduction of a new strategy to promote the benefits and advantages of working at Buckinghamshire
3. Consideration of the introduction of an additional payment for permanent staff to be paid 1/3rd after Year 1 and 2/3rd after Year 2, with costs offset by fewer agency staff
4. Improvements to career development opportunities and progression within Buckinghamshire Council

Retention:

5. Dedicated HR resource integrated into these two teams and sitting alongside them
6. Improve and upgrade technology (hardware and software) to increase efficiency
7. Investigate the Introduction of an additional payment for permanent staff to be paid 1/3rd after Year 1 and 2/3rd after Year 2, with costs offset by fewer agency staff
8. Introduction of core skills training for line managers immediately on appointment, potentially through an extension of the AYSE Academy
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13. Corporate Director to gather feedback, views and experience of IT from frontline staff to identify areas for improvement of existing software and the introduction of new technology hardware
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Additional key recommendations:

15. Consider a review to investigate the effectiveness of HR support across services
16. Expansion of the ASYE Academy
17. Continue to examine other counties with 'Good' and 'Excellent' OFSTED ratings to see what can be learned and which procedures and approaches could be adopted
18. Weekly report to the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director detailing average caseload per social worker (including highest and lowest level), changes in total team numbers together with historic data for comparison and direction of movement to identify trend with the trend trailing two weeks to smooth intra-day movement*

(*unless this report already exists)

Context

The recruitment and retention of social workers has been a key issue for local authority Children's Services departments for over ten years and has been well documented by various national organisations with statistics relating to the issue published annually by central government. Local authorities have been focussed on the attraction, recruitment and retention of social workers and social worker managers, using various methods to improve the situation. However, the success of the actions to address the social worker deficit in each area has varied depending on competition, pay and employment packages as well as geographical location, reputation, development opportunities, caseloads and quality of support, supervision and leadership.

As an often extremely stressful area of work, the role of an agency worker has become more attractive to social workers due to the opportunity for earning a higher rate of pay, working more flexibly and moving local authority if the work becomes untenable in one area. It perhaps also makes it easier to have a break between roles. The use of agency workers has increasingly become an essential part of a local authority's provision of social workers in order to meet demand for children's care services.

There has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of children being referred to the service and being subject to child protection plans and those children are also presenting with increasingly complex needs. This trend has been further compounded by the pressures brought about by the Covid pandemic.

The Children's Social Work workforce statistics published by gov.uk for the year October 2020 to September 2021 show that the total number of FTE social workers nationally was 32,502 and there were 6,522 vacancies and 5,977 agency workers. The agency worker rate had increased by 3% since the previous reporting year to 16%. The number of children and family social workers increased to the highest point in five years, however there were 5,000 leavers in 2021, up 16% from the previous year.

The mismatch in social worker requirements between over demand and under supply is affecting all local authorities. It is an issue represented in many local authority Ofsted reports where the success or otherwise of recruiting social workers has a major impact on the provision of services to children.

In Buckinghamshire, as in other local authorities, the social worker shortage has presented several challenges and this has been further compounded by the pressures of the pandemic. The recent Ofsted report of Buckinghamshire's Children's Services department noted the extensive work that had been undertaken by staff during the period which included the Covid pandemic, to move from "inadequate" to "requires Improvement to be good". However, the report noted that "the scale and speed of improvement work have been impeded by acute and persistent recruitment and retention difficulties of both social workers and frontline managers and the depth and extent of poor social work practice dating back to the last inspection in 2017".

In October 2021 the total number of qualified social workers in post in Buckinghamshire was 339 of which 221 were permanent staff and 118 were agency staff (35%). In addition, 53 posts were vacant. Since 2019, the authority has undertaken several initiatives to improve social worker recruitment and retention including setting up a social work academy to develop and support newly qualified social workers. Due to the vacancy rate and high turnover of agency staff, caseloads are often high, particularly in the Child Assessment and Protection teams, resulting in long working hours and stress for the social workers.

Methodology

The rapid review group held a series of meetings as follows:

21-1-22	Meeting with Children's Social Care Corporate Director, Richard Nash & HR
28-1-22	Meeting with Elizabeth Williams, Head of Finance
2-3-22	Focus Group discussion with 5 Social Work Line Managers
2-3-22	Focus Group discussion with 3 Social Workers
16-3-22	Meeting with HR Officers
17-3-22	2nd Focus Group discussion with 6 Social Workers

These meetings provided an opportunity for Officers in the respective areas to give their perspective on a range of issues relating to the recruitment and retention of social workers. The focus groups held with social workers and their managers were held in strict confidence, so they were able to speak openly. Participants were also encouraged to provide any additional thoughts via email.

Research information was also gathered and analysed on the national picture of social worker recruitment and retention, as well as information from other local authorities.

Initially the intention of the rapid review group was to consider Social Worker Recruitment and Retention across Children's Services. However, it became apparent very early on in the evidence gathering, that the key focus of our review should be the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams, where turnover of staff and use of agency social workers is highest and work pressures are intense. The review group was advised that there had been a 60% increase in Child Protection work since September 2020 therefore our key findings and recommendations are focussed on these two teams.

The rapid review group considered the following issues:

a) Recruitment Issues:

- (i) HR recruitment practices, processes, and how these adapt to the changing environment e.g. improved Ofsted result
- (ii) Understanding of pay levels and inter-authority agreements
- (iii) Issues relating to the geography of Buckinghamshire including the travel demands on social workers
- (iv) Career progression and planning
- (v) Management training and induction
- (vi) How the well-being of staff is supported

b) Retention Issues:

- (i) Investigating how we can address high caseloads and long working hours
- (ii) Addressing the particular Child Protection and Assessment team pressures and issues
- (iii) HR processes and procedures, pay and reward issues: overtime, time off in lieu
- (iv) Provision of a visible career path for all social workers
- (v) Management and supervision of social workers
- (vi) Technology issues and work processes within the role
- (vii) The geography of Buckinghamshire
- (viii) Improving communications

Key Findings

After carefully considering the evidence we collected through interviews, alongside desktop research into the national situation regarding recruitment and retention of qualified social workers, the review group wish to report the following observations and key findings, which are pertinent to the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams:

Recruitment

1. Overhaul of the approach, understanding and procedures of HR for recruitment

- Members would like to see a far more proactive and supportive approach from HR, particularly when responding to vacancies in the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams.
- We heard from social workers how an agency worker leaving at very short notice can have a significant impact on the rest of the team, who have to pick up their cases. Some managers were unsure who to contact in HR for support with recruitment, so there needs to be increased visibility and urgency from HR when vacancies arise. HR should formulate a plan to address the situation within an agreed response time to ensure that managers are well-supported.

2. Introduction of new strategy to promote the benefits and advantages of working at Buckinghamshire

- The findings of the Ofsted inspection undertaken in late 2021, which rated the service as 'requires improvement to be good' demonstrates that social work practice is moving in the right direction, despite the increased challenges in complexity and demand resulting from the Covid pandemic.
- The review group recommend that a new recruitment strategy should be developed by HR to promote working at Buckinghamshire, in light of the recent improvement in the Children's Services Ofsted rating. As a large unitary council, Buckinghamshire is well-placed to offer attractive career development opportunities alongside a competitive financial package.
- Existing members of staff were also complementary about the Tusker car scheme which should be highlighted as part of the overall benefits package.
- The possibility of using video testimonial of a social worker who has completed the ASYE Academy training to promote this opportunity to new recruits on the Council's website should be considered.

3. Consideration of the introduction of an additional payment for permanent staff to be paid 1/3rd after Year 1 and 2/3rd after Year 2, with costs offset by fewer agency staff

- Members are aware that the Council has some existing arrangements for offering an additional market premium to help with hard to recruit roles. These additional monies are currently paid on successful completion of a probation period.
- This recommendation would introduce an additional 'retention' bonus to encourage new permanent staff to stay. Crucially, this would benefit both children and families by providing more stability and individual social workers, who would have more opportunity to gain experience and adjust to the Council's specific processes and ways of working.
- We understand that a new memorandum of understanding has been signed by 19 local authorities in the South East, which is designed to set a maximum agency pay rate for different social work roles. This should minimise competition between councils for agency staff and it is hoped that this will help to stabilise the agency workforce.

4. Improvements to career development opportunities and progression within Buckinghamshire Council

- Members would like to see a more structured and consistent approach to career development. Managers should be encouraged to discuss opportunities for progression with social workers regularly, not just at their formal annual performance review.

- As a large unitary authority, Buckinghamshire is well-placed to offer opportunities for progression within the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams, and crucially across other social care teams, which would help to build a more stable workforce.
- A well-conceived and ongoing Learning and Development offering demonstrates that an employer values their staff, as well as being a valuable opportunity to upskill individuals. The Council wants individuals to succeed and build a career in Buckinghamshire. However, we heard that social workers often found it hard to attend training because of their high caseloads.
- We recognise that this is difficult when demand for the service is high. Perhaps the concept of 'protected learning time' could be considered where teams, on rotation, to ensure that there is always emergency cover, could have two hours of protected learning once every quarter.
- A clear career pathway would also boost the Council's recruitment offer and whilst many social workers might aspire to be promoted to team managers, consideration should also be given to other options, for example, quality assurance or training type roles or moving into other more specialist areas of social work.

Retention

5. Dedicated HR resource integrated into these two teams and sitting alongside them

- The review group believe that there is a disconnect between HR and the Child Assessment and Child Protection teams. A dedicated HR resource would help to improve HR's understanding of the demands of the role, which in turn will help them in improving their approach to recruitment and retention practices. It will also help HR to react quickly to changing circumstances with staffing levels in the teams.
- Social workers we spoke to suggested that exit interviews should be conducted by HR alongside team managers to ensure that any trends in reasons for leaving are quickly identified and where possible, responded to and immediately reflected to senior service and HR managers in a formalised manner. For example, we learned that a number of staff left in quick succession when Slough Borough Council was offering a higher rate of pay.

6. Improve and upgrade technology (hardware and software) to increase efficiency

- We heard from social workers that their laptops can create a physical barrier when they are meeting with children and families in their home environment, and we suggest that using a tablet device instead could be a helpful alternative.
- In addition, it would be helpful for Child Assessment and Child Protection social workers to be able to use voice-recording devices to note their observations when they have conducted a s47 assessment or a review visit. These could then be typed up by administrative staff in the office and checked and verified by the social worker thereafter. Voice-recording and voice-recognition software has improved in recent times so this should be investigated as a way of ensuring more efficient record keeping.

7. Investigate the Introduction of an additional payment for permanent staff to be paid 1/3rd after Year 1 and 2/3rd after Year 2, with costs offset by fewer agency staff

- Please see the explanation above, set out under Recommendation 3.

8. Introduction of core skills training for line managers immediately on appointment, potentially through an extension of the AYSE Academy

- We are aware that there is a council wide 'Being a Buckinghamshire Manager' programme that has been introduced recently alongside a number of specific management training courses and videos online through the Corporate Learning Hub.
- The review group see a need for additional training for new line managers, ideally immediately on appointment, which would focus more on the specific core skills needed to be an effective

manager in children's services. This would be an opportunity to introduce a consistency of approach and set clear expectations.

9. Improved career development path both within and outside of current roles

- See recommendation 4 above

10. Further investigation into pastoral care and support, including supervision sessions and the introduction of a buddy/mentor scheme

- Supervisions are key to supporting frontline social workers, both in terms of developing quality social work practice and supporting an individual's own emotional wellbeing. We heard that due to the pressure of workloads, some supervision sessions were focussed on the headlines of specific cases with little time available for personal reflection.
- The review group recognise that this is a consequence of the high levels of demand that the service is currently experiencing but it is important that there is a consistent approach to supervisions.
- We heard from some managers that it is difficult to devote enough time to newly qualified social workers when workloads are high, but newer social workers really need to form connections to help support them in the workplace. We therefore suggest the introduction of a buddy/mentor scheme across each of the teams.
- The details of how a buddy/mentor scheme should operate can be worked out by the Senior Managers – perhaps new members of staff could request a mentor and the Principal Social Worker can facilitate this.
- We heard of valuable initiatives that had been introduced including making Educational Psychologists available to social work teams and senior managers regularly checking in with staff with particularly high caseloads.
- There is also a corporate employee assistance package known as PAM Assist where counselling, legal, financial and health and wellbeing advice are available. This confidential service can be accessed online or via a telephone helpline. The availability of PAM Assist should be promoted more widely by line managers and HR.

11. Introduction of 360° reviews across all levels and teams including HR support

- The review group believe that there would be value in introducing 360-degree reviews across the teams. This is a method whereby individuals are reviewed 'laterally' by their peers and also 'vertically' by their managers and by the staff who they line manage. This would be a useful tool for supporting consistent management practice and would also encourage an open working environment, where all staff should be comfortable to share feedback.

12. Introduction of administrative support staff to assist with time consuming administrative functions and non-core responsibilities

- We acknowledge that there are administrative support staff in children's services currently, but we feel that introducing additional support staff could help to relieve over-stretched social workers of some of their administrative burden by updating files and typing up assessment reports on their behalf. Social Workers will still need to check and verify these reports to ensure they are accurate, but this would be quicker than writing them from scratch themselves.
- It was noted that whilst additional social workers have been recruited as project teams in response to the increased demand in child protection work, there has not been a commensurate increase in administrative support staff.

13. Corporate Director to gather feedback, views and experience of IT from frontline staff to identify areas for improvement of existing software and the introduction of new technology hardware.

- The review group are aware that LCS, the main file recording system for Children's Services is quite 'clunky' and very form intensive. The Council has tried to make some amendments to the system, but these have had a mixed reception from social workers who are using it on a daily basis. We heard, for example, that it can be very time-consuming to upload reports.
- We therefore propose that the Corporate Director should gather feedback from frontline staff and investigate what further improvements could be introduced to make this element of social work easier.
- The review group is confident that there will be technology software packages and Application Programming Interfaces (API) which will alleviate the time-consuming processes that social workers currently face, enabling them to spend more time with children and families.

14. Improved communication and cascading of information of benefits and support available

- During our discussions with social workers, it appeared that there was not a consistent approach to disseminating information.
- Social workers wanted to hear more feedback from the Improvement Board, especially what was going well. They also wanted to understand their connections in with other services e.g. HR and Communications contacts.
- Health and Wellbeing advice and encouragement to take breaks should also be promoted to staff.
- We heard that National Social Work Week had not been promoted to teams. This was a missed opportunity, and it was suggested that the Council could have its own celebration event for Social Work.

Additional key recommendations

15. Consider a review to investigate the effectiveness of HR support across services

- We suggest that it is time to review the effectiveness of the corporate HR delivery model.

16. Expansion of the ASYE Academy

- Additional funding to expand the ASYE Academy over the next three years was agreed by Council in the Budget in February 2022. After speaking with social workers who had come through the Academy and with Richard Nash, Corporate Director for Children's Services, the Review Group believe that the ASYE Academy has been highly effective in enabling the Council to grow its own social workers and endorse the continued commitment to and further expansion of this initiative.

17. Continue to examine other counties with 'Good' and 'Excellent' OFSTED ratings to see what can be learned and which procedures and approaches could be adopted

- As part of the Ofsted improvement journey, the Council has sought to learn from best practice elsewhere, with external expertise brought in through the Improvement Board and senior managers networking with their counterparts across the country. Members would like to see this continue as the service works towards 'Good'.

18. Weekly report to the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director detailing average caseload per social worker (including highest and lowest level), changes in total team numbers together with historic data for comparison and direction of movement to identify trend with the trend trailing two weeks to smooth intra-day movement*

(*unless this report already exists)

Conclusion

It is clear that whilst caseloads remain high, the pressure on social workers is immense and the review group wish to pay tribute to all Children's Services staff who are working incredibly hard in very difficult circumstances to improve the lives of children and families in Buckinghamshire. We hope that the recommendations in this report will help to improve the Council's recruitment and retention of staff and create a more stable workforce which will be beneficial for both service outcomes and individual social workers.



Report to Cabinet

Date:	12 July 2022
Title:	Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan
Author and/or contact officer:	Richard Nash, Corporate Director Children's Services
Recommendations:	For Cabinet to note the content of the Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan submitted to Ofsted following the December 2021 inspection.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide Cabinet with the final version of the Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan submitted to Ofsted on 25 May 2022.

2. Content of the Report

- 2.1 In December 2021, Ofsted conducted their Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) reinspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. This inspection found that Buckinghamshire was no longer 'Inadequate', and the overall judgement of Children's Services was 'requires improvement to be good'. Ofsted's report highlights examples of strong practice across the service, including the strengthening of performance measures and increased levels of managerial scrutiny and support for staff at every level which has led to demonstrable improvements in the experience of many children. However, the report also highlights areas where improvement is required and made the following recommendations:

- i. The understanding, and reduction of, a high rate of re-referrals and assessments that result in no services being provided for children and their families.
- ii. The consideration and cumulative impact of earlier interventions and family histories in children and family assessments.

- iii. The quality of social workers' direct work with children.
- iv. The support provided to children aged 16 and 17 years who present as homeless.
- v. The impact of independent reviewing officers (IROs) in decisively escalating children's cases when there is drift and delay in the progress of their care plans.
- vi. The quality of case supervision for social workers in order that it promotes consistently effective work with children.
- vii. The engagement and participation of children in care in the corporate parenting work of the council.

2.2 As a result of this continued improvement of services, the revised Statutory Direction issued to Buckinghamshire in July 2018 has been lifted and Buckinghamshire will now enter a period of 'support and supervision', in line with all authorities who exit formal intervention.

2.3 As a service, we will continue to use our existing Quality Assurance Framework and Check & Challenge process to review practice and monitor progress on a regular basis. Action Leads will also provide 6 weekly updates which will consider progress alongside Performance and Impact Reporting (including data trends, quality assurance and key performance indicators). Progress against this plan will also be a standing item on each Improvement Board Agenda.

3. Other options considered

3.1 N/A

4. Legal and financial implications

4.1 In light of the positive Ofsted judgement, the Statutory Direction issued to the Council in relation to Children's Services under Section 487A(4B) of the Education Act 1996 is in the process of being revoked by the Secretary of State.

4.2 There are no immediate financial implications but if any of the proposed actions result in financial requirements then approved funding will be sought before commitments are made .

5. Corporate implications

5.1 N/A

6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

6.1 N/A

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

7.1 N/A

8. Next steps and review

8.1 Local authorities judged as 'requires improvement to be good' at their most recent inspection will receive standard inspections by Ofsted. The standard inspection will usually take place about 3 years after the previous inspection. In between inspections, the local authority will receive up to 2 focused visits.

8.2 An independently chaired Board will continue to meet every two months. The Board will maintain oversight of the progress being made against the Ofsted recommendations and other improvements required across the service. John Coughlan, CBE, will continue to be the Independent Chair.

9. Background papers

Appendix 1: Post Inspection Action Plan

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

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Buckinghamshire Children's Services Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan

Our journey of continuous improvement



“Children’s services in Buckinghamshire are no longer inadequate, but still require further improvements to be good. Children are identified when they are at immediate risk of serious harm and prompt action is taken to protect them. No widespread or serious failures were identified that left children exposed to serious continuing harm. This is a tangible improvement on the position at the last inspection in 2017. It has been achieved while addressing the considerable additional challenges entailed in safeguarding children during the pandemic. Leaders and senior managers have achieved important improvements in practice for children in most parts of the service following two inadequate inspection judgements in 2014 and 2017. Several strengthened elements of leadership are in place, but much more needs to be done to ensure that children receive consistently positive standards of social work intervention in all parts of the service.” (Ofsted, February 2022)

The recent inspection of Buckinghamshire Children’s Services has recognised that services to children and their families require further improvements to be good. This is, in our view, a very significant achievement particularly given the long history of previously inadequate practice and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are also pleased that the inspection acknowledged our improvement journey. But we are not complacent.

The aim of this Post Ofsted Action Plan is to address the findings made by the Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) re-inspection in December 2021, clearly indicating how we will implement the 7 recommendations. Alongside this plan, we have a clear vision for work with children and families, which is underpinned by our “fundamentals for the future”.

1. **Strengths based** - actively exploring and acknowledging family strengths as well as their difficulties. We will use methods for building hope and motivation of change, reducing resistance or ambivalence to change. Providing families with **consistent, multidisciplinary**, and where appropriate ‘**high challenge, high support**’ to change and become more **resilient**.
2. Children and young people’s wishes, feelings and experiences placed at the centre; a relentless focus on the **timeliness, quality** and **effectiveness** of help given to children, young people and their families.
3. Recognising that **risk and uncertainty** are features of the system where risk can never be eliminated but it can be managed smarter.
4. The development of **professional expertise** to work effectively with children, young people and their families.
5. Truly valuing and acting on **feedback** from children, young people and families; and **continuous learning and improvement**, by reflecting critically on practice to identify problems and opportunities for a more effective and efficient system.

In our drive towards achieving consistently good services, we follow a cycle of improvement, continuously reviewing and testing our practice and oversight to ensure that we are making progress and creating actions to address our priority areas. In addition, a suite of key performance indicators will be used to track and monitor progress against each recommendation and priority area.

Governance and Accountability

As a senior leadership team, we will take responsibility for the delivery of our plan. We will monitor improvements in performance and practice, measuring impact of our plan quarterly. Our independently chaired Board will continue to meet every two months and maintain oversight of the progress being made against the Ofsted recommendations and other improvements required across the service.



Actions in Response to Ofsted Recommendations



Recommendation 1: The understanding, and reduction of, a high rate of re-referrals and assessments that result in no services being provided for children and their families.

Outcomes we are seeking to achieve:	Red: Little or no progress/at risk Amber: Progressing with minor delay Green: Good progress / on track Blue: Completed / embedded
1. Greater understanding of the local factors underpinning the high re-referral rate. 2. A reduction in the number of children with a previous referral within 12 months of their latest referral. 3. Audits showing families receiving the right support at the right time. 4. A reduction in the number of families that step back up after being stepped down from requiring statutory social care support. 5. A greater proportion of referrals received seeking statutory intervention meet the threshold for statutory intervention.	

Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
1.1	Review and report on the reasons for re-referral rate.	Amanda Andrews	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
1.2	In response to the findings from the review above (1.1), develop a specific set of actions that address identified areas for development.	Palvinder Kudhail	31 July 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

Recommendation 2: The consideration and cumulative impact of earlier interventions and family histories in children and family assessments.

Outcomes we are seeking to achieve:	Red: Little or no progress/at risk Amber: Progressing with minor delay Green: Good progress / on track Blue: Completed / embedded
1. Assessments are timely and proportionate to risk, informed by research and by the historical context and significant events for each child. 2. Assessments are dynamic and change in the light of emerging issues and risks. 3. Assessments lead to direct help for families if needed and are focused on achieving sustainable progress for children. Help given to families is proportionate to the level of need. 4. Families only tell their story once and actions / plans that have not worked in the past are not repeated.	

Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
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2.1	Issue and embed guidance and tools to staff to improve the quality of the consideration of diversity in case work with children.	Amanda Andrews	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
2.2	Issue guidance and good practice exemplars to staff about assessments and use of research and analysis including historical information.	Errol Albert	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
2.3	Undertake dip sampling of assessments to ensure that families histories are taken into account and research informs appropriate interventions.	Palvinder Kudhail	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
2.4	Understand and report on the reasons for high numbers of assessments that lead to no further action.	Amanda Andrews	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
2.5	Develop, issue and embed revised guidance on safety plans with a stronger focus on ensuring that they are robust and up to date, and share good practice exemplars with staff.	Amanda Andrews	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
2.6	Evidence better oversight of outcomes and follow up of feedback in return home interviews in plans for children though audit activity.	Ollie Foxell	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	

				What more needs to be done:	
2.7	Identify and develop initiatives / interventions that supports mothers who have repeat pregnancies where children are removed.	Errol Albert	31 March 2023	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

Recommendation 3: The quality of social workers' direct work with children.

Outcomes we are seeking to achieve:

1. Children and young people benefit from stable and meaningful relationships with social workers.
2. Practice is based on understanding each child's day-to-day lived experience and is informed by the most recent assessment.
3. Plans set out clearly the detail of the direct work required based on the needs of the individual child.
4. Children are seen regularly and seen alone by their social worker and children understand what is happening to them.
5. Children are safer as a result of the help they receive.
6. An increased number of children and young people engage in participation activity including 'We do Care' and routinely share their views, wishes and feelings.

Red: Little or no progress/at risk
Amber: Progressing with minor delay
Green: Good progress / on track
Blue: Completed / embedded

Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
3.1	Undertake a series of workshops across all teams about effective direct work with children and share tools and techniques that can be used.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
3.2	Review and issue guidance and good practice exemplars for plans to be clear and focused, avoiding generic statements.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

3.3	Feedback to be sought from a sample of children and young people in relation to their experience and impact of the work undertaken with them.	Gareth Morgan	30 November 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
Recommendation 4: The support provided to children aged 16 and 17 years who present as homeless.					
Outcomes we are seeking to achieve: 1. Young people receive timely and effective support that prevents the need for them to become homeless. 2. More young people on the edge of care are presented to the Legal Planning and New Admissions Panel in a timely way increasingly the opportunity for earlier intervention. 3. A reduction in the number of young people living in unsuitable accommodation. 4. Young people identified as requiring joint assessments of need with housing that are compliant with the Southwark Judgment, are carefully monitored to ensure they receive the support they need from all services.					Red: Little or no progress/at risk Amber: Progressing with minor delay Green: Good progress / on track Blue: Completed / embedded
Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
4.1	Undertake a dip sample of all young people at risk of or homeless to ensure that practice for 16/17-year-old homeless is in line with the agreed protocol and guidance and Southwark Judgement.	Amanda Andrews	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
4.2	In response to findings from the review above (4.1), develop a specific set of actions that address identified areas for development.	Amanda Andrews	31 July 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
4.3	Complete a further review of children aged 16 and 17 years who have recently presented as homeless. This will include those who present directly to housing and third sector organisations to	Amanda Andrews	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

	assess impact of the revised protocol and guidance.				
Recommendation 5: The impact of independent reviewing officers (IROs) in decisively escalating children's cases when there is drift and delay in the progress of their care plans					
Outcomes we are seeking to achieve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) offer strong, positive challenge through flexible and supportive actions to drive forward good practice and bring effective, timely support which prevents unnecessary drift and leads to improved outcomes for children and families. 2. IROs apply robust scrutiny which impacts the care planning and review process for each child. IROs are strong advocates for children and young people and work diligently to ensure the child's wishes and feelings are given full consideration and that the care plan fully reflects the child's current needs. 3. Plans to make permanent arrangements for children and young people are effective and regularly reviewed by IROs. 4. IROs challenging any shortfalls in care plan actions and checking the progress of children in between their statutory reviews. They ensure that children are seen and supported to contribute to their review and to influence planning. 5. An increased number of children and young people participate in their review. 6. IRO review outcomes are recorded within 5 days of the child's review and this is closely monitored. 				Red: Little or no progress/at risk Amber: Progressing with minor delay Green: Good progress / on track Blue: Completed / embedded	
Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
5.1	When IROs escalate cases as a result of drift and delay, the IRO will set specific actions they will take to address the identified problem. These actions are in addition to those set for the allocated social worker.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
5.2	Develop a data set and use this to track and report monthly on the timeliness of resolving IRO resolutions.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
5.3	IRO Practice standards to be shared with social work teams to	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 June 2022	Action status:	

	embed the CLA review process within all social work teams.			Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
5.4	Undertake dip sampling of the impact of the IRO footprint on casefiles, consistency of the use of the agreed headings, and compliance with IRO practice standards.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
Recommendation 6: Improve the quality of case supervision for social workers in order that it promotes consistently effective work with children					
Outcomes we are seeking to achieve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular supervision takes place which promotes a reflective and analytical approach to children and families' needs. 2. Supervision is utilised to increase workers' confidence, competence and their ability to think critically leading to improved decision making and effective interventions with children and families. 3. Supervision is held within timescales reducing drift and delay and supporting case progression and this is closely monitored. 					Red: Little or no progress/at risk Amber: Progressing with minor delay Green: Good progress / on track Blue: Completed / embedded
Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
6.1	Revise case work supervision template so that there is a distinct focus on impact, reflection, and what needs to be done to secure a good outcome for the child.	Palvinder Kudhail	31 May 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
6.2	Workshop with managers to consult on the above prior to implementation.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
6.3	Implement and embed the revised supervision guidance and	Aman Sekhon-Gill	31 August 2022	Action status:	

	undertake live observations of case work supervision to assess impact.			Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
6.4	Through our quality assurance programme, complete a review to assess the quality and impact of supervision across all teams.	Aman Sekhon-Gill	30 September 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

Recommendation 7: The engagement and participation of children in care in the corporate parenting work of the Council

Outcomes we are seeking to achieve:

1. Children and young people are encouraged to express their views, wishes and feelings, and these are considered in the planning and delivery of services.
2. The local authority is a committed corporate parent that recognises and prioritises the needs of children in all aspects, such as housing, career opportunities, education and learning.
3. Children in care and care leavers are helped to understand their rights, entitlements and responsibilities. Care leavers are well-informed about access to their records, assistance to find employment, training and financial support.
4. The local authority celebrates the achievements of children in care and care leavers. It shows it is ambitious for their futures.

Red: Little or no progress/at risk
Amber: Progressing with minor delay
Green: Good progress / on track
Blue: Completed / embedded

Ref	Action	Accountable Lead	Deadline for completion	Progress, impact and what more needs to be done	Progress RAG
7.1	Launch Buckinghamshire's Participation Strategy 2022-2025.	Gareth Morgan	31 May 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
7.2	Embed feedback from participation with children and young people into all reports to the Corporate Parenting Panel.	Alison Munt	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

7.3	Undertake periodic checks to evidence that care leavers understand their entitlements and how to access support.	Alison Munt	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	
7.4	Team Managers to ensure Personal Advisors understand the Local Offer and use this knowledge in their work.	Alison Munt	30 June 2022	Action status:	
				Impact against outcomes set:	
				What more needs to be done:	

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Report to Cabinet

Date:	12 July 2022
Title:	Buckinghamshire Levelling Up Framework: Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for All
Cabinet Member(s):	Councillor Martin Tett
Contact officer:	Sarah Ashmead Deputy Chief Executive Sarah.Ashmead@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	Booker, Cressex & Castlefield, Totteridge & Bowerdean, Ryemead & Micklefield, Abbey, Terriers & Amersham Hill. West Wycombe, Aylesbury South West, Aylesbury North- West, Aylesbury North, Chesham.
Recommendations:	To agree to the proposals for a Buckinghamshire Levelling Up Framework and to support the programme 'Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for All'
Reason for decision:	In order to establish a shared commitment and approach across Buckinghamshire to addressing disparities in outcomes within our communities.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 Outcomes for people living in Buckinghamshire are some of the best in the country. However, there are also parts of the county where residents experience significant hardship. The Council, in discussion with partners, has been exploring the potential for a local approach to 'levelling up' within Buckinghamshire designed to address disparities of outcomes experienced by particular communities within the county and promote community wellbeing and increased productivity. The proposed framework attached at Appendix 1 is designed to set the context for this approach, establish a shared ambition and a programme of work to tackle the underlying

issues. This framework will also form part of the negotiations with Government on a County Deal for Buckinghamshire.

- 1.2 At the meeting of Council in April 2022, Members committed to producing a report on Levelling Up within 3 months. This report sets out the initial plans for taking action to secure long term change.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 Residents are currently experiencing unprecedented pressures in the cost of living and rising inflation levels suggest that these pressures will become more acute as the year progresses. The Council has developed a comprehensive programme of support for those struggling with financial hardship, under the umbrella of its Helping Hand brand. However, this support can only be a short-term solution. Long term financial resilience for residents relies on tackling underlying issues including skills, work readiness, employment and debt management.
- 2.2 The Government has placed 'Levelling up' at the heart of its agenda to recover after the pandemic. The Levelling Up White Paper published in February 2022 sets out 12 national missions designed to spread opportunity across the whole UK and improve everyday life and life chances for people in underperforming places. Building on the Levelling Up missions, the attached framework "Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for All" is aimed at spreading opportunities and promoting pride in place in Buckinghamshire. It is a partner document to the Buckinghamshire proposition "Succeeding as a Place, Succeeding as a Country" which focuses on our ambition for economic recovery and a devolution deal.
- 2.3 'Opportunity Bucks' provides a framework for the Council, key partners and local community groups to focus together on tackling those local priorities that will make a difference to the outcomes of residents. It sets out an ambition to reduce inequality, whilst improving outcomes for all. This will be underpinned by a programme of work focused on five themes:
 - Education and Skills
 - Jobs and career opportunities
 - Quality of our Public Realm
 - Standard of living
 - Health and Wellbeing
- 2.4 Initially, the focus of the programme will be on 10 wards in parts of Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham which experience particular challenges in terms of outcomes. These wards are as follows:
 - **High Wycombe –**
 - Booker, Cressex & Castlefield

- Totteridge & Bowerdean
- Ryemead & Micklefield
- Abbey
- Terriers & Amersham Hill
- West Wycombe
- **Aylesbury**
 - Aylesbury South West
 - Aylesbury North-West
 - Aylesbury North
- **Chesham**

- 2.4 Local action plans to tackle the five themes will be developed for each area through engagement with the communities, led by the Community Boards. Each plan will need to be designed in a way that adds value to existing activity in the area.
- 2.5 Depending on progress, there may be opportunities to extend the programme to include other areas in the future, and this consideration will form part of the regular monitoring and evaluation.
- 2.6 A 'Levelling Up' Programme Board, chaired by the Chief Executive, has been established to bring partners together to help drive the development and delivery of the programme. This is a multiagency board reporting into the Growth Board, chaired by the Leader. As set out in Appendix 1, a series of metrics will be tracked regularly and reported to Cabinet in order to assess progress and impact.
- 2.7 This strategy will require long term and sustained commitment by the Council and its partners. Partner organisations will also consider the policy framework through their individual governance arrangements over the next few weeks, with a view to signing up to it. The document will be updated to include the logos of all partner organisations prior to the launch.
- 2.8 The Council, in liaison with partners, has submitted a bid to join the 'Making Every Adult Matters' (MEAM) Network to support the programme. This is a national network, support by national lottery funding, which currently supports 32 local areas to transform services and systems for people facing multiple disadvantage. If successful, we will be able to draw on support and advice on the MEAM approach to help shape the Buckinghamshire programme together with training for key staff and opportunities to learn and network with practitioners in other areas.

3. Legal and financial implications

- 3.1 As we develop the detailed action plans, resources may be required for initial investment in the priority areas. It is recommended that £1.5m p.a. for 3-years is put aside to support the programme, with the release of funding being dependent upon

the approval of agreed business cases by the Leader. This will be funded from uncommitted earmarked reserves.

4. Corporate implications

- 4.1 This is a cross-cutting programme which will draw on contributions from all parts of the council. Demand for many of the council's front-line services is disproportionately high within these communities, and the programme therefore offers significant opportunities to support service objectives. As the detailed work to shape the programme progresses, it may require changes in the service delivery models within the specific communities in order to respond to local need. Any such proposals will be determined in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member as appropriate.

5. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 5.1 Meetings are planned with the Chairman of the Community Boards and the local councillors in the wards identified in order to consult them about the key issues to be addressed in each locality, and the role that local members will play in shaping the plans to compliment and build upon existing activity within the communities.

6. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 6.1 Communication and engagement with the local communities will be at the heart of the proposed approach. Community Boards will play a key role in leading the engagement with the communities to identify priorities for the local action plans.
- 6.2 A communications plan will be produced for the programme as a whole, together with individual plans for communication and engagement with the specific communities. This will include mechanisms for gathering regular feedback in order to monitor the impact of the programme.
- 3.4 A conference to launch the programme is being planned for September 2022. This will provide an opportunity to establish a shared vision across a range of stakeholders, raise the profile of the programme across the county, and develop the plans around the five themes.

7. Next steps and review

- 7.1 Next steps in developing the programme will include commencing the engagement with local communities and developing action plans for the local areas and the five strategic themes. It is recommended that an update on progress should be reported to Cabinet in November 2022, and at six monthly intervals after that.

8. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 8.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone 01296 382343 or email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

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OPPORTUNITY BUCKS – SUCCEEDING FOR ALL

A local response to Levelling Up



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- 5. Our Approach
- 6. Taking Action
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1. INTRODUCTION

Buckinghamshire is a beautiful place to live and work, famous for its natural environment and its quality of life.

As the 'entrepreneurial heart of Britain' we are home to both global brands and large numbers of small and medium sized businesses which underpin our strong economy. We have robust and effective partnerships which bring together public service bodies, business leadership and the voluntary and community sector, and together we are ambitious for our communities and our residents.

Whilst the majority of our communities are thriving in the county, we know that in some areas of Buckinghamshire people are experiencing significant hardship. As partners, we want to come together with these communities and draw upon our collective resources to enhance opportunities and promote community wellbeing.



LEVELLING UP

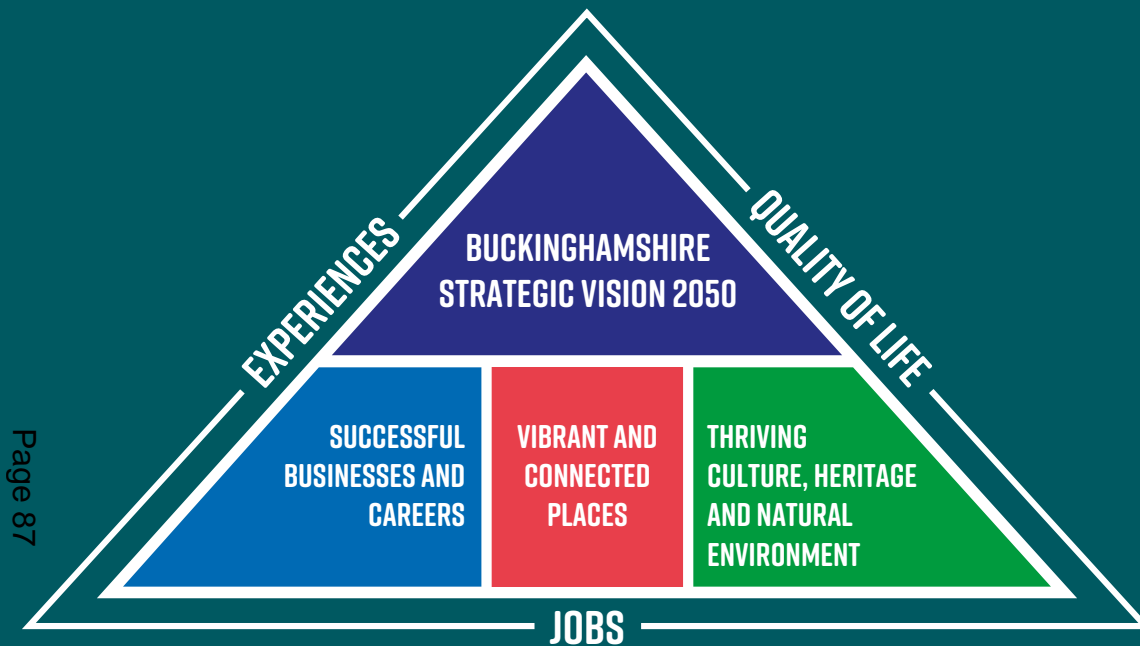
The Government has placed 'Levelling up' at the heart of its agenda to recover after the pandemic. The Levelling Up White Paper published in February 2022 sets out 12 national missions designed to spread opportunity across the whole UK and improve everyday life and life chances for people in underperforming places. These missions are grouped into four themes:

- a) Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging - with a focus on living standards, research and development, transport infrastructure and digital connectivity
- b) Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest - with a focus on education, skills, health and wellbeing
- c) Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost - with a focus on pride in place, housing, and crime
- d) Local Leadership - with a focus on devolution deals from national to local government.

"It is about improving living standards and growing the private sector, particularly where it is weak. It is about increasing and spreading opportunity, because while talent is evenly distributed, opportunity is not. It is about improving health, education and policing, particularly where they are not good enough. It is also about strengthening community and local leadership, restoring pride in place, and improving quality of life in ways that are not just about the economy"

(Boris Johnson, May 2021)

SUCCEEDING AS A PLACE, SUCCEEDING AS A COUNTRY



The Buckinghamshire Growth Board has set out a shared strategic vision for Buckinghamshire for 2050.

The vision is underpinned by three interlinked strategic ambitions that will guide a thriving, resilient, successful, connected, healthier and inclusive Buckinghamshire.

Building on the Levelling Up missions, **"Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for All"** is aimed at spreading opportunity and promoting pride in place in Buckinghamshire. It is a partner document to the Buckinghamshire proposition **"Succeeding as a Place, Succeeding as a Country"** which focuses on our ambition for economic recovery and a devolution deal.

Change will not happen overnight and we know that this is a long term commitment.

This Framework provides a clear statement of intent by Buckinghamshire partners, together with a structure for taking action and providing accountability.

2. SUMMARY

Buckinghamshire is widely known as an affluent county with great outcomes. However, we know that this overall picture masks some significant variations in outcomes, with some areas experiencing significant hardship.

'Opportunity Bucks - Succeeding for All' provides a framework for bringing partners together to focus our collective resources on tackling those local priorities that will make a difference to the outcomes of residents.

It will focus on five themes:

- Education and Skills
- Jobs and Career Opportunities
- Quality of our Public Realm
- Standard of Living
- Health and Wellbeing

Initially, the programme will be focused on 10 wards in three areas – parts of Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham. Local action plans will be developed through engagement with the communities, led by the Community Boards.

The Buckinghamshire Growth Board will provide clear accountability for the programme.



3. THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CONTEXT



AN AFFLUENT COUNTY WITH GREAT OUTCOMES

Buckinghamshire is an affluent county and residents enjoy some of the best outcomes in the UK.



Economy

- **31,470** businesses
- **249,000** jobs
- **553,100** residents
- **£17.4bn** economy



Employment

- **Low** unemployment and **Higher** than average incomes
- **15%** higher average earnings for residents than nationally
- **2.7%** of the working age population claiming unemployment benefits, compared with **3.9%** nationally



Health

Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average.



Education

- **47.5%** of residents have a degree or equivalent qualification or higher, compared to 43.5% nationally
- **66%** of children achieve grades 9-5 in GCSE English and Maths compared to 52% nationally

Data Sources:

- ONS Business Register and Employment Survey (2020)
- ONS Inter Departmental Business Register (2021)
- ONS Claimant count by sex and age (May, 2022)
- Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (2022)
- Census (2021)
- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (LA profiles 2022)
- Department for Education (2016/17 to 2020/21 for Buckinghamshire)
- ONS annual population survey (2021)



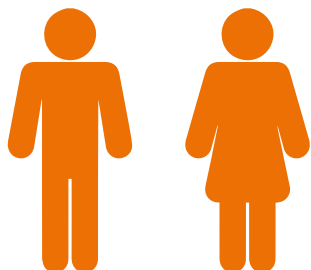
SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS IN OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES

However, we know that this overall picture masks significant variations in outcomes across the county, with some areas experiencing significant hardship. Health inequalities has long been identified as a key public health challenge to tackle in the UK. The lower an individual's socio-economic position, as defined by where they live, their job, qualifications, income and wealth, the more likely they are to experience poor health. The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have mirrored, and in some cases exacerbated, existing inequalities, impacting particularly on those who are most vulnerable and putting a spotlight on underlying health and economic challenges within our communities.

Life Expectancy

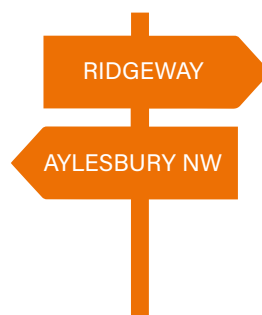
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There is a difference of 8 years for a woman and 6 years for a man depending on where you live in Buckinghamshire.

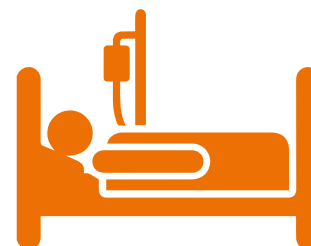
Life expectancy in North West Aylesbury is 80 years for a woman and 78 years for a man.



This contrasts with 88 years for a woman in Ridgeway East and 84 years for a man.

Hospital Admissions

Emergency hospital admissions in Aylesbury and High Wycombe are all well above the average for the county.



Financially stretched



16%

Bucks residents are identified as 'financially stretched' according to Acorn household segmentation data.

Free School Meals



10,856

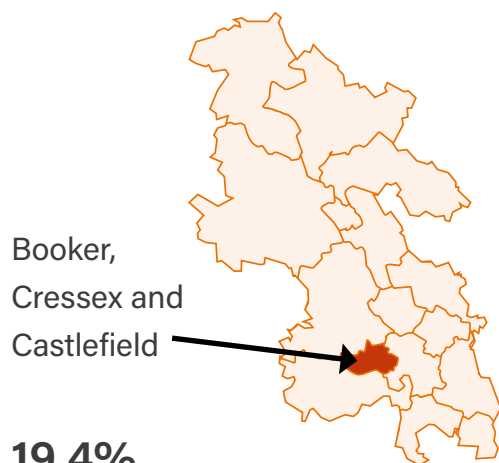
Buckinghamshire Pupils were eligible for Free School Meals (January 2022), 12.3% of all pupils. This is an increase of 1,361 pupils since January 2021.

Data Sources:

- ONS Life expectancy at birth (2019)
- NHS Hospital Activity Data (2022)
- CACI Acorn geodemographic segmentation data (2022)
- Buckinghamshire Council (free school meal data 2021)

SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS IN OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES

Universal Credit



19.4% of the working population in Booker, Cressex and Castlefield claim universal credit (April 2022), compared with 5.4% in Gerrards Cross (8.9% for Buckinghamshire).

27% of residents over the age of 16 in Booker, Cressex and Castlefield have no qualifications, compared with 10% in Gerrards Cross (17% for Buckinghamshire).

House prices and rents

Experiencing hardship in an area of relative affluence brings particular challenges. Buckinghamshire has higher than average house prices and rents.



The **average** house price in Buckinghamshire was **£549k** in November 2021.

This figure disguises considerable variation, with the **average** house price in Gerrards Cross **£1.3m**



The lack of affordable housing is a key driver of **homelessness**. There is a growing gap between local housing allowance rates and private sector rents.



£925 per month is the median cost of renting a two bedroomed dwelling in Buckinghamshire, in the private sector rental market, unaffordable for anyone on benefits, including working households on low incomes.

Challenging Landscape

The landscape is becoming even more challenging for those who are struggling with the rising cost of living and fuel crisis.

In 2020, **12.6%** of households in Booker, Cressex and Castlefield experienced **fuel poverty**. We expect that this figure will have grown since then and will continue to grow.



The impact of COVID is likely to be particularly acute in these communities too. Cases of chronic disease that weren't being managed during peak waves are likely to lead to rises in ill health. Children's development and education are likely to be hardest hit in these areas too.

Data Sources

- Department for Work and Pensions; Universal Credit Claimants (May 2022)
- MHCLG Indices of Deprivation 2019
- Land Registry Average House Prices (2022)
- Buckinghamshire Council Education Attainment Measures (2019)
- BEIS Fuel Poverty (2020)
- Valuation Office Agency. Private rental market summary statistics (Table 2.4), 2019



The six food banks in Buckinghamshire have experienced significant increases in demand.

Together, they have distributed:

- **35,477 parcels in 2021**
- **26,386 parcels in 2020**
- **13,503 parcels in 2019**



The top five reasons for people being referred to the food bank (June to August 2021) are:

- **Debt (19%)**
- **Housing/homeless (14%)**
- **Benefits related issues (13%)**
- **Sickness and ill health (12%)**
- **Work-related changes such as reduced hours or loss of work (9%)**



Levels of crime impact significantly on the wellbeing of the population and satisfaction with their neighbourhood.

Areas suffering high levels of deprivation suffer disproportionately from crime. Total crime offences across Buckinghamshire is:

- **69.7 per 1,000 residents as of February 2022**
- **Abbey ward, the rate is 199 per 1,000 residents**
- **Ridgeway East, the rate is 26 per 1,000 residents**

Data Sources

- ONECAN Monthly Food Bank Reports (2022)
- Police UK - Buckinghamshire crime offence rates (2022)



SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS IN OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES

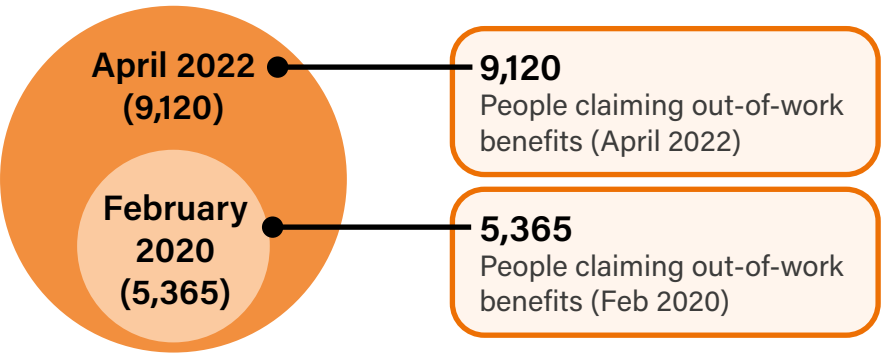
Employment

The number of claimants in Buckinghamshire is almost double that of pre-pandemic levels despite an unprecedented increase in the number of vacancies seen across the county. The high percentage of people unemployed in areas of Wycombe contrasts with the high number of vacancies: Wycombe reported the highest number of job posts in Jan-Mar 2022. In December 2021 the roles with the most postings were admin, nursing, customer service and social care roles.

These areas have high proportions of people from Ethnic Minority groups compared to the rest of the county, as well as a high proportion of people with no qualifications, lower levels of people with degrees or higher qualifications, high numbers of children receiving free school meals and high rates of children living in areas of deprivation.

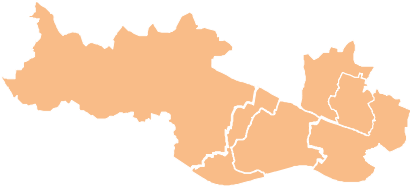
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The number of unemployment benefit claimants is still much higher than pre-pandemic levels



High number of job postings reported in High Wycombe, including in areas where unemployment is highest

Upskilling unemployed people in areas of High Wycombe could help fill job vacancies.



Number of job postings in High Wycombe as follows:

- 4,460 Oct-Dec 2019
- 5,210 Oct-Dec 2021
- Increase of 17%

Skills needed



Nursing



Business Admin



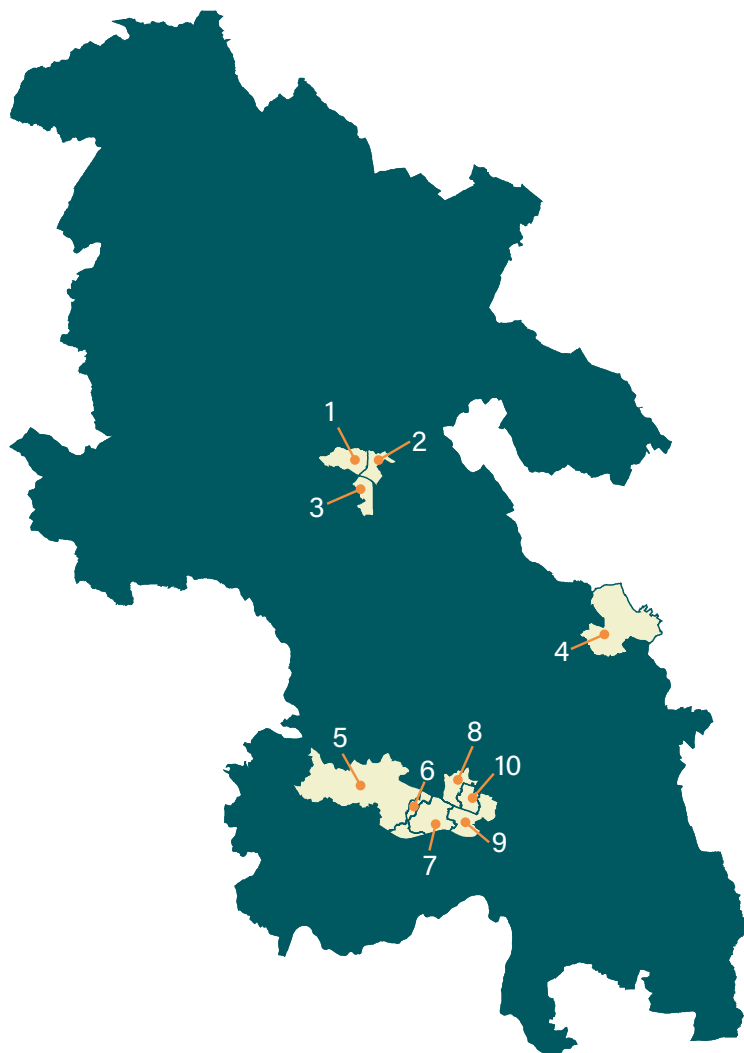
Customer Services



Social Care

Data Sources
• ONS Claimant count by sex and age
• Buckinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (2022)

SIGNIFICANT VARIATIONS IN OUTCOMES FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES



Together, the mix of factors result in poorer outcomes for the individuals, pressure on public services and constraints on the growth potential of the county.

The 10 wards experiencing the poorest outcomes across multiple indicators of inequality within Buckinghamshire are:

- **High Wycombe**
 - Booker, Cressex & Castlefield
 - Totteridge & Bowerdean
 - Ryemead & Micklefield
 - Abbey
 - Terriers & Amersham Hill
 - West Wycombe
- **Aylesbury**
 - Aylesbury South West
 - Aylesbury North-West
 - Aylesbury North
- **Chesham**

Ward areas

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Aylesbury North West | 6. Booker, Cressex and Castlefield |
| 2. Aylesbury North | 7. Abbey |
| 3. Aylesbury South West | 8. Terriers and Amersham Hill |
| 4. Chesham | 9. Ryemead and Micklefield |
| 5. West Wycombe | 10. Totteridge and Bowerdean |

4. OUR AMBITION AND PRIORITIES



AMBITION

Reduce inequality whilst improving outcomes for all

Together, our public, private and voluntary sector services have played a vital role in responding to the pandemic in Buckinghamshire. Throughout this period, we have delivered at speed, working in partnership together locally to support communities.

As we turn our attention to tackling the significant challenges ahead, **we are ambitious for Buckinghamshire.**

We have an innovative recovery and growth proposition that will accelerate economic growth and prosperity for the county. Our plans will build on our distinctive and internationally recognised economic assets to deliver quality jobs, a strong talent pipeline, and quality, low carbon and connected communities for people to live and work. Through investing in regeneration schemes in our town centres, we want to create vibrant town centres that meet the needs of residents and businesses.

But we also want to ensure that nobody gets left behind. We want to reduce inequality within our communities, whilst improving outcomes for all our residents.



Everyone in Buckinghamshire should have the opportunity of achieving:

- A good quality job, that pay enough money to support a decent quality of life
- Good standard of attainment and skills
- Learning and career progression
- Good mental and physical wellbeing and independent living
- Decent, warm home and good quality food
- Involvement in shaping their community, with strong social connections
- A feeling of being safe where they live
- Pride in where they live

We want to ensure that all Buckinghamshire residents have the opportunity to succeed in life, to play their part in and share in the success of the county. But this is not the position today and we know that things will get worse if we don't come together as partners and take action.

Our ambitions of developing the local economy and reducing inequalities are intrinsically linked. By breaking the cycle of disadvantage, we will improve health outcomes and grow our economy.

The purpose of this framework is to establish a shared vision for what levelling up means in Buckinghamshire and to translate it into specific initiatives and strategies locally which will improve living standards and opportunity across the county.



OUR PRIORITIES

We will focus on five key themes:

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- Helping the under 5s catch up post Covid-19
- Joined up skills and careers system that offers young people and adults access to quality education and training opportunities in Buckinghamshire

JOBS AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Good quality positions that pay a decent salary and provide progression opportunities, combined with active support for residents to secure employment

QUALITY OF PUBLIC REALM

- Public realm improvements which will promote a sense of wellbeing in our communities

STANDARD OF LIVING

- Assistance for residents in finding sustainable solutions to difficulties with decent housing, warmth, food and debt

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Engaging communities in mental and physical health initiatives, and supporting businesses with a healthy workforce and reduced absenteeism

In tackling these priorities, we will initially focus our action on those wards where residents experience a combination of inequalities:

- **High Wycombe**
 - Booker, Cressex & Castlefield
 - Totteridge & Bowerdean
 - Ryemead & Micklefield
 - Abbey
 - Terriers & Amersham Hill
 - West Wycombe
- **Aylesbury**
 - Aylesbury South West
 - Aylesbury North-West
 - Aylesbury North
- **Chesham**

Where possible, we will draw on the initiatives and learning being developed through the Levelling Up White Paper.

5. OUR APPROACH



PLACE BASED PARTNERSHIP

Buckinghamshire is an aligned county, with a shared geography between the Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Healthcare NHS Trust and Buckinghamshire Business First. Our universities, further education providers and voluntary and community sector are also closely tied in, giving us a unique ability to unite key organisations to deliver coherently for the benefit of all. This strong collaborative model means that we are able to take effective action to tackle inequalities on a place basis.

RECOGNISING LOCAL IDENTITY

Our commitment to localism is a key strength that we can draw on. We recognise that our communities are distinct places, with their own local sense of identity, and their own definitions of success. Local residents need to be at the core of what we do. In developing levelling up plans, we will work with residents at a local level to ensure that action builds on local strengths and responds to the needs, ambitions and experiences of the specific individual communities. Our Community Boards will play a critical role in this.

INNOVATION

As partners, we already have a range of services and initiatives in place in the identified communities. Many of these will be focused on responding to the result of inequality, rather than tackling the root causes. We need to take account of these but also be prepared to try new ideas that can build sustainable change. We will develop pilots that we can learn from, evaluate and, where appropriate, scale up. We will also learn from the initiatives developed nationally, as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper.

EVIDENCE BASED

We want to ensure we have a firm evidence base for developing our approach. We have a wealth of statistical information which will support us but we also want to expand our insight into the barriers experienced by the identified communities and the approaches that are most effective. We will invest in qualitative research and insight to inform our strategy. We will also use and develop this evidence base to monitor the impact of any interventions that are delivered.

6. TAKING ACTION



Working with the communities, we will identify key priorities and develop local action plans which tackle each of the five themes. In Year one, this could include:

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- Develop localised skills plans, matched to the needs of local employers
- Develop a local version of the National Youth Guarantee concept tailored to the needs of the communities

JOB AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Expand the number of apprenticeships taken up by residents in partnership with local businesses
- Identify entry level job opportunities and paid internships that can be targeted at the communities, working with DWP restart providers
- Develop 'work readiness' programmes for residents in the communities who have limited work experience

QUALITY OF OUR PUBLIC REALM

- Develop and deliver a Regeneration plan for each of the three town centres
- Produce a delivery plan for public realm improvements in each of the communities

STANDARD OF LIVING

- Through our 'financial insecurity' partnership, roll out a scheme that provides advice and support and helps people out of debt
- Working with the Buckinghamshire Food Partnership, implement the recommendations of the 2020 Sustain report
- Review our approach to 'affordable warmth' and develop an action plan for 2022+

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Undertake public health projects targeted at the particular needs of the communities (including cardiovascular health)

By strengthening coordination across partners and collaboration with local communities, we will seek to maximise the benefit of the existing multi-agency resources already deployed in these communities. Where appropriate, we will build business cases for investment in specific projects and bid for external funding to support our objectives.

7. OVERSEEING DELIVERY



Governance

The Buckinghamshire Growth Board will be responsible for the governance of the programme, underpinned by a partnership steering group which will oversee the detailed development and delivery of our approach. This will include a lead champion for each of the five themes.

The Community Boards in Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Chesham will play a key role in overseeing the development and delivery of the local action plans.

Monitoring and Evaluating Impact

Levelling up is not going to happen overnight. This strategy requires long term and sustained commitment and it would not be appropriate to set targets at this stage. To assess progress, performance will be tracked against key metrics measured at community level in order to understand the direction of travel, including measures that evidence:

- Healthy life expectancy
- Unemployment rates
- Early Years and Primary education attainment
- GCSE performance
- Completion of skills training
- Number of children eligible for free school meals
- Crime and anti-social behaviour
- Quality of the environment
- Number of people living with multiple morbidities
- People's satisfaction with their neighbourhood and community connectedness (measured through an annual survey and focus groups)

Views and feedback will also be gathered from communities and partners to evaluate impact.

Progress will be reported to the Buckinghamshire Growth Board and the Council's Cabinet on a regular basis.

OPPORTUNITY BUCKS – SUCCEEDING FOR ALL

A local response to Levelling Up



Report to Cabinet

Date:	12 July 2022
Title:	Town and Parish Charter
Relevant councillor(s):	Cllr Steve Bowles, Communities Portfolio
Author and/or contact officer:	Hannah Thynne, Head of Policy & Partnerships / Simon Garwood, Senior Policy Officer (Town & Parish Council lead)
Ward(s) affected:	None specific
Recommendations:	To adopt the proposed charter that outlines Buckinghamshire Council's commitment to working with Town and Parish Councils across the county and to note the action plan that supports the delivery of our commitments in the charter.
Reason for decision:	To demonstrate and embed our commitment to effective working with Town and Parish Councils across the Council.

1. Background

- 1.1 Town and Parish Councils (T&PC's) are the grass roots of local government in Buckinghamshire. Following the establishment of the new Buckinghamshire Council Members wanted to take the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between all tiers of local government.
- 1.2 Since the new council there has been an ongoing programme of work to create a document that outlines this commitment and articulates some key areas to help cement a strengthened relationship.
- 1.3 This work has involved extensive engagement with local councils, members and has been supported by an independent consultant.

- 1.4 Following this work the recommendation was for Buckinghamshire Council to produce a document which sets out a framework for how Buckinghamshire Council will work with local councils going forward.
- 1.5 The document is titled the Town and Parish Charter and is attached at appendix A. This sets out assurances on the relationship between Buckinghamshire Council and the 171 town and parish councils in Buckinghamshire and aims to help articulate a commitment and ambition to work collaboratively. It is an important document which helps define the relationship and will need to be embedded across the organisation as part of our commitment to working together.
- 1.6 Underpinning the Charter is an action plan that is detailed in Appendix B.
- 1.7 This action plan will establish mechanisms for accountability and how the charter will become embedded within the council and in the ongoing relationship with local councils.
- 1.8 It also addresses a number of areas for improvement which came out of the development of the Charter.
- 1.9 Within the Deputy Chief Executives directorate, the Partnerships, Policy and Communications team will act as the lead service in implementing the action plan and building on the existing relationship to ensure effective partnership and joint working between the two tiers of local government.
- 1.10 This won't however replace existing relationships and arrangements for engagement and consultation with local councils on specific service issues.

2. Legal and financial implications

- 2.1 There are no legal and financial implications as a direct result of implementing the Charter. However, the action plan includes actions for individual services which may have small budgetary implications which will be picked up within existing budgets as appropriate.

3. Corporate implications

- 3.1 All directorates will be expected to follow the principles of the Charter.

4. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 4.1 During the development of the Charter, all Buckinghamshire councillors were consulted and given the opportunity to comment. Further views of local members were also sought by the independent consultant during their review, including cabinet members and community board chairmen.

5. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 5.1 Once the Charter is agreed the details of this will be shared widely across the council, with elected members and to all local councils.

6. Next steps and review

- 6.1 Following agreement, the Town and Parish Charter will be published on our website and shared as detailed above.
- 6.2 Officers will also monitor the progress of the action plan and review the Charter on an annual basis ensuring consultation with Buckinghamshire councillors and town and parish councils. Any key changes to the Charter itself will be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

Your questions and views (for key decisions)

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

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Buckinghamshire Council's Town & Parish Charter

Our commitment to working with
all local councils in Buckinghamshire

Introduction

This commitment is founded on our respect for all councils in Buckinghamshire as independent, democratically accountable bodies and has one simple aim - to articulate and demonstrate our commitment to work together to serve the people of Buckinghamshire. We have a common purpose to improve the economic, environmental, health and social wellbeing of Buckinghamshire and its residents, businesses and visitors. To achieve this, Buckinghamshire Council will work together with town and parish councils to:

- promote the best interests of the communities we serve,
- provide quality, value for money public services and,
- promote opportunities for greater public participation and involvement in public life.

Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Recognise that parish and town councils are independent democratically elected bodies who work within their own financial constraints and represent communities at a truly local level.
- Understand that parish and town councils are a key connection between the unitary council and their community who can help improve services and foster greater community empowerment, especially through devolution and community boards.
- Develop an action plan that will embed the charter and its aims across the council and to ensure that its delivery is monitored and any arising issues addressed.



To Enable Effective Communication Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Appoint a cabinet member as the council's lead for relationships with parish and town councils and the champion of local councils.
- Establish a senior role within the Policy and Partnerships team to lead on strategic relationships with parish and town councils and local associations.
- Provide a single priority telephone number and email for parish and town councils and a list of key officer contacts (updated every 6 months) to use when contacting Buckinghamshire Council.
- Provide a list of all Buckinghamshire Councillors and their contact details on the Buckinghamshire Council website.
- Ensure a wide range of effective channels are in place to enable two-way communication, spanning all levels of the organisation, including focus groups and local meetings to address issues around service delivery where necessary.
- Work in partnership to explore further opportunities for devolution where this will benefit local communities, in accordance with Buckinghamshire Council policies*.
- Provide parish councils with advance notice/schedule of consultations and aim to allow at least 6 weeks for responses wherever possible.
- Work towards developing a consistent approach to producing summary reports for lengthy consultations and briefings on complex issues, which include a focus on implications for parish councils.

**It is recognised that not all parish and town councils have the resources or the desire to take on additional services and assets and there is no compulsion or expectation to do so.*

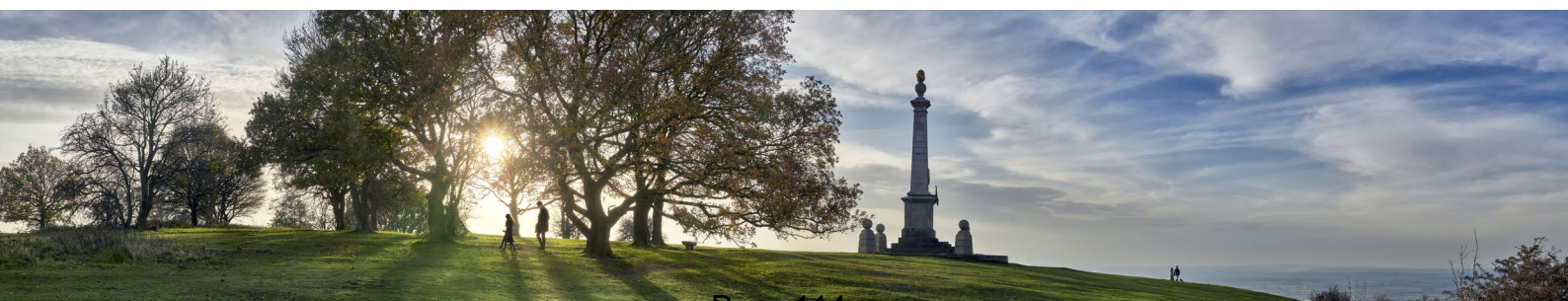


To Provide Effective Services and Collaboration Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Encourage Buckinghamshire ward councillors to attend parish and town council meetings.
- Ensure there are opportunities to comment on proposed changes to services that will significantly impact parish and town councils.
- Provide early communication and support in all financial transactions with parish and town councils including precept payments and invoices for the administration of elections, polls and referendums.
- Work with BMKALC to provide training, support and resources to assist parish and town councils including specific training or briefing sessions e.g. standards, planning, local neighbourhood plans and local emergency plans.
- Provide specifications for relevant services along with procedures for monitoring and reporting any developing service issues.
- Improve and agree response times for key services to respond to information requests from parish and town councils.
- Support parish and town councils to address local needs through the provision of advice and signposting.

To enable Parish and Town Councils to contribute to the planning process Buckinghamshire Council will...

- Adopt a 'Statement of Community Involvement' regarding consultation with parish and town councils on planning issues.
- Equip parish and town councils with the knowledge and skills to enable them to share the views of the communities they represent.
- Enable parish and town councils to set policies for their own local areas by preparing Neighbourhood Plans.
- Ensure parish and town councils have the right to request a 'call in' of an application to the committee or request a Buckinghamshire Councillor do that for them and are given a dedicated speaking slot where they have made representation.
- Consult parish and town councils when producing the Buckinghamshire Local Plan that will replace the current adopted local plans on completion, and in addition to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.



All Councils Charter Action Plan

Ref	Action	Quality Criteria	Lead	Support	Due Date	RAG Status
1.00	Raising awareness of the Charter					
1.01	Develop and implement internal communication and engagement plan to raise awareness of the charter and embed the objectives of the Charter across the council	Uses appropriate channels and mechanisms to raise awareness amongst both officers and Members and to embed the objectives across the council. Also to raise awareness internally of the role and value of town & parish councils and town & parish council meetings. Includes feedback mechanisms and contact details for further details.	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Communications & Engagement Team	Aug-22	Green - on track
1.02	Develop and implement an external communication plan to raise awareness of our commitment to the charter	Particularly focused on raising awareness amongst town & parish councils	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Communications & Engagement Team	Jul-22	Green - on track
2.00	Ensuring Effective Communication					
2.01	Appoint a Cabinet Member as Buckinghamshire council's lead member for relationships with parish and town councils.	To act as lead for relationships with the parish and town councils and champion of local councils	Leader of the council	-	May-21	Complete
2.02	Create a senior officer role to lead on strategic relationships with local councils and associations	To act as key strategic lead for day to day relationships and escalation point for unresolved operational matters. Day to day responsibility for implementation of the town and parish charter action plan.	Head of Policy & Partnerships	-	Apr-22	Complete
2.03	Provide a list of all Buckinghamshire councillors and also parish and town councils on website with contact details	Ensure changes and updates are timely and accurate and that relevant services are notified e.g. Policy and Partnerships, Community Boards, Highways etc	Democratic Services	-	Apr-20	Complete

2.04	Provide single priority telephone number and mailbox for parish and town councils to use when contacting Buckinghamshire council customer service centre about operational issues	Ensure priority access to town and parish councils and timely responses	Business Operations	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Apr-20	Complete
2.05	Develop key list of contacts for services relevant to town and parish councils	Outline key points and of interaction between Buckinghamshire council and local councils. Define key contact points and responsibilities / purpose. Co-design single list of key officer contacts for all key BC services relevant to town & parish councils. Consult with town & parish councils as the draft develops.	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	All Services	Aug-22	Green - on track
2.06	Develop an appropriate meetings framework and calendar of activities between Buckinghamshire Council and town and parish councils	Map key liaison meetings / forums and engagement with local councils and local associations. co-design meetings framework and calendar of key meetings, activities and events with local councils. Consult with town & parish councils as the draft develops. Issue regular town and parish council Newsletters. Consult with local councils on content and frequency. Content to be relevant, useful and up to date.	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	BMKALC	Sep-22	Green - on track
2.07	Develop, plan and deliver an annual 'parish Conference' in partnership BMKALC	Work in partnership with BMALC and local associations to ensure consultation with town and parish councils on content of conference Clear on purpose and theme of the conference Identify key speakers / topics	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	BMKALC	Jul-23	
Consultation						

2.08	Produce an annual list of consultations and a schedule ensuring parish councils are given early warning of dates and at least 6 weeks to respond where possible	Must have a sustainable supporting process to regularly update the list	Consultation & Engagement Lead	All Services	Dec-22	
2.09	Develop and implement a process for the drafting of summary reports for lengthy / complex BC consultations which are of particular interest to town and parish councils	Consider Must be a sustainable process. Develop a process enabling and encouraging services to provide briefings for town and parish councils on complex consultations. Consider existing contact / engagement points and how they might be utilised.	Consultation & Engagement Lead	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Dec-22	
3.00 Effective Services & Collaboration						
3.01	Develop a process to ensure engagement with town and parish councils on key service changes that will affect them				Mar-23	
3.02	Review financial processes and support for town and parish councils	Ensure best possible service is provided in terms of precept payments and support and charges for elections	Head of Finance (Corporate) Head of Democratic Services)	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Mar-23	
3.03	Provide specifications for relevant services along with procedures for monitoring and reporting any developing service issues.		Head of Highways		Mar-23	
Devolution						
3.04	Review devolution timetable to explore opportunities where appropriate.		Devolution Manager	Relevant Service Areas	Dec-22	
3.05	Consultation and Review of current highways devolution agreements to support the development of new agreements under the new highways contract.		Head of Highways		Mar-23	
Community Boards						
3.06	Provide standing invitations to town & parish councils to their local Community Boards		Community Board Managers		May-22	Complete

3.07	Provide regular Community Board Newsletters to local town & parish councils		Community Board Managers		May-22	Green - on track
Training & Support						
3.08	Develop a training plan to provide training, support and advice to key service areas	Consider the effectiveness of training sessions for key service areas Provide support and advice as required Consider the effectiveness of toolkits and guidance documents for key services Utilise the knowledge and skills of BMKALC, parish / town councillors and Clerks	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	BMKALC	Dec-22	
3.09	Develop a training plan to provide training, support and advice to parish and town councils	Equip town and parish councils with knowledge and skills to contribute to the planning process, neighbourhood planning, emergency planning, delivering devolved services Consider the effectiveness of toolkits and guidance documents for key services	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	BMKALC & Key Service Areas	Mar-23	
4.00 Planning / Local Plans						
4.01	Run regular town and parish council Planning Forums / Meetings to provide updates on Planning and discuss any major issues		Head of Planning and Development	BMKALC	May-22	Complete
4.02	Adopt 'statement of community involvement' (Planning)		Head of Planning Policy and Compliance	Consultation & Engagement Lead	Mar-23	Green - on track
4.03	Consultation on Buckinghamshire Local Plan that will replace the current adopted plans on completion		Head of Planning Policy and Compliance	Consultation & Engagement Lead	May-22	Green - on track
5.00 Monitoring, Review and Accountability						

5.01	Develop process / set of measures for monitoring the commitments made in the charter		Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Business intelligence / BMKALC	Dec-22	
5.02	Develop a process for reporting to the Communities and Localism Select Committee on the progress / success of the charter	Provide half yearly reports on compliance and review from the working group Service Directors / Cabinet Members attend Committee meeting to answer questions on service issues	Democratic Services	Senior Policy & Partnerships Officer (T&PCs)	Sep-22	

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Report to Cabinet

Date:	12 July 2022
Title:	Biodiversity Net Gain
Cabinet Member(s):	Cllr Peter Strachan; Cllr Gareth Williams
Contact officer:	Ian Thompson Corporate Director Planning, Growth and Sustainability ian.Thompson@buckinghamshire.gov.uk Report authors: David Sutherland and Simon Meecham
Ward(s) affected:	All
Recommendations:	AGREE to adopt the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document

NOTE that the proposed biodiversity net gain scheme will be bought back for consideration later in the year following the publication of guidance and secondary regulations.

Reason for decision:	To adopt the Supplementary Planning Document to provide guidance to planning applicants and to aid the decision making of the council on Biodiversity Net Gain.
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1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the new requirement to provide biodiversity net gain as part of the planning system and presents the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document for adoption. The report highlights that the proposal to run a Buckinghamshire Council biodiversity net gain scheme is currently paused pending publication of government guidance. Subject to the guidance this scheme will be brought back for consideration later in the year.
- 1.2 The Environment Act 2021 has introduced a new mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain in the planning system, to ensure that all new developments

increase biodiversity by a minimum of 10%, with this requirement coming into effect from late 2023. The aspiration for achieving biodiversity net gain is also set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and in our adopted Local Development Plans. The Supplementary Planning Document being put forward for adoption by the Council, as part of this report, explains how biodiversity net gain can be achieved in Buckinghamshire.

- 1.3 In addition, the Council has also been developing a Biodiversity Net Gain scheme that aims provide a one-stop shop for developers, enabling them to discharge their offsite biodiversity net gain obligations through financial contributions. By potentially offering a locally operated scheme to provide net gain offsets, the Council is aiming to help ensure that biodiversity net gain offsets would support habitat creation and restoration on a strategic scale within Buckinghamshire. However, this scheme will not be available until further clarification is provided by the government through the publication of detailed guidance on the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain by Local Authorities. Whilst work will continue to develop the proposed scheme, this will be brought back to Cabinet separately after taking into account government guidance once published.
- 1.4 The attached supplementary planning document can be adopted at this time without the above scheme being in place. This is on the basis that the supplementary planning document provides guidance to underpin that biodiversity net gain should be achieved within a development site; and that offsetting is only an option if it can be demonstrated that any redesign of an application cannot meet the net gain within the site, in full. The Supplementary Planning Document indicates that in the event of an offsite net gain being required, developers have the option of using a third-party biodiversity net gain offset provider or finding a bespoke offset site themselves. It notes that the option of the Buckinghamshire Council off-setting scheme is not currently available.

2. Content of report

National and local policy context.

- 2.1 Biodiversity net gain is one of the key commitments set out in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. The Environment Act has integrated the requirement to deliver biodiversity net gain by development into the planning system. The Environment Act sets out the following key components of mandatory biodiversity gain:
 - Amendment of Town & Country Planning Act (TCPA).
 - Requirement for a minimum 10% gain calculated using the Biodiversity Metric & approval of a biodiversity gain plan.

- Habitat is required to be secured for at least 30 years via planning obligations or conservation covenants.
 - Delivered on-site, off-site or via a new government statutory biodiversity credits scheme (although this would be a last resort option); and
 - The setting up of a national register for net gain delivery sites.
- 2.2 The biodiversity net gain requirements of the Act will become mandatory in November 2023, which has given local authorities a two-year transition window within which to implement net gain within the planning system. The supplementary planning document aids this implementation.
- 2.3 Biodiversity net gain requirements will supplement, but not replace or undermine, existing protections for protected sites and species or irreplaceable habitats. Indeed, critical to the understanding of the process is that a mitigation hierarchy must be followed. This requires that all possible avoidance, mitigation, and gains in biodiversity are made onsite first. Opportunities for compensation for losses of biodiversity and a net gain in biodiversity only taking place offsite if they cannot be designed into the planning application onsite. Any off-site provision is the last resort to achieve net gain.
- 2.4 Biodiversity net gain also links to another statutory requirement on local authorities under the Environment Act 2021 - the production of Local Nature Recovery Strategies that will set local biodiversity priorities and will spatially guide and direct where biodiversity net gain offsets will be strategically located at local level. Buckinghamshire was chosen to be one of five pilot areas within the Country to trial the production of Local Nature Recovery Strategies and submitted a draft prototype to Defra in June 2021.
- 2.5 Biodiversity net gain policies have been incorporated into the adopted local plans and core strategies within Buckinghamshire and as such the local policy framework now exists county-wide. To provide clarity and a clear process for developers, the biodiversity net gain supplementary planning document has been drafted, incorporating changes made following public consultation between 19 February 2021 and 19 March 2021. If adopted, it will become the first county-wide supplementary planning document for Buckinghamshire Council.
- 2.6 Whilst biodiversity net gain will become a legislative mandatory requirement later next year local authorities are still being encouraged to bring forward locally specific biodiversity net gain policies for the following reasons:
- If a local policy is in place before biodiversity net gain becomes mandatory, it allows the authority to implement biodiversity net gain prior to the

legislative requirements and also prevents the situation where applicants rush to get planning permission without any net gain before the requirement is mandatory. The council has biodiversity policies within the Local Development Documents covering all its planning areas. These policies can be used to ensure biodiversity considerations are included within planning applications; however, the policies do not state a percentage requirement for net gain. The requirement for 10% net gain will only become mandatory with the implementation of the requirement by the Environment Act, in November 2023.

- A locally specific policy allows the local authority to set what strategies they require developers to take into account in delivering BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain), e.g. Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), for example in targeting offsite BNG delivery. This will help ensure that the right habitats are provided in the right places.

Summary of how biodiversity net gain offsetting schemes operate

- 2.7 Demonstrating BNG requires an approach to measuring biodiversity. The impact of a development on biodiversity is calculated using a standardised “biodiversity metric”. Mandatory biodiversity net gain will require use of the latest version of the metric, the current version of which is Biodiversity Metric 3.1. The impact is expressed in biodiversity units, based mainly on the type (the distinctiveness), condition and extent of the habitats affected. Developers should ensure that potential negative impacts on biodiversity (losses), predicted through applying the metric, are either
- avoided in the first place,
 - or are otherwise minimised / mitigated,
 - compensated for *on the development site* through careful design.
- 2.8 After all efforts on-site to avoid, mitigate and compensate for any loss in biodiversity have been exhausted, and the results of the biodiversity accounting metric still show that the development is likely to result in a loss (i.e. fewer units of biodiversity post-development compared with pre-development), then to achieve an overall net biodiversity gain as a result of the development, finding biodiversity units off-site, or “**offsetting**”, will be required.
- 2.9 Offsetting means delivering a number of biodiversity units on land outside of the application area so that an overall net biodiversity gain is achieved as a result of the development. Offsetting can result from either creating new habitat or restoring/enhancing existing, degraded habitat. Importantly, offset sites must

reflect the habitat that is being lost and deliver 'like for like' habitats or 'like for better' habitats.

2.10 Where offset sites are required, the developer has a choice:

- they can source and provide their own bespoke offset site,
- or they can obtain an offset site via a third-party provider.
- If a shortfall in units required to achieve BNG remains, having explored the onsite and local offsite options, a developer will be able to purchase statutory biodiversity credits from the government as a last resort

What's the role of Local Authorities in delivering biodiversity net gain

2.11 The local authorities' regulatory statutory duty with regard to biodiversity net gain relates to its policy making role in respect of planning as well as how this links into the local nature recovery strategy. In addition, ecologists will evaluate the biodiversity net gain information accompanying a planning application (completed net gain metric and net gain plan) and provide advice to the planning authority whether this is acceptable or not on this basis. Any requirement for offsite net gain provision would be secured via a S106 agreement.

2.12 Furthermore, the Environment Act has introduced an enhanced duty that requires each local authority to consider the actions it can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity, consistent with the proper exercise of all of its functions, and then take those actions. This enhanced duty will include the requirement of local planning authorities to report on the actions they have taken to deliver biodiversity net gain and the results of that action.

2.13 Whilst not a statutory duty, a local authority also has the potential to enter into the market for providing offsite biodiversity units to developers. It is in this respect where work has been undertaken in terms of how a potential Buckinghamshire Council scheme would operate.

Buckinghamshire Council Biodiversity Net Gain Scheme ("the Scheme")

2.14 Buckinghamshire Council has been developing a biodiversity net gain scheme ("the Scheme") in consultation with the Bucks and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership (NEP) and with support and advice from Warwickshire County Council, who have been operating a similar biodiversity net gain scheme since 2012. The Scheme is being designed to provide a one-stop-shop for developers, to provide them with the option to fulfil their offsite biodiversity net gain obligations through a financial contribution to the council, secured via S106 agreements.

- 2.15 The local authority would then identify appropriate offset sites for suitable habitat creation in accordance with the strategic priorities set out in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and then secure the relevant agreements regarding delivery of these offset sites. As part of the work undertaken during the recent pilot Local Nature Recovery Strategy, extensive mapping work was undertaken that identified priority offset areas for net gains in terms of most appropriate locations for particular habitats.
- 2.16 However, this scheme will not be available until further clarification is provided on how local delivery of biodiversity net gain will work in practice via the publication of detailed guidance and secondary legislation by the government. Pending this clarification, expected later this year, work will continue to develop the proposed scheme and how it would work and associated financial assurance. It is anticipated that the Scheme would be brought back to cabinet for consideration of approval separately later in the year.
- 2.17 In the meantime, the Supplementary Planning Document is able to be adopted. Any requirement for offsite biodiversity net gain provision would be secured via a S106 agreement. The only implication being is that developers will not have the option of paying a financial contribution to the Local Authority to enable them to fulfil their obligation. As such they would need to source any offset requirements via a third-party biodiversity net gain provider or by providing a bespoke offset site themselves.

3. Other options considered

- 3.1 Regarding the Supplementary Planning Document, the alternative option is to not adopt as there is no legal requirement to provide specific guidance on the topic, albeit a forthcoming Supplementary Planning Document is referenced in Buckinghamshire Local Plans.
- 3.2 Biodiversity net gain is a relatively new concept and adopting the Supplementary Planning Document would clearly help developers and the public understand the requirements of the associated policies and will support the planning application and appraisal processes. Indeed, local authorities are being positively encouraged by Natural England to adopt local biodiversity net gain guidance ahead of any national requirement.

4. Legal and financial implications

- 4.1 The Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The relevant regulations relating to the consultation process are explained below.

- 4.2 Regulation 12: Regulation 12(a) requires the Council to produce a consultation statement before the adoption of the SPD. This must set out who was consulted in preparing the document; a summary of the main issues raised by those individuals and organisations who responded, and how those issues have been addressed in final version of the SPD. This document is the 'Consultation Statement' for the adopted SPD for the purposes of Regulation 12(a). This is attached as Appendix 2.
- 4.3 Regulation 12(b) requires the Council to publish the documents (including a 'consultation statement') for a minimum four-week period, to specify the date when responses should be received, and identify the address to which responses should be sent. The consultation statement that accompanied the consultation draft Supplementary Planning Document set out that information.
- 4.4 Regulation 13: Regulation 13 stipulates that any person may make representations about the Supplementary Planning Document and that the representations must be made by the end of the consultation date referred to in Regulation 12. The consultation statement that accompanied the consultation draft Supplementary Planning Document set out that requirement.
- 4.5 The creation of Supplementary Planning Documents relating to biodiversity net gain is being encouraged by Natural England. The operation of local authorities as offset providers and brokers is permitted under the Environment Act 2021 and the current biodiversity net gain consultation indicates that this is the direction of travel.
- 4.6 Financial implications – The government acknowledges that the introduction of biodiversity net gain into the planning system will place a new burden on local authorities in terms of resourcing requirements. As such the government has indicated that it will fund local authorities for this new burden. A small initial new burdens payment has been paid to allow authorities to start to prepare (Bucks Council received £24k, which we used to fund staffing costs last year) and full details of new burdens funding are expected to be announced this summer. In the interim the Council has identified £200k from earmarked reserves to forward fund to the Biodiversity net gain Officers required, in advance of the new burden funding. This is done 'at risk' of the New Burden funding being less than the £200k we have set aside.
- 4.7 MTFP implications: Once the new burden funding is confirmed, this will need to be reflected in MTFP to highlight that the new funding will cover the ongoing staffing requirements. New burdens funding is issued initially as a one-off grant, and then is 'rolled up' into the Local Government Settlement on an ongoing basis e.g., we receive a new burden grant of £150k; the following year this will be incorporated into our LG Settlement. The adjustment in MTFP would show the staffing costs offset by the new burden grant and then corporately via the LG Settlement. The additional staffing, therefore, will not be a pressure on the Council's base budget.

5. Corporate implications

5.1 *This section will need to include the relevant corporate plan priority relating to this report and refer to any other implication that need to be taken into account such as:*

- *Property* – It should be noted that we may be considering Buckinghamshire Council’s own land holdings as potential offset sites as part of the Council run net gain scheme that is under development.
- *HR* – specialist staff will be employed to run the proposed biodiversity net gain scheme. As this is a new commitment for local planning authorities, New Burdens payments will be forthcoming from Government to support our staff costs.
- *Climate change* - This report is directly related to Buckinghamshire Council’s key priority of improving our environment, notably addressing climate change, improving our environment and creating economic opportunities for clean growth.
- *Sustainability* – This system would support long term biodiversity priorities for the area, as set out in the NEP’s Biodiversity Action Plan 2030.
- *Equality* – The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:
 - i. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - ii. Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
 - iii. Foster good relations between people from different groups

Officers have paid due regard to the aims of the Equalities Act 2010 throughout the consideration and preparation of this SPD. This review has indicated no adverse impact on any of the specified equality groups. Officers will continue to keep this matter under review to ensure no adverse impacts arise.
- *Data* - data generated as part of the Scheme will be subject to GDPR; and Data Protection Impact Assessments will be carried out at the earliest opportunity.
- *Value for money* –. New burdens funding will also be provided by the government to help local authorities implement this new duty. However, it is not clear what level of funding will be provided and for how long.

6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 6.1 A summary of the Supplementary Planning Document public consultation can be found in Appendix 2.
- 6.2 The development of the biodiversity net gain Supplementary Planning Document and scheme has been discussed with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, as well as the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment. Extensive consultation has been held with partner organisations in the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environmental Partnership (NEP).

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 7.1 Upon approval, Supplementary Planning Document will be launched through press releases, social media posts and events. Our website will include new content on the scheme.

8. Next steps and review

- 8.1 The Supplementary Planning Document will be adopted and made available to developers and the public via our website. The Supplementary Planning Document will note that the option for a developer to fulfil their offsite biodiversity net gain obligations through a financial contribution to the council, secured via S106 agreements is not currently available. The developer would need to source any offsets requirements via a third-party biodiversity net gain provider or by providing a bespoke offset site themselves.
- 8.2 The work to develop a specific Buckinghamshire Council next gain scheme will continue and this will be brought back to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet separately after taking into account government guidance and secondary regulations once published and having gone through associated financial assurance.

9. Background papers

- 9.1 **Appendix 1 - Biodiversity net gain Supplementary Planning Document**
- 9.2 **Appendix 2 - Supplementary Planning Document consultation statement**

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please contact the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

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Buckinghamshire Council

Biodiversity Net Gain - Supplementary Planning Document

Draft for Adoption

Last updated on: 16 May 2022 by Simon Meecham

Version: 19

This supplementary planning document has been adopted by Buckinghamshire Council to aid decision making on Planning Applications submitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Its aim is to ensure that development within the county provides an increase in biodiversity post development compared to what existed prior to the new development. Which is otherwise known as biodiversity net gain.

Please note: References to Option 1 – the Buckinghamshire Council off-setting scheme is not available at the point of Adoption of this Supplementary Planning Document.

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1. Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document

1.1. Why is Biodiversity Important to Planning in Buckinghamshire?

Biodiversity is a shorter way of saying Biological Diversity. The term given to “... the variety of life on Earth and the natural patterns it forms. The biodiversity we see today is the fruit of billions of years of evolution, shaped by natural processes and, increasingly, by the influence of humans. It forms the web of life of which we are an integral part and upon which we so fully depend” ([Convention on Biological Diversity](#)).

Biodiversity has a natural and intrinsic value to all life. It is important because it provides essential human services such as food production, climate change adaptation, flood regulation, crop pollination plus numerous other benefits including enhancing human mental and physical well-being. Developments, no matter how small, can provide additional biodiversity which can help link to other habitats and areas of ecological importance providing opportunity for genetic diversity across Buckinghamshire’s landscapes and beyond.

1.2. Why is Biodiversity Loss an Issue?

Biodiversity has declined over many years as a result of human activity. In 1992, the UK government signed up to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity; this committed the UK to reverse the loss of biodiversity. Successive governments have produced plans to stem and reverse the loss of biodiversity and have committed to higher targets to achieve this reversal. Measures to protect biodiversity include laws, such as the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) which protects species and habitats.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has also been strengthened over the years with regards to biodiversity, moving from aspiring for ‘no net loss’ of biodiversity to requiring a ‘biodiversity net gain’. This is in line with the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan, and strengthened by the requirement for a minimum 10% net gain under the Environment Act (2021) and changes to the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).

1.3. About this Supplementary Planning Document

This Supplementary Planning Document has been produced with advice from the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership. It sets out guidance on how biodiversity net gain can be delivered in Buckinghamshire.

The guidance is to support:

- **planning applicants to follow the national requirement to ensure their development would result in a biodiversity net gain;**
- **a Buckinghamshire process for achieving biodiversity should that net gain not be achievable on their development site; and**
- **a process by which landowners can offer their land for consideration as a potential site for hosting biodiversity net gain than cannot be met on a development site.**

This document has been produced to provide guidance in support of the following development plans and national guidance. The policies are provided in full in Appendix 1 of this document.

Figure 1- The Development Plan for Buckinghamshire

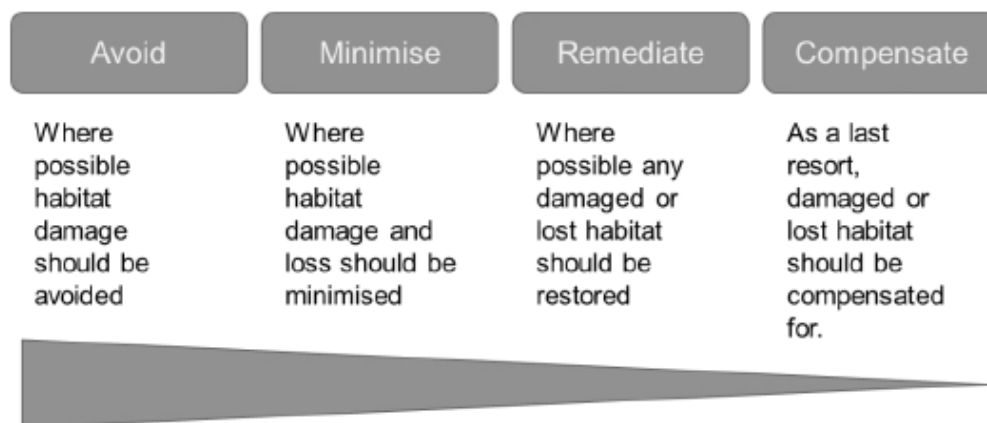
Development Plan	Policy References
Neighbourhood Plan	Made Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Buckinghamshire Development Plan – the coverage of these plans is increasing – please also refer to the policies in these plans when developing your planning application.
Chiltern Core Strategy 2011	Policy CS24: Biodiversity

Development Plan			Policy References
South Bucks Strategy 2011	Core		Core Policy 9: Natural Environment
Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033	Local Plan		NE1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Wycombe 2019	Local Plan		Policy CP7: Delivering the Infrastructure to Support Growth Policy CP10: Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment DM34: Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development
Delivery and Allocations Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development 2013	Site Plan		DM11 Green Networks and Infrastructure DM13 Conservation and enhancement of sites, habitats and species of biodiversity and geodiversity importance. DM14: Biodiversity in Development
Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan			Policy 18: Natural Environment Policy 21: Green Belt Policy 24: Environmental Enhancement Policy 25: Delivering High Quality Restoration and Aftercare

2. Biodiversity Net Gain and the Planning Process

- 2.1 A key goal of biodiversity net gain is to achieve that gain within the development site. This includes avoiding any on-site loss, mitigating any loss if it cannot be avoided, remediating any lost or damaged biodiversity on-site and as a last resort, compensating for any on-site loss off-site. Figure 2 illustrates this hierarchy for the prioritisation of achieving net gain on-site.

Figure 2 – The Mitigation Hierarchy



Source: Natural England – Biodiversity Metric User Guide 2021

- 2.2 The latest government metric must be used by applicants as was available in the most recent survey season prior to application unless an alternative is agreed by the council prior to application submission. The calculation is derived by use of a Biodiversity Metric set by the government. This is a spreadsheet-based tool; and can be used in conjunction with a qualitative ecological assessment. The metric is used to calculate the units of biodiversity gained or lost as a result of development on a site, and that which can be gained on a potential off-set site.

The government's Biodiversity Metric is subject to a series of 8 Principles and 6 Rules which are summarised in Figure 3 below and are listed in full in Appendix 2. The government's metric guidance and the prevailing law should be consulted to establish if there is an exemption from the biodiversity net gain assessment for the proposed development.

Figure 3 – Principles and Rules of the Biodiversity Metric

PRINCIPLES	
Principle 1	The metric does not change the protection afforded to biodiversity.
Principle 2	Biodiversity metric calculations can inform decision-making where application of the mitigation hierarchy and good practice principles conclude that compensation for habitat losses is justified.
Principle 3	The metric's biodiversity units are only a proxy for biodiversity and should be treated as relative values.
Principle 4	The metric focuses on typical habitats and widespread species; important or protected habitats and features should be given broader consideration.
Principle 5	The metric design aims to encourage enhancement, not transformation, of the natural environment.
Principle 6	The metric is designed to inform decisions, not to override expert opinion.
Principle 7	Compensation habitats should seek, where practical, to be local to the impact
Principle 8	The metric does not enforce a mandatory minimum 1:1 habitat size ratio for losses and compensation but consideration should be given to maintaining habitat extent and habitat parcels of sufficient size for ecological function.
RULES	
Rule 1	Where the metric is used to measure change, biodiversity unit values need to be calculated prior to the intervention and post-intervention for all parcels of land / linear features.
Rule 2	Compensation for habitat losses can be provided by creating new habitats, or by restoring or enhancing existing habitats. Measures to enhance existing habitats must provide a significant and demonstrable uplift in distinctiveness and/or condition to record additional biodiversity units.
Rule 3	'Trading down' must be avoided. Losses of habitat are to be compensated for on a 'like for like' or 'like for better' basis. New or restored habitats should aim to achieve a higher distinctiveness and/or condition than those lost. Losses of irreplaceable or very high distinctiveness habitat cannot adequately be accounted for through the metric.
Rule 4	Biodiversity unit values generated by biodiversity metric 3.0 are unique to this metric and cannot be compared to unit outputs from version 2.0, the original Defra metric or any other biodiversity metric. Furthermore, the three types of biodiversity units generated by this metric (for area, hedgerow and river habitats) are unique and cannot be summed.
Rule 5	It is not the area/length of habitat created that determines whether ecological equivalence or better has been achieved but the net change in biodiversity units. Risks associated with creating or enhancing habitats mean that it may be necessary to create or enhanced a larger area of habitat than that lost, to fully compensate for impacts on biodiversity
Rule 6	Deviations from the published methodology of biodiversity metric 3.0 need to be ecologically justified and agreed with relevant decision makers. While the methodology is expected to be suitable in the majority of circumstances it is recognised that there may be exceptions. Any local or project-specific adaptations of the metric must be transparent and fully justified.

2.3 All development proposals that require biodiversity net gain can use the government's metric to support their biodiversity impact assessment; this will indicate whether the

resultant development is likely to be positive (gain), negative (loss) or neutral in its impacts on biodiversity.

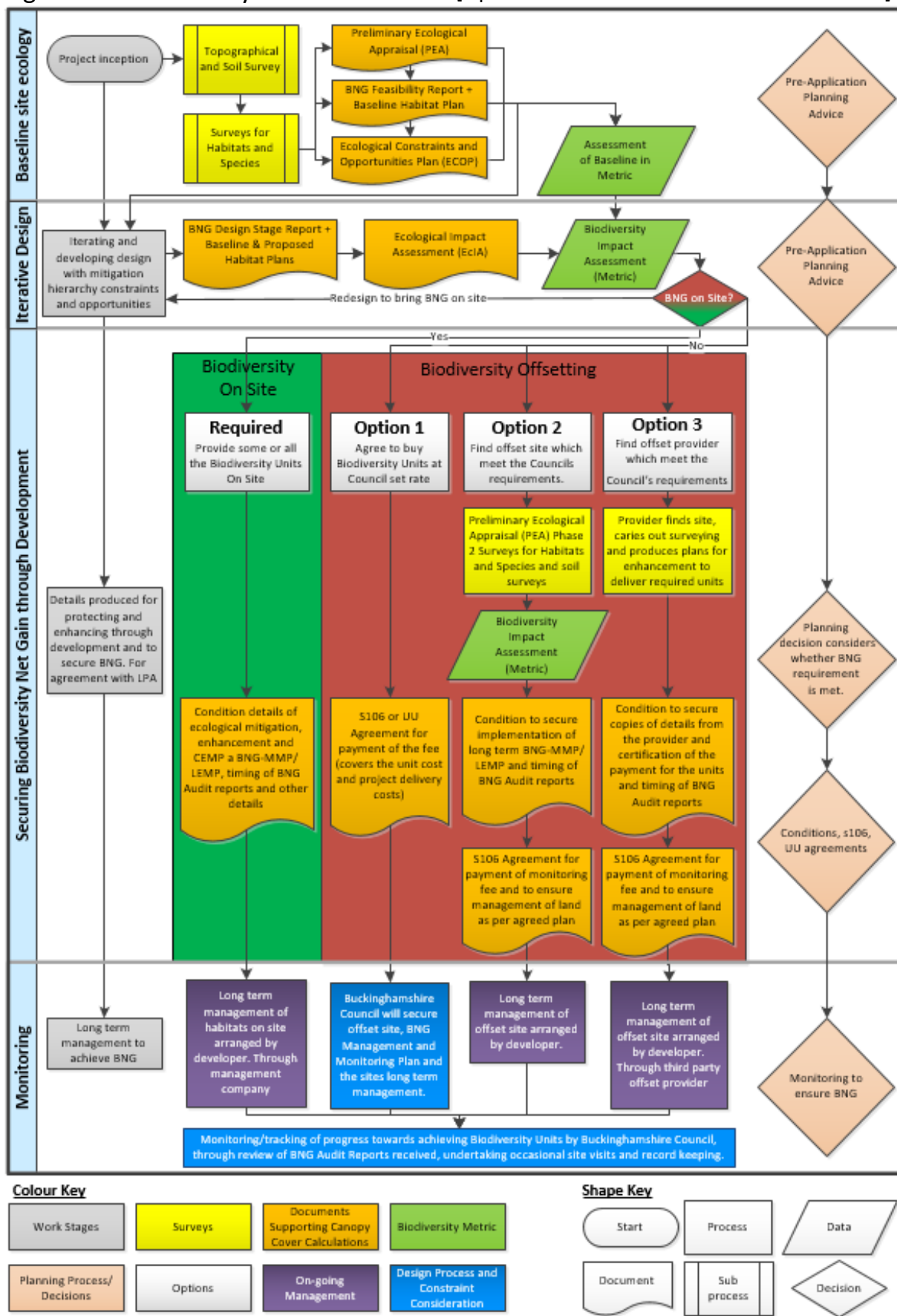
- 2.4 The requirements for biodiversity net gain do not replace or undermine existing habitat and species protection for protected sites or irreplaceable habitats, or for existing requirements for ecological assessments and species surveys. Decisions relating to habitats or species subject to statutory protection under national legislation remain subject to those requirements. Similarly, impacts to irreplaceable habitats shall be considered outside the biodiversity net gain system.

3. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Process

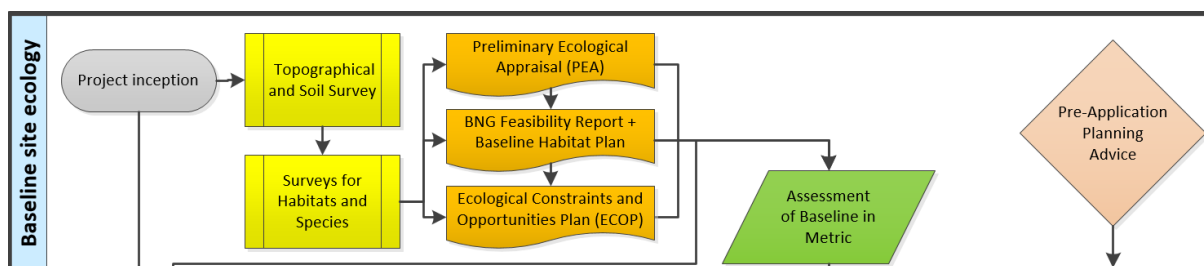
3.1 Figure 4 on the next page is a flow chart which sets out the end to end process for achieving biodiversity net gain. The stages in this flow chart are set out in more detail in this section. The meaning of acronyms in this section are provided below:

BMERC	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre
NEP	Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
BNG-MMP	Biodiversity Net Gain – Management and Monitoring Plan
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecologists and Environmental
ECOP	Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservancy Council
LEMP	Landscape and Ecology Management Plan
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
S106	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
UKHab	United Kingdom Habitats (survey methodology)
UU	Unilateral Undertaking

Figure 4 – Biodiversity Net Gain Process [Option 1 is not available until further notice]



3.1. Baseline Site Ecology



At the very start of a development project there is often a stage called 'project inception'. During project inception several surveys and reports will be needed to inform how biodiversity is factored into the design.

3.1.1. Topographical and Soil Surveying

Topographical surveying is an important starting point as it allows further accurate surveys to be undertaken and plans to be produced. Soil surveys are important for a range of disciplines but for biodiversity net gain it informs decisions on the types of habitat which can be (and would be most appropriate to be) created on site. Applicants should discuss this with council to determine what, if any, soil surveys should be undertaken.

3.1.2. Surveys for Habitats and Species

Habitat and species surveys need to be undertaken to inform the ecological reports which will be produced for a site. It is typical for a 'walk over' survey to be undertaken initially; this might have included a 'Phase 1 Habitat Survey' to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee [JNCC](#) standard. However, the [UKHab](#) is now the default format for habitat surveying to work with the government's metric.

During the walk over survey, signs which might mean that more detailed habitat or species surveys could be required, would be collected. The need for further surveys will also be informed by carrying out a search using the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Environmental Records Centre database. Further surveys will need to be undertaken in accordance with industry best practice, these must be undertaken by a qualified and experienced ecologist, CIEEM consultant ecologists can be found [here](#).

Surveys to inform the completion of the metric will need to:

- be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced persons;
- be carried out at the appropriate time of the year for the habitats in question. The botanical survey season (late March/Early April through to mid-October) although this can be longer or shorter in any given year);

- justify the categorisation of distinctiveness and condition of baseline habitats with the aid of descriptions, photographs and species lists; and
- if it is clear that habitats have been recently changed to their detriment, it will be necessary to make an informed assessment of what the best condition and distinctiveness of that habitat would have been, prior to the change. This will need to be justified to the Council and agreed by them.

3.1.3. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is a consolidation of desk study work and initial survey works. It is to be produced in accordance with the CIEEM guidelines for a [Preliminary Ecological Appraisal](#) and will contain recommendations with regards to its findings. If further surveys are required, these will need to be undertaken to inform design.

3.1.4. Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report

A biodiversity net gain feasibility report is one of the reports listed in the CIEEM resource [Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates](#); the structure and guidance set out in this resource should be used.

A biodiversity net gain feasibility report is used at a pre-application planning stage. This will outline the feasibility of biodiversity net gain resulting from the potential development. This can be contained within or be separate to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report. Within these reports there will be a Baseline Habitats Plan which will link to the biodiversity metric to show the baseline conditions and help in designing what is feasible for biodiversity net gain on-site. It is recognised that sufficient information may not be available at this stage for a final measure of biodiversity net gain to be provided.

It is vital that potential impacts upon irreplaceable, vulnerable, designated and priority habitats are highlighted at this stage as this could constrain the potential for delivering biodiversity net gain. Even where biodiversity net gain is not deliverable because of losses of irreplaceable habitats, a commitment to quantifiable compensation for impacts that can be mitigated is strongly recommended. Good practice would be to involve the council at this stage to help guide the design process. Clause 5.2 in [British Standard 8686:2021](#) sets out important further guidance to be taken into account when assessing biodiversity net gain feasibility.

3.1.5. Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan

The identification of biodiversity constraints and opportunities and an assessment of likely ecological impacts will be useful when considering the design of a site; the production of an Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan should be considered throughout the design and development process.

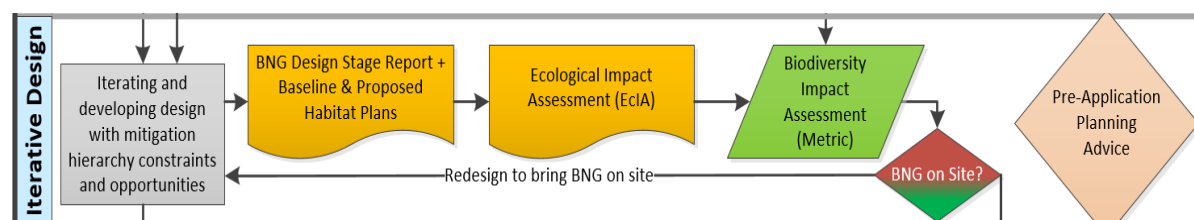
3.1.6. Assessment of Baseline in the Metric

Through accurate surveying and assessment, and by following government guidance when completing the metric, a clear understanding of the baseline biodiversity value can be reached. This will be the foundation for the successful design of a site for biodiversity net gain. Applicants should contact the council or its website for guidance on the local nature priorities for the assessment of the land parcels and their strategic significance to biodiversity.

3.1.7. Planning Advice

Following the collection of the above information it is advisable to seek planning advice from Buckinghamshire Council.

3.2. Iterative Design



This part of the project covers the iterative process of design from initial concept design, through developed design towards technical design. The design process is informed by the collation of ecological information in the earlier stage and the bringing together of a multi-disciplinary approach to ensure the best outcomes can be achieved.

3.2.1. Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report

A Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, is one of the reports listed in the document “Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Audit Templates”, [CIEEM](#). The structure and guidance set out in that document should be used. If a BNG feasibility report has not been provided, it may be necessary to adapt the structure to include key information from the feasibility stage.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report is produced to inform the planning application and its determination by the council. This will include a fully completed biodiversity metric and will be considered alongside an Ecological Impact Assessment.

A description of the current on-site baseline conditions must be provided, and it must directly relate to a Baseline Habitat Plan (this should reflect the biodiversity net gain feasibility report). Reference numbers for each habitat parcel must be given which cross reference with the metric.

Full details covering the retention, restoration and enhancement of existing habitats as well as the creation of new habitats must be provided clearly in a Proposed Habitats Plan showing the impact of development for the site. The existing and proposed site conditions (soil, aspect, intended use, proposed management regime, etcetera) must be taken into account when justifying the proposed distinctiveness and condition for habitats post-development.

Outline applications may not have the layout finalised. Here, a Proposed Habitats Plan and the biodiversity metric can be based upon a realistic scenario, taken from a parameters plan and/or an illustrative masterplan or landscape scheme. It is important that the requirements for allotments, sports pitches, play areas, natural green spaces, etc. are taken into account so that proposals are achievable.

Demonstrating the net biodiversity condition within the planning application enables the council to assess whether further net-gain could be achieved on-site. Where this is not possible, the council may require the applicant to secure off-set net gain with long-term management and monitoring through a legal agreement and, where relevant, secure further details and associated updated biodiversity metric calculations through reserved matters applications.

Where a development is to be phased, a biodiversity net gain strategy must be submitted at the outline stage, which shows how individual phases deliver a predetermined proportion of the biodiversity value. Reserved matters applications will then be required to demonstrate exactly how each phase will meet its biodiversity requirements.

3.2.2. Ecological Impact Assessment

An Ecological Impact Assessment is a document which explains the effects that a development could have on ecology. This assessment is focused on specific impacts which will occur through a range of different identified actions and which affect different identified species or habitats of importance. Whereas, biodiversity net gain assessments provide a more generalised overview of aggregated biodiversity value as measured through habitats, hedgerows and watercourses.

The ecological impact assessment must be produced in accordance with [CIEEM](#) guidance. This assessment is a complimentary document to be considered in the design process alongside the consideration of biodiversity net gain. The assessment will address impacts that have not been considered through biodiversity net gain assessment. This is important as it would be possible to address the needs of biodiversity net gain but fail to address the needs of this assessment and vice versa. When considered together the proposals should achieve additional ecological benefits.

3.2.3. Biodiversity Net Gain Impact Assessment

An assessment of biodiversity net gain Impact Assessment using the Biodiversity Metric must be submitted as a spreadsheet with the planning application so that it can be assessed. It is expected that the council's guidance regarding strategic significance on biodiversity is used. Applicants should contact the council or its website for guidance on the local nature priorities for the assessment of the land parcels and their strategic significance to biodiversity.

3.2.4. Biodiversity Net Gain On-site Decision Making.

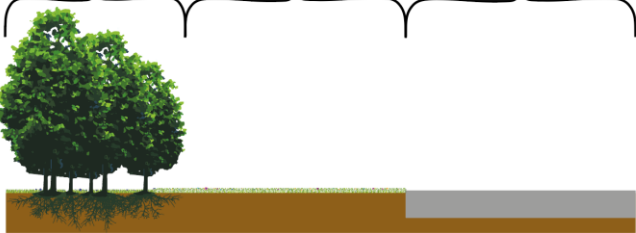
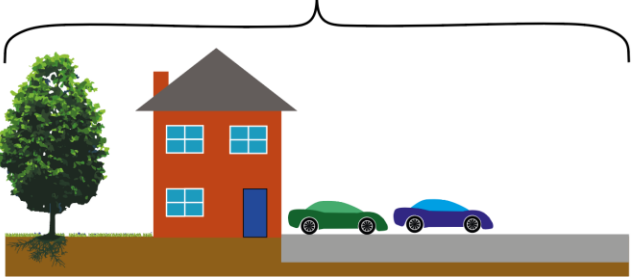

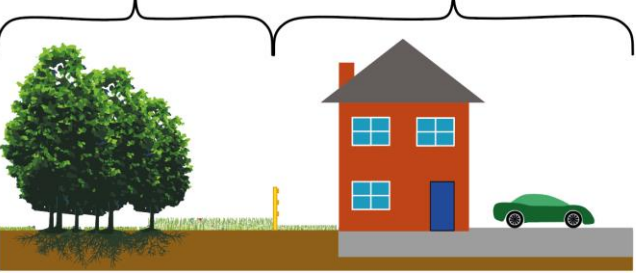
The pre-application iterative design phase should follow the principles of the mitigation hierarchy as set out below:


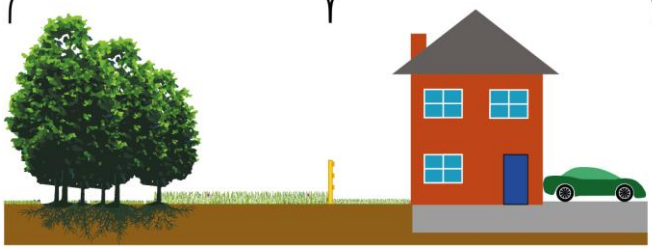

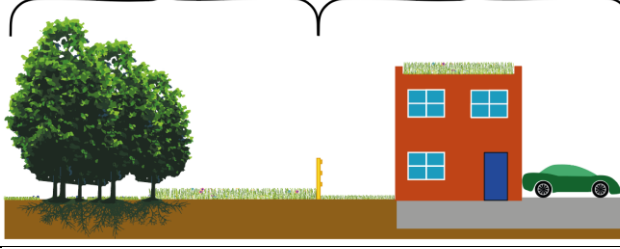



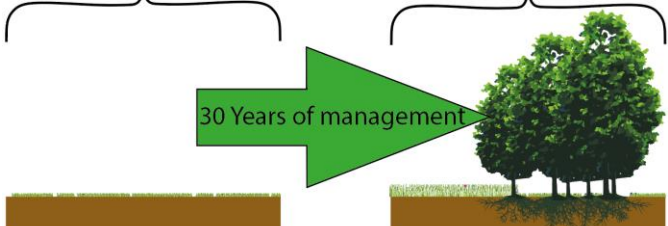
If biodiversity net gain is not being met on site, opportunities for redesigning the proposals should be sought before consideration of offsetting is given. This may include:

- reducing the extent of proposed development, this may be the number of units or through making efficiencies in building and hard surfacing layouts.
- retaining and enhancing habitats which have higher distinctiveness values.
- adding features such as green roofs and green walls which are valued in a Biodiversity Metric and have other additional benefits.
- taking a multi-disciplinary approach e.g., dealing with surface water run off through a feature which has both landscape and biodiversity value, rather than using underground tanks.
- following the Mitigation Hierarchy (as set out on the next page).

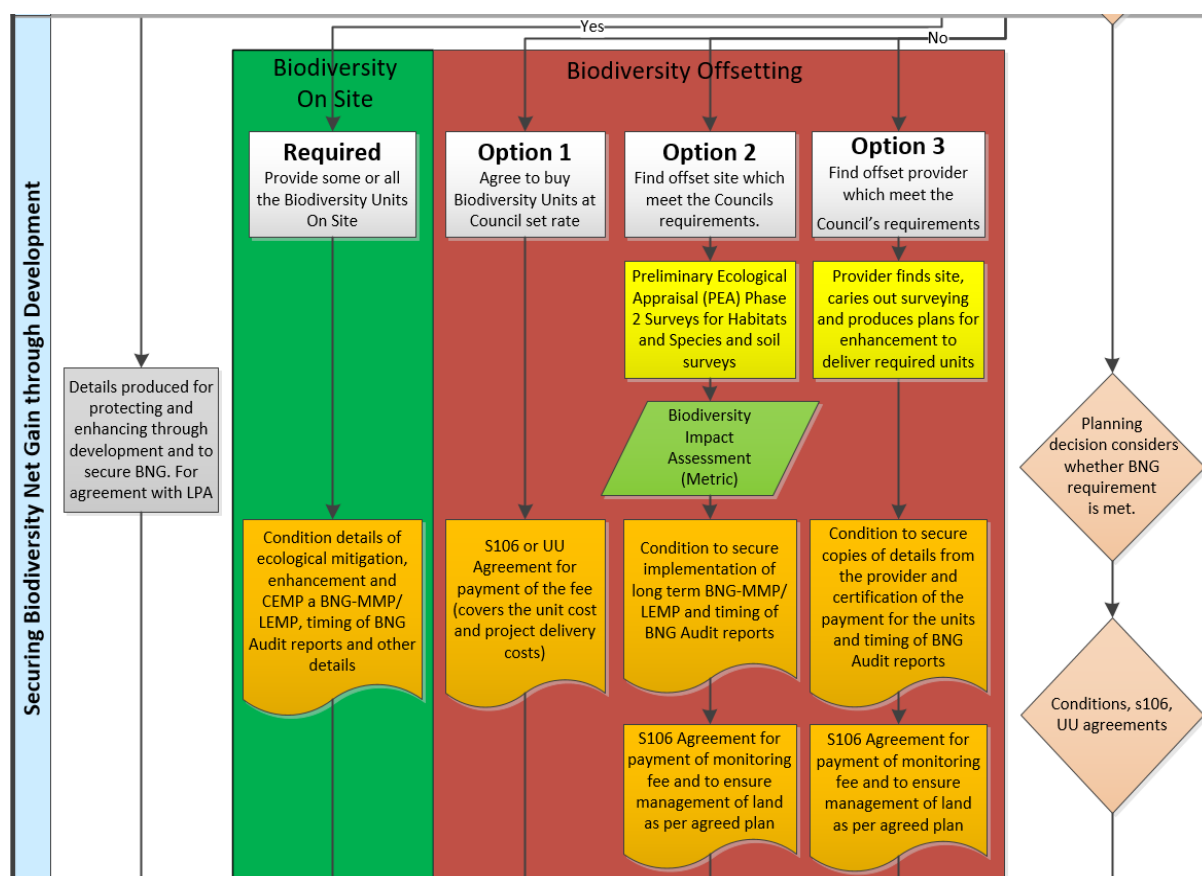
3.3.Mitigation Hierarchy

Figure 5 – Mitigation Hierarchy

<p>Pre-development baseline</p> <p>Baseline = 100%</p> <p>Woodland + Grassland + Hard standing</p> 	<p>The baseline biodiversity value is worked out in the Biodiversity Metric. This sets the level from where a net gain is measured from.</p> <p>The baseline unit value for different sites will vary but it will always be 100%.</p>
<p>Initial design</p> <p>80% net loss</p> <p>New development, one tree and some grassland retained in garden in reduced condition/distinctiveness</p> 	<p>An initial design with little consideration of biodiversity will likely result in a significant percentage loss in biodiversity. This design has only avoided the loss of one tree.</p>
<p>1st Iteration</p> <p>40% net loss</p> <p>Avoid loss of some woodland & grassland</p> <p>New development results in loss of some grassland & reduced condition/distinctiveness of that within garden</p> 	<p>Iterating design with the Mitigation Hierarchy improves the situation for biodiversity. Avoidance is the first step on the Mitigation Hierarchy, in this case development in the woodland and some of the grassland has been avoided; and through the restriction of access to the retained habitat, Mitigation has been achieved.</p>
<p>2nd Iteration</p> <p>10% net loss</p> <p>Avoidance of loss of woodland & restoration of some grassland</p> <p>New development results in loss of some grassland & reduced condition/distinctiveness of that within garden</p> 	<p>The second iteration shows greater Avoidance and some Restoration of the grassland and woodland (in Compensation), as well as Mitigation Measures.</p>

<p>3rd Iteration</p> <p>No net loss </p> <p>Avoidance of loss of woodland & restoration of more grassland</p> <p>New development results in reduced condition/distinctiveness of grassland within garden</p> 	<p>The third iteration shows even greater Avoidance and Restoration of the grassland and woodland (in Compensation), as well as Mitigation Measures.</p> <p>Some of the grassland will be turned into garden lawn which a lower biodiversity value but this is compensated through the restoration of areas to give 'No net loss' overall.</p>
<p>4th Iteration</p> <p>10% Net Gain </p> <p>Avoidance of loss of woodland & restoration of more grassland</p> <p>New development results in reduced condition/distinctiveness of grassland within garden + Green roof enhancement</p> 	<p>The fourth iteration builds upon the third iteration but it includes a green roof as an Enhancement.</p> <p>This scenario achieves an onsite biodiversity net gain. Achieving the biodiversity net gain on site is preferable over to resorting to offsetting.</p>
<p>2nd Iteration + Offsetting site</p> <p>10% net loss </p> <p>Avoidance of loss of woodland & restoration of some grassland</p> <p>New development results in loss of some grassland & reduced condition/distinctiveness of that within garden</p> 	<p>In some situations, where the mitigation hierarchy has been followed, it might still not be possible or appropriate to achieve a biodiversity net gain on site.</p> <p>In this situation it might be appropriate to allow the required net gain to be achieved through Biodiversity Offsetting.</p>
<p>Offsetting site</p> <p>Gain equivalent to 20% of development site baseline </p> <p>Agricultural grassland</p> <p>Meadow and Woodland</p> <p>30 Years of management</p> 	<p>Offsetting can be arranged in several different ways, but the end result must always mean that enhancements which are created and maintained off site will not only compensate for onsite losses but also achieve the required biodiversity net gain.</p>

3.4. Securing Biodiversity Net Gain



It is necessary for the council to be confident that biodiversity net gain requirements will be achieved as a result of the development. The way this will be achieved is examined and then secured during this stage.

3.4.1. Biodiversity On-Site [Green column Required in Figure 5]

As set out in Figure 2, biodiversity net gain on-site is the primary goal for any development. However, if this is not possible, after the designs have been iterated within the mitigation hierarchy, it is highly likely that at least some of the biodiversity units can be provided on-site. Providing biodiversity on-site enables the benefits of biodiversity to be experienced by those occupying the development and the local community.

3.4.2. Conditions for On-Site Biodiversity

Planning conditions attached to a planning application can secure the implementation of on-site mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

The format in which details are provided can vary depending upon the scale of the development. Documents may include a Construction Environmental Management Plan and a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.

Where there is a need for full details of the management and monitoring required to achieve and maintain the suggested distinctiveness and condition for habitats, over a period of at least 30 years (as set out in a metric), this must be provided in a Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan which follows good practice guidance. Details contained within this plan may overlap with those contained in a landscape maintenance plan or a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan; these documents can be combined to ensure consistency.

More details of what might be expected in the biodiversity net gain management and monitoring plan can be found at the bottom of Table 2 of the [CIEEM](#) resource biodiversity net gain report and audit templates, more details are included in section 8 of British Standard 8693:2021, extracts are included in Appendix 3.

The delivery of biodiversity net gain takes time, and it is reliant on a biodiversity net gain management and monitoring plan being implemented successfully. It will therefore be necessary to include the source of funding for its management and maintenance and to identify who will be responsible for achieving the target condition and who will carry out the work.

To ensure progress is reported, it is essential that future audit reporting is secured through planning conditions. It will be important to secure who is responsible for the production of the reports and what details they will contain. Details of what should be included in an audit report are contained in Table 3 of the biodiversity net gain report and audit templates.

The frequency of audit reporting will depend upon the scale of the project, but in all cases they will be needed:

- following any changes to project design post-consent - significant changes may require a full review of earlier stages of the process;
- immediately following project implementation, for example, the completion of construction or at the end of a landscape establishment phase; and
- when the majority of created habitats are expected to have reached their target condition.

Where there are large gaps in time between different habitats reaching their target condition, it may be necessary to timetable additional audit reports. To ensure biodiversity net gain is being achieved in line with the Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan, the council needs to monitor and record the progress towards reaching biodiversity net gain wherever and however this is secured.

Monitoring which the site manager undertakes is to enable adaptive management to keep delivery of biodiversity units on track and to provide evidence for audit reporting of the

progress towards reaching target conditions. The council will charge a fee for biodiversity net gain monitoring of on-site habitats in line with the council's schedule of fees and charges. This will be used to review audit reports, make occasional site progress checks, keep track of cumulative gains and losses and report information internally and to government.

3.4.3. Biodiversity Offsetting [Option 1 in Figure 5]

Option 1 is not available at the point of Adoption of this Supplementary Planning Document. *Where biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on-site, despite iterative design and when on-site opportunities have been exhausted, biodiversity off-setting is required to make up any shortfall. There are three main ways in which biodiversity off-setting can be delivered. Option 1 involves the developer paying the council an amount of money the "Financial Contribution", determined by the council's Biodiversity Accounting Financial Calculator, in exchange for the council taking on the responsibility for securing the delivery of the biodiversity net gain, off-site.*

This option has several advantages for both the developer and the council. The developer can make a payment which covers the cost of off-setting and council project delivery costs, and it discharges the developer's responsibility to provide net gain at that point. The council can manage the creation, restoration and enhancement of habitats in a strategic way in line with the current NEP Biodiversity Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

A planning obligation secured through a Section 106 agreement would be the usual legal method to secure a financial contribution to the council. This will cover both the biodiversity offsetting costs to achieve biodiversity net gain and the council project delivery costs. The Section 106 will be based upon the Buckinghamshire Council biodiversity offsetting Section 106 template. There will be a separate charge to cover legal fees for the drafting of a legal agreement.

3.4.4. Biodiversity Offsetting [Option 2 in Figure 5]

If biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on-site and a developer has land within their control which is suitable to act as a biodiversity offset site, option 2 might be preferred. However, for a site to be considered suitable it will need to meet several requirements:

- security - it must be possible to secure the land for at least 30 years;
- quantity - it must be possible to achieve the required number of biodiversity units;
- equivalence - it must be possible to secure the biodiversity units in right type of habitats to ensure there is no 'trading down'; and
- proximity – this is determined by the spatial risk categories which are set by the government in their guidance relating to the metric. In reference to how spatial risk is determined in the guidance, the whole of Buckinghamshire Council is the Local Planning Authority.

3.4.5. Surveys

To ensure that the offset site can provide suitable biodiversity units, surveys will need to be undertaken. Surveys will need to be undertaken in the same manner as those for a development site. It will also be necessary to produce details in a report format which cover the same issues as the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Report and Baseline Habitat Plan, Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan and also details which would otherwise be found in the biodiversity net gain Design Stage Report including a Proposed Habitat Plan. The Biodiversity Impact Assessment Metric produced would need to show how the required biodiversity net gain will be achieved.

3.4.6. Conditions to Secure Biodiversity Net Gain

Details similar to those in paragraph 3.4.2. will be secured through planning conditions.

3.4.7. Agreement for Payment of Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring Fee

A monitoring fee will need to be secured to ensure biodiversity net gain is being achieved in line with the Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan. The council needs to track and record the progress towards reaching biodiversity net gain wherever and however this is secured. The Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan will set out the frequency for the council to be sent audit reports.

The council will secure a fee to cover the costs of reviewing audit reports, make occasional site progress checks and keep track of cumulative gains and losses as well as report information internally and to government. The council's Biodiversity Accounting Financial Calculator will be used to calculate the council's monitoring cost; this will be secured as a fee to the council through legal agreement with the developer. This is additional to any fees which are paid to the council to determine planning application and legal fees for the drafting of legal agreements.

A legal agreement will need to be completed between the council and the developer which secures the delivery of the biodiversity units to achieve biodiversity net gain and to maintain the land in the long term (for at least 30 years).

3.4.8. Biodiversity Offsetting [Option 3 in Figure 5]

If biodiversity net gain cannot be achieved on-site, a developer might choose to use a third-party off-set provider, broker (or a government scheme). An offset provider or broker will take money from a developer to provide an offset in a similar way to how the council would in Option 1. However, details of how the biodiversity units will be delivered must be provided to the council, and additional conditions and/or legal agreements may need to be put in place.

3.4.9. Details from Offset Provider or Broker

Details will need to be provided of the proposed offset provider, the proposed site for the offset, surveys which the baseline condition and proposals which will ensure the anticipated net gain will be provided. A Biodiversity Metric will need to be completed for the offset site using the same version as that used for onsite calculations.

3.4.10. Conditions for Further Details and Certification

Securing the long term delivery of the offset site will be through planning conditions similar to those set out in 3.4.2. The offset provider will need to certify that they have received the funds to enable the offsetting to take place.

3.4.11. Agreement for Payment of the Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring Fee

A monitoring fee may need to be secured as per 3.4.7. Where this is with the developer it may likely be through a Section 106 agreement. Where it is with an offset provider it may be through a Section 39 agreement of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, or a Conservation Covenant. If it is with a broker a different type of legal contract may be required.

3.4.12. Planning Decision, Conditions and Legal Agreements

The decision to grant planning permission is dependent upon a range of considerations. The granting of permission may be withheld for several reasons including:

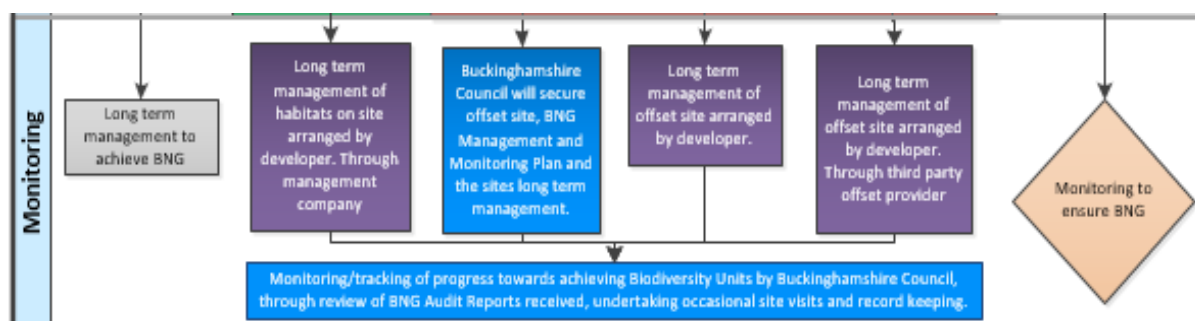
- inadequate information is submitted with regards to demonstrating biodiversity net gain;
- if better outcomes are achievable for biodiversity but a developer will not engage in iterating the design following the mitigation hierarchy;
- if (even after iterating the design following the mitigation hierarchy) biodiversity net gain is not achievable through the proposals on site and the applicant is unwilling to accept necessary pre-commencement conditions relating to biodiversity or sign a legal agreement for Biodiversity Offsetting.

Planning conditions may need to be applied to planning decisions to secure the submission of information and the carrying out of particular actions. There is often also a need to use legal agreements as well as or instead of planning conditions because planning conditions:

- are not appropriate for securing financial contributions;
- may not be able to be applied outside of the development site;
- may be limited in their scope in other ways.

Legal Agreements may include section 106 agreements, Unilateral Undertakings, or Conservation Covenants.

3.5. Long Term Management and Monitoring to Achieve Biodiversity Net Gain



Long term management and monitoring of habitats is essential to ensure that biodiversity net gain is achieved. The four options for achieving biodiversity net gain differ in terms of who will carry out the management of the habitats as set out in a Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan, but their progress will be tracked by Buckinghamshire Council.

3.5.1. On-site Management – [Green column in Figure 5]

A developer will often employ a management company to manage habitats, however, given the special requirements for managing habitats for biodiversity it may be the case that specialist contractors are required. Auditing should be undertaken by an ecological consultant as they will have greater surveying knowledge and should be independent from the contractor.

*Buckinghamshire Council Biodiversity Offsetting [Option 1 in Figure 5] **Option 1 is not available at the point of Adoption of this Supplementary Planning Document.***

3.5.2 Buckinghamshire Council could deliver offset sites in a number of ways:

- *through management of areas of existing council-owned land;*
- *through purchasing land specifically for the purpose of achieving biodiversity net gain;*
- *through working with partner organisations, securing legal agreements for the management of their land; or*
- *through working with other landowners to secure legal agreements for the management of their land.*

In all instances a biodiversity net gain management and monitoring plan will either be produced by the council or its partners. The carrying out of the land management to provide the offset units will vary in different circumstances.

3.5.2. Developer-Secured Biodiversity Offsetting [Option 2 in Figure 5]

Where a developer provides an offsetting site this will need to have been secured prior to planning application determination, and the means by which it will be managed, monitored and reported on, including arrangements for providing information on progress to the Council, should be set out and agreed with the Council. In most cases this will be as per paragraph 3.4.2.

3.5.3. Offset Provider or Broker Biodiversity Offsetting – [Option 3 in Figure 5]

Where developer sources an offsetting site through an offset provider or broker, the details will have been secured prior to determination along with the means by which it will be managed, monitored and reported on, which should be agreed with the Council, including arrangements for providing information on progress to the Council. The way in which this is arranged will be dependent upon the type of offset provider or broker.

3.5.4. Biodiversity Net Gain Monitoring

Monitoring or tracking of the progress towards achieving the anticipated biodiversity units for both on and off-site habitats will be carried out by the council. This will include the scrutiny of biodiversity net gain auditing reports submitted to the council as well as carrying out occasional site checks. Monitoring details will be used to inform the councils own planning monitoring reports as well as feeding back to government where necessary.

There is an important distinction to be made between this monitoring undertaken by the council and that which forms part of the Biodiversity Net Gain Management and Monitoring Plan which is carried out by the offset provider as part of adaptive management of the habitat.

4. Appendices

4.1.1. Appendix 1 – Adopted Policies related to this Supplementary Planning Document

Chiltern Core Strategy 2011

Policy CS24: Biodiversity

The Council will aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity within the District. In particular

- the Council will work with its partners to protect and enhance legally protected species and all sites and networks of habitats of international, national, regional or local importance for wildlife or geology. development proposals should protect biodiversity and
- provide for the long-term management, enhancement, restoration and, if possible, expansion of biodiversity, by aiming to restore or create suitable semi-natural habitats and ecological networks to sustain wildlife. This will be in accordance with the Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Action Plan as well as the aims of the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and the Chiltern AONB Management Plan. where
- development proposals are permitted, provision will be made to safeguard and where possible enhance any ecological interest.
- where, in exceptional circumstances, development outweighs any adverse effect upon the biodiversity of the site and there are no reasonable alternative sites available, replacement habitat of higher quality will be provided through mitigation and/or compensation to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.

South Bucks Core Strategy 2011

Core Policy 9: Natural Environment

The highest priority will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the integrity of Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation.

The conservation and enhancement of the Chilterns AONB and its setting will be achieved by ensuring that all development complies with the purposes of the AONB and its Management Plan. The conservation and enhancement of Burnham Beeches SAC, and its surrounding supporting biodiversity resources, will be achieved through restricting the amount of development in close proximity to the site, and ensuring that development causes no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC. Further details on mechanisms for achieving this will be given in the Development Management DPD.

More generally, the landscape characteristics and biodiversity resources within South Bucks will be conserved and enhanced by:

- Not permitting new development that would harm landscape character or nature conservation interests, unless the importance of the development outweighs the harm caused, the Council is satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm and appropriate mitigation or compensation is provided, resulting in a net gain in Biodiversity.

- Seeking the conservation, enhancement and net gain in local biodiversity resources within the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, on other non-designated land, on rivers and their associated habitats, and as part of development proposals.
- Maintaining existing ecological corridors and avoiding habitat fragmentation.
- Conserving and enhancing landscapes, informed by Green Infrastructure Plans and the District Council's Landscape Character Assessment.
- Improving the rural/urban fringe by supporting and implementing initiatives in the Colne Valley Park Action Plan.
- Seeking biodiversity, recreational, leisure and amenity improvements for the River Thames setting where opportunities arise, for example at Mill Lane (see Core Policy 15).

Wycombe Local Plan 2019

Policy CP7 – Delivering the infrastructure to support growth.

Provision will be made for new infrastructure to support growth, through planning obligations, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and other available funding streams as appropriate. Where justified, development will be required to provide or contribute towards delivering the key infrastructure requirements for the District including:

4. Environment a) Green Infrastructure – including landscape, recreation, and biodiversity improvements;

Policy CP 10 – Green Infrastructure and the natural environment.

The Council will promote the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and green infrastructure of the District through:

1. Conserving, protecting and enhancing the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and other natural environmental assets of local, national and international importance by:
 - a) Protecting them from harmful development through development management policies in this Plan and the Delivery and Site Allocations Plan including the protection of biodiversity and landscape designations and landscape character based approach to considering proposals;
 - b) Working with the Chilterns AONB Board and other agencies to improve the management of the AONB and other natural assets, and help people's enjoyment of them;
 - c) Taking a landscape character based approach to considering proposals.
2. Ensuring there is a net gain in biodiversity within individual development proposals and across the District as a whole over the plan period.
3. Working with local natural environment partnerships to protect and enhance the green infrastructure network of the District by:
 - a) Protecting designated sites and through management plans ensuring their biodiversity value will be enhanced;
 - b) Proactive, early and strategic planning of green infrastructure to maximise its benefits, including a baseline assessment of what exists (function, location, size, connectivity);
 - c) Keeping under review and updating the extent of the Green Infrastructure network in coordination with the Bucks and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership and other agencies;

d) Ensuring through development management policies that all development is required to maximise the opportunities to protect, enhance, expand, connect, improve and use the existing green infrastructure, including across the border of the development site.

4. Working in partnership with the Environment Agency, Natural England and the water companies to protect, manage and improve water quality in the District, particularly the quality of water bodies which are currently failing to meet the Water Framework Directive (WFD) requirements as set out in the Thames River Basin Management Plan (RBMP).

Policy DM 34 – Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development

1. All development is required to protect and enhance both biodiversity and green infrastructure features and networks both on and off-site for the lifetime of the development.

2. Developments proposals are required to evidence a thorough understanding of context through the preparation of a proportionate assessment of existing and planned green infrastructure, biodiversity and ecological features and networks both on the site and in the locality, and demonstrate how:

a) Through physical alterations and a management plan for the lifetime of the development:

- i. Existing green infrastructure and biodiversity assets will be maximised;
- ii. Opportunities to enhance existing and provide new green infrastructure and biodiversity assets will be maximised;
- iii. Development will deliver long lasting measurable net gains in biodiversity;
- iv. Where appropriate, a monitoring plan will be put in place to review delivery of i - iii.

b) The mitigation hierarchy has been applied by following a sequential approach to avoid, minimise, mitigate, and finally compensate for (on then off-site) any harm to biodiversity. If significant harm cannot be avoided in this way, development will not be permitted. 3. Development (excluding householder applications) is required as a minimum to:

- a) Secure adequate buffers to valuable habitats;
- b) Achieve a future canopy cover of 25% of the site area on sites outside of the town centres and 0.5 ha or more. This will principally be achieved through retention and planting of trees, but where it can be demonstrated that this is impractical the use of other green infrastructure (e.g. green roofs and walls) can be used to deliver equivalent benefit;
- c) Within town centres and on sites below 0.5 ha development is required to maximise the opportunities available for canopy cover (including not only tree planting but also the use of green roofs and green walls);
- d) Make provision for the long term management and maintenance of green infrastructure and biodiversity assets;
- e) Protect trees to be retained through site layout and during construction.

Delivery and Site Allocations Plan 2013

Policy DM14 Biodiversity in Development

1. All development proposals should be designed to maximise biodiversity by conserving, enhancing or extending existing resources or creating new areas or features.
2. Where potential biodiversity interest is identified on a site or the development creates an opportunity to increase biodiversity, the Council will require an ecological survey and report to be submitted which demonstrates how this will be addressed.

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2021

Policy NE1

Protected Sites

Internationally or nationally important Protected Sites (SACs and SSSIs) and species will be protected. Avoidance of likely significant adverse effects should be the first option. Development likely to affect the Chiltern Beechwoods SAC will be subject to assessment under the Habitat Regulations and will not be permitted unless any significant adverse effects can be fully mitigated.

Development proposals that would lead to an individual or cumulative adverse impact on an internationally or nationally important Protected Site or species, such as SSSIs or irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland or ancient trees, will be refused unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated as follows:

- a. the benefits of the development at this site significantly and demonstrably outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it internationally or nationally important and any broader impacts on the national network – for example of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and
- b. the loss can be mitigated and compensation can be provided to achieve a net gain in biodiversity/geodiversity

Sufficient information must be provided for the council to assess the significance of the impact against the importance of the Protected Site and its component habitats and the species which depend upon it. This will include the area around the Protected Site and the ecosystem services it provides and evidence that the development has followed the mitigation hierarchy set out in (d) below

Protection and enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity will be achieved by the following:

- c. A net gain in biodiversity on minor and major developments will be sought by protecting, managing, enhancing and extending existing biodiversity resources, and by creating new biodiversity resources. These gains must be measurable using best practice in biodiversity and green infrastructure accounting and in accordance with any methodology (including a Biodiversity Impact Assessment) to be set out in the Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Accounting SPD.
- d. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or as a last resort, compensated for, then development will not be permitted. If a net loss in biodiversity is calculated, using a suitable Biodiversity Impact Assessment (see c) then avoidance, mitigation and compensation, on site first, then offsite must be sought so the development results in a net gain (percentage of net gain to meet any nationally-set minimum standard and or as detailed in an SPD) in order for development to be permitted. Mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures must be secured and should be maintained in perpetuity. These assessments must be undertaken in accordance with nationally-accepted standards and guidance (BS 8683 Biodiversity net gain in project design and construction; and CIRIA Biodiversity Net Gain Good practice principles for development).
- e. Development which would result in damage to or loss of a site of biodiversity or geological value of regional or local importance (such as Local Wildlife Sites or Local Geological Sites) including habitats of principal importance (known as Priority Habitats) or the habitats of species of principal importance (Priority Species) or their habitats will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances where the need for, and benefits of the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm it would cause to the site, and the loss can be mitigated and compensation provided to achieve a net gain.
- f. The Council will, where appropriate, expect ecological surveys for planning applications. These must be undertaken by a suitably qualified person and consistent with nationally accepted standards and guidance (BS 42020: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for planning and development; and CIEEM Ecological Report Writing guidance) as replaced.

- g. Where development proposals affect a Priority Habitat (As defined in the Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Action Plan or UK Biodiversity Action Plan and as listed in accordance with s41 of the NERC Act 2006) then mitigation should not be off-site. Where no Priority Habitat is involved then mitigation is expected to follow the mitigation hierarchy, where options for avoidance, mitigation and compensation on-site, and then offsite compensation, should be followed in that order as outlined in d. When there is a reasonable likelihood of the presence of protected or priority species or their habitats, development will not be permitted until it has been demonstrated that the proposed development will not result in adverse impacts on these species or their habitats. The only exception will be where the advantages of development to the protected site and the local community clearly outweigh the adverse impacts. In such a case, the council will consider the wider implications of any adverse impact to a protected site, such as its role in providing a vital wildlife corridor, mitigating flood risk or ensuring good water quality in a catchment.
- h. Development proposals will be expected to promote site permeability for wildlife and avoid the fragmentation of wildlife corridors, incorporating features to encourage biodiversity, and retain and where possible enhance existing features of nature conservation value on site. Existing ecological networks should be identified and maintained to avoid habitat fragmentation, and ecological corridors including water courses should form an essential component of green infrastructure provision in association with new development to ensure habitat connectivity.
- i. Planning conditions/obligations will be used to ensure net gains in biodiversity by helping to deliver the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Biodiversity Action Plan targets in the biodiversity opportunity areas and other areas of local biodiversity priority. Where development is proposed within, or adjacent to, a biodiversity opportunity area, biodiversity surveys and a report will be required to identify constraints and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. Development which would prevent the aims of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area from being achieved will not be permitted. Where there is potential for development, the design and layout of the development should secure biodiversity enhancement and the council will use planning conditions and obligations as needed to help achieve the aims of the biodiversity opportunity area. A monitoring and management plan will be required for biodiversity features on site to ensure their long-term suitable management

(secured through planning condition or Section 106 agreement).

- j. Development proposals adversely affecting a Local Nature Reserve will be considered on a case-by-case basis, according to the amount of information available about the site and its significance, relative to the type, scale and benefits of the development being proposed and any *mitigation*. *Any mitigation strategy will need to include co-operation with the nature reserve managers.*

4.2. Appendix 2 - Principles and Rules for Biodiversity Assessment

Principles

Principle 1: The metric does not change the protection afforded to biodiversity. Existing levels of protection afforded to protected species and habitats are not changed by use of this or any other metric. Statutory obligations will still need to be satisfied.

Principle 2: Biodiversity metric calculations can inform decision-making where application of the mitigation hierarchy and good practice principles conclude that compensation for habitat losses is justified.

Principle 3: The metric's biodiversity units are only a proxy for biodiversity and should be treated as relative values. While it is underpinned by ecological evidence the units generated by the metric are only a proxy for biodiversity and, to be of practical use, it has been kept deliberately simple. The numerical values generated by the metric represent relative, not absolute, values.

Principle 4: The metric focuses on typical habitats and widespread species; important or protected habitats and features should be given broader consideration.

- Protected and locally important species needs are not considered through the metric, they should be addressed through existing policy and legislation.
- Impacts on protected sites (e.g. SSSIs) and irreplaceable habitats are not adequately measured by this metric. They will require separate consideration which must comply with existing national and local policy and legislation. Data relating to these can be entered into the metric, so as to give an indicative picture of the biodiversity value of the habitats present on a site, but this should be supported by bespoke advice.

Principle 5: The metric design aims to encourage enhancement, not transformation, of the natural environment. Proper consideration should be given to the habitats being lost in favour of higher-scoring habitats, and whether the retention of less distinctive but well-established habitats may sometimes be a better option for local biodiversity. Habitat created to compensate for loss of natural or semi-natural habitat should be of the same broad habitat type (e.g. new woodland to replace lost woodland) unless there is a good ecological reason to do otherwise (e.g. to restore a heathland habitat that was converted to woodland for timber in the past).

Principle 6: The metric is designed to inform decisions, not to override expert opinion. Management interventions should be guided by appropriate expert ecological advice and not just the biodiversity unit outputs of the metric. Ecological principles still need to be applied to ensure that what is being proposed is realistic and deliverable based on local conditions such as geology, hydrology, nutrient levels, etc. and the complexity of future management requirements.

Principle 7: Compensation habitats should seek, where practical, to be local to the impact. They should aim to replicate the characteristics of the habitats that have been lost, taking account of the structure and species composition that give habitats their local distinctiveness. Where possible compensation habitats should contribute towards nature recovery in England by creating 'more, bigger, better and joined up' areas for biodiversity.

Principle 8: The metric does not enforce a mandatory minimum 1:1 habitat size ratio for losses and compensation but consideration should be given to maintaining habitat extent and habitat

parcels of sufficient size for ecological function. A difference can occur because of a difference in quality between the habitat impacted and the compensation provided. For example, if a habitat of low distinctiveness is impacted and is compensated for by the creation of habitat of higher distinctiveness or better condition, the area needed to compensate for losses can potentially be less than the area impacted. However, consideration should be given to whether reducing the area or length of habitat provided as compensation is an appropriate outcome.

Species Rules	
Species Rule 1	Species metric(s) are a distinct entity and an evaluation of 'species biodiversity units' must be kept separate in any 'account' of the effects of an intervention on biodiversity. You <u>must not</u> sum habitat and species units to derive a total biodiversity unit value.
Species Rule 2	Species metric(s) can be used as an additional source of information to complement information provided by biodiversity metric 3.0. It is important that the habitat-based metric is used as the primary tool for evaluating biodiversity change. Using a species metric in isolation can result in significant risk of net loss in biodiversity.
Species Rule 3	A species metric needs to be consistent with all key principles of the biodiversity metric 3.0, particularly the principle that the metric does not change the protection afforded to biodiversity (Principle 1).
Species Rule 4	The legal provisions that apply to protected species (and habitats) take precedence in designing and planning the approach used to mitigate or compensate for impacts on species. An acceptable design must satisfy these legal requirements, even if this does not result in the best possible biodiversity unit outcome (based on evaluation using the biodiversity metric 3.0).
Species Rule 5	It is acceptable for the same area of habitat to be separately scored using the biodiversity metric 3.0 and one or more species metrics. Because each metric describes the value of that habitat from a distinct perspective the corresponding outputs represent a different 'biodiversity currency' and must not be summed.

4.2.1. Appendix 3 - Pertinent Clauses from BS 8683:2021

Clause 5.1

Recording a commitment to achieving BNG shall include:

- commit to the implementation of the BNG Good Principles [N1], especially the application of the mitigation hierarchy throughout the project's lifecycle with an emphasis on avoiding impacts to biodiversity include a measurable target for BNG describe the project team's intended resource and funding streams to design and implement BNG to maintain and monitor BNG over the long-term;
- reference the driver(s) for achieving BNG, such as a company's voluntary commitment to BNG or a policy requirement;
- state that project-wide claims of BNG cannot be made for projects that affect irreplaceable habitats; and
- maximise opportunities for BNG to generate positive social outcomes.

Clause 6.2.12 Finalise BNG design outputs

In addition to the evidence and documents required in 6.2.1 and 6.2.11, the outputs of the BNG design shall include the following:

All predicted biodiversity outcomes: this shall include a qualitative and quantitative assessment of all the project's predicted biodiversity outcomes (i.e. both losses and gains and the timing of these) with evidence that associated social impacts have been considered.

Separately to BNG, negative impacts on biodiversity features for which net gain outcomes are not possible: this shall include biodiversity features for which any negative impacts after following the mitigation hierarchy cannot be restored or offset to achieve BNG. The BNG plan shall incorporate or refer to a specific compensation and or management strategy for these features separate from the specific biodiversity features for which BNG targets are set.

BNG design specification: this shall include specifications of all BNG design measure whether on- or off-site (e.g. a planting specification), a detailed programme of delivery during implementation and post-implementation stages, and scaled drawings.

A description, with justification of the method or metric used for measuring BNG and the data limitations and assumptions used to measure the baseline, impacts and post-project predicted BNG outcomes.

A detailed breakdown of the measurement of BNG, including data collection methods and findings (e.g. full results of habitat condition assessments and the method used to measure area of habitats) and any limitations encountered or assumptions made about the data. The

results shall include specific biodiversity features (e.g. broad habitat types) showing how negative impacts on specific biodiversity features have been addressed and counterbalanced by a set of commensurate net gains by applying the 'like for like or better' principle (see 6.22)

BNG Management and Monitoring Plan (MMP) (see 8.1)

The BNG MMP shall include:

The project's biodiversity baseline assessment against which BNG outcomes are assessed and monitored;

The project's BNG targets;

The number of years to achieve and then maintain the BNG targets;

A programme detailing the long-term phases of the management and monitoring activities;

A monitoring plan to inform decisions about management, whether assessing progress towards the BNG targets is on track and whether changes to management are required to achieve the targets; and

The roles and responsibilities and required competencies of those involved with implementing and monitoring the BNG design during implementation and post-implementation stages.

Resources: evidence shall be documented of the resources confirmed to the implemented BNG design and the BNG MMP for the lifetime of the BNG MMP

Spatially referenced BNG data: spatially referenced data on the project's biodiversity baseline and BNG design measures shall be submitted in digital format to all organisations involved with the practical implementation and monitoring of BNG. The data shall also be submitted to relevant stakeholders.

Clause 7.6 Biodiversity Net Gain Agreement

The BNG project developer, consenting authority (where applicable) and organisations(s) responsible for BNG outcome delivery shall establish between themselves a written BNG agreement. This BNG agreement shall contain, as a minimum the following information:

The names and signatures of the parties, or their representatives, entering into the BNG agreement;

The duration of the BNG agreement (in years), including the start and anticipated end date (if relevant) of the agreement;

The proposed mechanisms for securing delivery of the proposed outcome(s), for example, through a planning obligation or other legal contract between the parties to the agreement;

Where payments are involved relating to the delivery of the BNG outcome, an agreed payment mechanism shall be stipulated and agreed payment schedule shall be included with the agreement;

Confirmation of the type, format and frequency of any monitoring or reporting, in relation to the BNG outcomes, to be undertaken over the duration of the agreement and detail set out as to whom the recipient of such reporting information is;

Information in relation to the mechanisms for resolving disputes between the parties to the BNG agreement; and

A summary of the BNG outcomes to be achieved [detail set out in the management and monitoring plan (MMP)] for which the agreement covers, as a minimum to include either percentage gain to be delivered.

The completed BNG agreement shall be added to the MMP & shall be retained for the duration of the BNG project.

Clause 8.1 Implementation of the Management and Monitoring Plan (MMP)

In accordance with 7.6, the Biodiversity net gain agreement shall establish mechanisms to enable the management, monitoring, maintenance and monitoring of the biodiversity features within the MMP.

These mechanisms shall be sufficient to meet the BNG outcomes for the project for the duration of the biodiversity net gain agreement. A nominated person or body responsible shall be appointed for ensuring that the MMP is implemented; monitoring shall be designed and undertaken by a competent person who is able to apply the methodology required.

Activities shall be documented and costed when planning management arrangements and handing over responsibilities to third parties.

The project shall employ adaptive management (see 3.1.1), informed by periodic monitoring and evaluation of results. Monitoring activity shall evidence assessments of whether site management has delivered, or is on target to deliver, the planned habitat outcomes.

If management is not delivering the biodiversity outcomes, or is deemed unlikely to (on the basis of trajectory of change in condition and known time to target condition), changes in the management regime shall be implemented to deliver a successful outcome. There shall be no 'trading' of offset types, i.e. failure of one habitat features cannot be offset by a quicker than planned improvement in the condition of another.

Clause 8.2 Monitoring

The monitoring aspects of the MMP shall be implemented to:

Cover all habitats and features that have contributed towards the BNG calculations;

Check that habitats types and features are achieving the planned condition and functioning ecologically as intended according to timescales anticipated in the calculations;

Provide information to aid future interpretation and assessment of the change; and

Meet MMP requirements for survey methods, timing and frequency of resurvey, qualifications and experience required of surveyors and arrangements for retaining and sharing raw survey data to aid future interpretation and assessment of change.

Any changes to survey methods, frequency and timing etc. From those envisaged in the original MMP shall be recorded and justified.

Survey records shall be retained and handed over to any parties undertaking subsequent management and monitoring in accordance with 8.3 to 8.5.

Clause 8.3 Reporting

Reporting requirements shall be agreed at the outside of a project and shall be undertaken at least until all obligations to BNG are fulfilled. the MMP shall specified the reporting frequency.

Report content shall be defined in the design and the MMP.

Monitoring reports and updated MMP shall be submitted to the body specified in planning conditions, or to the commissioning agency.

Clause 8.4 Record Management

BNG records shall be kept and maintained, as specified in the MMP, for at least the full duration of the project. Records relating to the biodiversity outcomes delivered shall be made available to third parties as required.



Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document - Statement of Representations

As required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 - Regulations 12 and 13

The Council consulted on the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document from 19 February 2021 to 19 March 2021.

Simon Meecham – May 2022

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1.0 Introduction

This statement is the 'Consultation Statement' for the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). It sets out how the public and other stakeholders were consulted on the Consultation Draft, provides a summary of the issues which were raised during the consultation, and how those issues have been addressed in preparing the final version of the document.

2.0 Consultation requirements of the regulations

The Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The relevant regulations relating to the process are explained below.

Regulation 12: Regulation 12(a) requires the Council to produce a statement before the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document. This must set out who was consulted in preparing the document; a summary of the main issues raised by those individuals and organisations who responded, and how those issues have been addressed in final version of the Supplementary Planning Document. This document is the statement for the adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document for the purposes of Regulation 12(a).

Regulation 12(b) requires the Council to publish the documents for no less than four weeks and to specify the date when responses should be received, and identify the address to which responses should be sent. The consultation statement that accompanied the draft Supplementary Planning Document set out that information.

Regulation 13: Regulation 13 stipulates that any person may make representations about the Supplementary Planning Document and that the representations must be made by the end of the consultation date referred to in Regulation 12b. The consultation statement that accompanied the draft Supplementary Planning Document set out that requirement.

Regulation 35: Regulation 12 states that when seeking representations on a Supplementary Planning Document, documents must be made available in accordance with Regulation 35. This requires the Council to make documents available by taking the following steps:

- Make the document available at the principal office and other places within the area that the Council considers appropriate;
- Publish the document on the Council's website.

All these measures were undertaken as part of the consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document, subject to the Government regulations and guidance in force to limit the transmission of Covid-19, as described in the section below.

3.0 Details of how the consultation was undertaken

The potential impact of the proposed strategy is the whole of administrative area of Buckinghamshire.

Details of the consultation were sent to key stakeholders including organisations registered on the planning consultation database, town and parish councils, neighbouring local authorities, developers, housing associations, local environmental groups, and government agencies. The Supplementary Planning Document was also made available on the Council's website. A link to the consultation was published on dedicated Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership *Your Voice Bucks* consultation website. This publishes all Partnership's community engagement and consultation activities in one place.

During the consultation, details of the consultations were posted at regularly intervals on the Council's social media accounts.

A list of measures taken to publicise the consultation are set out below:

- The statutory 28 days-notice was published on the Council's website for the key decision to consult.
- The consultation was listed on the home page of the Your Voice Bucks website.
- All statutory and prescribed bodies were sent a link to the consultation portal.
- All consultees on the planning policy databases were informed.
- Local media were sent a media release on the consultation.
- Details were provided of a named Council contact officer, together with their email address phone number, who would be able to assist with any queries

4.0 Summary of the issues raised during the consultation and how they have been addressed in the final version of the Supplementary Planning Document.

A summary of the representations is attached at appendix 1. This includes officer recommendations for modifications to the draft Supplementary Planning Document.

5.0 The Consultation Statement of Representations Procedure.

The statement of representations procedure is attached at appendix 2.

Appendix 1 - Consideration of Representations and Proposed Modifications

Summary of the issues raised during the consultation and how they have been addressed in the final version of the Supplementary Planning Document.



Buckinghamshire Biodiversity Net Gain

Draft Supplementary Planning Document

Consideration of Representations and Proposed
Modifications

Summary

The consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document attracted 310 comments, 239 from objectors and 71 in support.

The Supplementary Planning Document received support from individuals and organisations which include: Natural England, the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, City of London Corporation, the Marlow Society, The Canal and Rovers Trust, Buckinghamshire Town Council, Chesham and District Natural History Association, Savills, Wycombe Wildlife Group, Chilterns Conservation Board who also consider it should be held up as a model, the Chiltern Society, the Woodlands Trust, Chesham Society, Catesby Estates Ltd., the Environment Agency, Gerrards Cross Town Council and individuals.

The Supplementary Planning Document received objections from individuals and organisations which include: from MSC Planning Associates Limited, the Landscape Partnership, Risborough Environmental Group, Aspect Ecology, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership, Chiltern Society, Buckingham Town Council, Catesby Estates Ltd., Sustainable Chesham, CALA Homes (Chiltern) Ltd., Persimmon Homes North London, Chesham and District Natural History Society, Crest Nicholson, City of London Corporation, Beaconsfield Society, Ellington and District Residents Association, Berkeley Strategic Land Limited., Savills, Chiltern Society, Beaconsfield Town Council, Environment Agency, the Canal and Rivers Trust, Crest Nicholson and individuals.

The result of the consultation is that modifications are required to the Supplementary Planning Document before its adoption. Modifications include improved flow charts linking the stages of the preferred option of on-site net gain and options for the three less preferred mitigation measures.

Also, since the consultation the government has published the Environment Act, which is accompanied by detailed information on biodiversity accounting; which this Supplementary Planning Document has considered.

Summary of Representations

Consultation Response	BC Response	Modification
The council is enabling biodiversity off-site rather than ensuring it is on site.	<p>This formed the bulk of objections - that off-site mitigation should not be allowed.</p> <p>The council's position remains that its preference is for biodiversity net gain is to be on site. Flow charts, text and options have been made clearer and an illustration is provided to show how net gain on site can be achieved by iterating the design of the development.</p>	Provision of replacement flowcharts and illustrations.
The Supplementary Planning Document is just added bureaucracy.	The Supplementary Planning Document provides guidance on how to achieve biodiversity net gain in Buckinghamshire. It guides applicants on the processes to enable net gain to be achieved within Buckinghamshire.	None
More information is required on monitoring.	Further information on monitoring has been added.	Information has been enhanced on monitoring.
The council should ask for a minimum of 20% net gain.	The Supplementary Planning Document cannot require a specific percentage of net gain because it is a guidance document. A percentage would usually be set out in legislation or in a Local Plan. Whilst all	None

Consultation Response	BC Response	Modification
	current Local Plans in Buckinghamshire support net gain, none provide a minimum percentage. The document defers to the Environment Act on this matter.	
The Supplementary Planning Document should only be in place when there is a mechanism in place to determine planning applications on net gain.	The council has taken this on board and aligned the implementation programme alongside the Supplementary Planning Document for consideration by the council's Cabinet.	Processes aligned for decision making and implementation.
The council should consider micro-farms to aid biodiversity.	The Supplementary Planning Document does not restrict any options for net gain.	None
Why exclude nationally significant infrastructure?	Since the consultation took place, the government has added this type of development to the need for net gain.	None

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIONS PROCEDURE AND CONSULTATION STATEMENT

Last updated: 15 February 2021 by Simon Meecham, Lead Local Plan Consultant

Version: 1.0

Biodiversity Accounting Supplementary Planning Document

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIONS PROCEDURE

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Buckinghamshire Council has published the Biodiversity Accounting Supplementary Planning Document for consultation from 17:00 19 February 2021 to 23:59 19 March 2021.

Title of Document: Biodiversity Accounting Supplementary Planning Document

Subject matter: This Supplementary Planning Document is intended to guide developers and key organisations on the following:

1) To provide more detailed guidance regarding the implementation and interpretation of the following policies:

Local Plan	Policy Reference The policies are reproduced in full in Appendix 1
Chiltern Core Strategy 2011	Policy CS24: Biodiversity
South Bucks Core Strategy 2011	Core Policy 9: Natural Environment
Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 as Further Modified 2020	NE1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity (once adopted)
Wycombe Local Plan 2019	Policy CP7: Delivering the Infrastructure to Support Growth Policy CP10: Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment DM34: Delivering Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity in Development
Delivery and Site Allocations Plan for Town Centres and Managing Development 2013	DM14: Biodiversity in Development

2) This guidance, produced with advice from the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership, sets out how Biodiversity Accounting will be used to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain across Buckinghamshire. It sets out how the council and those making planning applications will calculate the development impacts on biodiversity as part of their landscape plans and enables schemes to be devised to ensure that a net gain in biodiversity is delivered on site. The supplementary planning document and the relevant plan do not specify the percentage of net gain to be sought, this is deferred to the forthcoming Environment Act.

The requirements for a net gain in biodiversity do not undermine the existing range of protections outlined in planning policy and legislation for protected sites or for irreplaceable habitats. Accounting for biodiversity also does not replace the existing planning application requirements for ecological assessment and species surveys.

The consultation will run from 19 February 2021 to 19 March 2021. During this consultation period the Supplementary Planning Document will be available to view online on the council's consultation portal.

Any comments on the Supplementary Planning Document, its Habitats, Regulations Assessment or Strategic Environmental Assessment must be submitted in writing. Comments can be submitted:

- online through our planning consultation portal.
- via Your Voice Bucks to our planning consultation portal :
<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/>
- via email to planningpolicyteam.bc@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specified address of any further updates in the preparation of the Draft Supplementary Planning Document.

STATEMENT OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSPECTION OF THE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Due to Covid 19 restrictions the council cannot display a hard copy of the document in the council offices or libraries or provide hard copies.

All representations should be clear on which sections you are making the representation. It would be helpful if you could state the section number and paragraph number.

This will ensure that the Council has all the information needed to process any representation you wish to make.

All comments on the Draft Supplementary Planning Document must be received no later than 11.59 PM on 19 February 2021.

After the end of the consultation period, any comments received will be considered by Council and the Draft Supplementary Planning Document will be amended accordingly. Please note that all comments (including some of your personal details) will be made available for the public to view, and therefore cannot be treated as confidential.

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

Persons the local planning authority consulted when preparing the supplementary planning document.

This draft Supplementary Planning Document has been produced with advice from the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Natural Environment Partnership. The council engaged with this organisation and their working group: The Biodiversity Accounting Working Group.

This group helped to shape a model Supplementary Planning Document which this Supplementary Planning Document is based on. The working group included the Environment Agency, Natural England, Milton Keynes Borough Council, the Chilterns Conservation Board, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust and Buckinghamshire Council. Two Workshops also took place, the first with the same (and predecessor) organisations on the 29 November 2019 and a development management focussed workshop on 12 May 2020.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment have been prepared and consulted upon with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.

Summary of the main issues raised and by those persons.

The organisations provided their advice and challenges in the writing of the model Supplementary Planning Document. Warwickshire County Council acted as a consultant to the working group basing their advice on the experience they have had in running a biodiversity accounting scheme since being part of a pilot programme in 2012-2014.

Matters raised included the accounting metric, offsetting, fees, the hierarchy for biodiversity gain and the percentage of net gain compared to the current state of a development site.

Historic England commented:

Historic England agrees with the conclusion in the SEA Screening Report, February 2021 (Lepus Consulting) that an SEA is not required for the Biodiversity Accounting SPD. This is because the Biodiversity Accounting SPD does not set new policy: it provides further detail to existing or forthcoming local plan policies, specifically those set out in the table on p8 of the Consultation Draft Biodiversity Accounting SPD, Version 7, dated 25th January 2020.

Natural England commented:

SEA and HRA Screening

Based on the plan submitted, Natural England agree with the assessment that the Biodiversity Accounting Supplementary Planning Document does not require an SEA or HRA.

Biodiversity Accounting Supplementary Planning Document

We welcome that overall priorities for biodiversity net gain including improved connectivity and habitat creation have been set out in this document along with how applications will calculate the impacts of development on biodiversity. In addition, we commend the ambitions of the SPD in reflecting the commitment to deliver the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan to create ecological links, networks and green corridors for nature and people to enjoy.

Planning policies and supplementary planning documents:

The following documents/strategies could be added to the list of planning policies and supplementary planning documents:

- Emerging Biodiversity Action Plan Forward to 2030; and
- Emerging Buckinghamshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Projects that provide opportunities for biodiversity gains could also be referenced in the SPD. This may include the following:

- Roadside Verges for Wildlife; and
- Bucks Buzzing.

Clauses 95-99 of the Environment Bill 2020, will mandate the creation of LNRSs across England. Biodiversity Net Gain will provide the crucial financial incentive to deliver the emerging LNRS. As a result, we would recommend that the SPD makes reference to the LNRS pilot for Buckinghamshire.

Biodiversity Accounting scheme:

We would like to raise the following with regards to biodiversity net gain receptor sites. Sites proposed for biodiversity offsetting must not already be serving as mitigation from previous development e.g.

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs). Unless however, net gain is providing additional enhancements to the site that are not required for the existing mitigation/SANG. If you need any specific clarification on this, please speak to us directly.

How those issues have been addressed in the supplementary planning document?

The working groups and the workshops have helped to shape the model SPD and in turn the drafting of this Supplementary Planning Document. The references made by Natural England, but excluding the projects, have been added to the draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation 19 February 2021 – 19 March 2021.



Report to Cabinet

Date:	12 th July 2022
Title:	2022/23 Corporate Key Performance Indicators
Relevant councillor(s):	John Chilver
Author and/or contact officer:	Matt Everitt
Ward(s) affected:	None specific
Recommendations:	1. Recommend that key performance indicators for 2022/23 are agreed 2. Recommend that associated targets for 2022/23 are agreed
Reason for decision:	Key performance indicators and targets have been developed collaboratively with each Directorate and agreed with the portfolio holder.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report details the key performance indicators and targets being proposed for reporting to Cabinet in 2022/23. If agreed, reporting against these indicators will commence for Quarter 2.
- 1.2 Proposed key performance indicators and the associated targets to be reported to Cabinet have been agreed within each Directorate and with each portfolio holder. These will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 Cabinet Key Performance Indicators and targets are reviewed annually in accordance with the Corporate Performance Framework.

- 2.2 Proposed key performance indicators and targets are included in the appendix.
- 2.3 Cabinet are asked to consider:
- a) Key Performance Indicators for 2022/23, considering;
 - i. Whether we will have a satisfactory range of indicators to evidence the key Council objectives for 2022/23.
 - ii. Whether we will have an appropriate number of indicators that evidence the outcomes we are seeking to achieve.
 - b) Targets, considering
 - i. Whether targets proposed evidence the Council's ambition for 2022/23, are stretching but achievable, and in line with latest benchmarking (where available).

3. Other options considered

3.1 N/A

4. Legal and financial implications

4.1 N/A

5. Corporate implications

5.1 N/A

6. Consultation with local councillors & community boards

6.1 N/A

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

7.1 N/A

8. Next steps and review

8.1 If agreed, outturns for key performance indicators will be reported for Quarter 2

8.2 Indicators and targets will be reviewed annually

9. Background papers

9.1 Details of key performance indicators, targets and a summary of the process are included in the appendix

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

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Cabinet

Corporate Key Performance Indicators 2022/23

Business Intelligence & Insight

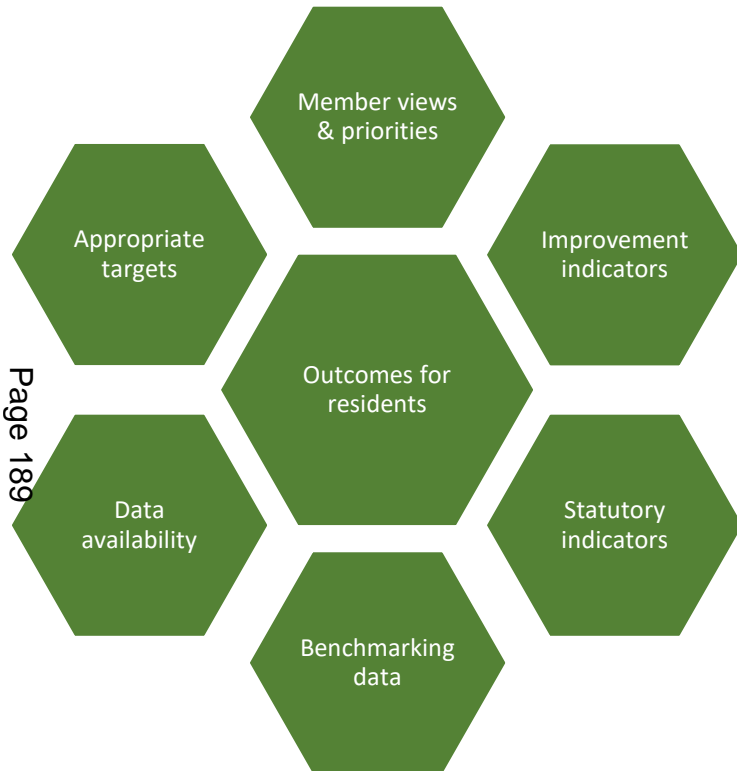
Report for decision



Summary of process

- Cabinet Performance Indicators and targets are reviewed annually
- Cabinet Members have been involved in the development of these indicators and targets, with input from Directorate teams and Business Intelligence & Insight
- Cabinet Member approval has been obtained for the proposed indicators for their portfolio area
- Proposals are presented to Cabinet for approval
- There are 116 indicators for consideration.

Indicator and target setting



- Indicators selected will clearly evidence and/or support the priorities in the Manifesto and Corporate & Directorate plans.
- When setting indicators, the following factors will be considered:
 - a) Strength of link to outcomes for residents
 - b) Member views and priorities
 - c) Improvement indicators
 - d) Statutory indicators
 - e) Availability of benchmarking data
 - f) The availability of the relevant data
 - g) An appropriate target for the indicator
- The Business Intelligence & Insight team work with each service area, providing analysis and information to enable indicator and target setting.
- Cabinet members are responsible for signing-off indicators and targets within their portfolio area, in discussion with Corporate and Service Directors with support from the Business Intelligence and Insight team.

Leader

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Economic Growth and Regeneration						
LEA 001	Percentage unemployed in Buckinghamshire to be less than 55% of the Percentage unemployed nationally	Quarterly	55%	Low	Compared to National figures	Q4 2021/22: 67%
LEA 002	Number of new business registrations (rank against other LEPs)	Quarterly	Top 10	Low	Compared to other LEPs	Q4 2021/22: 9
Strategic Transport and Infrastructure						
LEA 003	Strategic Infrastructure projects: % profiled spend achieved (SEALR Phases 1 and 2)	Quarterly	100%	High	Set against budget	Q4 2020/21: 146.58%

Accessible Housing & Resources

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Business Operations						
AHR 001	Percentage of phone calls answered in the Customer Service Centres	Quarterly	90%	High	Same as weekly target and based on previous performance	9 June 2022: 84%
AHR 002	Council Access Point Plus customer satisfaction	Quarterly	75%	High	Based on previous performance	June 2022: 81%
AHR 003	Percentage of phone calls in Customer Service Centres resolved at first call (FCR)	Quarterly	51%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 69.7%%
AHR 004	Average webchat response time	Quarterly	50 seconds	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 28 seconds
AHR 005	Average call wait time	Quarterly	3 minutes	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 9 minutes 4 seconds
AHR 006	Call customer satisfaction	Quarterly	60%	High	Based on previous performance	June 2022: 58%

Accessible Housing & Resources

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Corporate Finance						
AHR 007	Percentage of total capital spend across Buckinghamshire Council (forecast) compared to Budget (performance measure)	Quarterly	Within 90%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 90.5%
AHR 008	Overall revenue (Forecast) variance (%) across the Council	Quarterly	0%	Low	0% or below	Q4 2021/22: -0.50%
Service Finance						
AHR 009	£ value of unsecured debt >90 days (excl Business Rate, Housing Benefit and Council Tax, and not secured against a property or asset) across the Council	Quarterly	£10 million	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: £8.5 million
AHR 010	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days across the Council	Quarterly	95%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 99%
AHR 011	Percentage of Council Tax collected (cumulative)	Quarterly (Cumulative)	98.2% (Year-end target)	High	Target slightly increased	Q4 2021/22: 97.4%
AHR 012	Percentage of Business Rates collected (cumulative)	Quarterly (Cumulative)	96.8% (Year-end target)	High	Target slightly increased	Q4 2021/22: 96.8%
AHR 013	Average time for processing new Housing Benefit claims (days)	Quarterly	20 days	Low	September 2021: 20 days (DWP)	Q4 2021/22: 19 days
AHR 014	Average time for processing Housing Benefit change claims (days)	Quarterly	7 days	Low	September 2021: 8 days (DWP)	Q4 2021/22: 5 days



Accessible Housing & Resources

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Human Resources and Organisational Development						
AHR 015	Number of sickness absence days per FTE annually (rolling 12-month period)	Quarterly	9 days	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 9.27 days
AHR 016	Voluntary staff turnover percentage (rolling 12-month period)	Quarterly	12-16%	Banding	Hertfordshire County Council: 15.4% Kent County Council: 13.8% Surrey County Council: 15%	Q4 2021/22: 14.5%
AHR 017	Percentage of staff who feel happy, valued & motivated at work	Twice a year	70%	High	Based on previous performance	Q3 2021/22: 71%
Page 193	ICT					
	AHR 018	Service desk first time fix percentage	Quarterly	62%	High	Based on previous performance
Partnerships, Policy and Communications						
AHR 019	Percentage of new website updated	Quarterly (cumulative)	Q1 75% Q2 90% Q3 99%	High	The website will be fully updated by the end of Q3	Q4 2021/22: 60.5%
Service Improvement						
AHR 020	Percentage of planned savings on track for delivery across Buckinghamshire Council as a result of the Better Buckinghamshire Programme	Quarterly	100%	High	Based on previous performance	Q3 2021/22: 100%

Accessible Housing & Resources

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Property and Assets						
AHR 021	Gross yield from Investment portfolio	Quarterly	6.4%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 6.69%
AHR 022	Gross income from Property	Quarterly	2022/23 Budget	High	Set against budget	Q4 2021/22: £21,302,000
AHR 023	Percentage of empty properties across the Council Estate that are vacant for more than 2 years (excluding those in an approved Regeneration or Capital Programme, and schools)	Quarterly	0.4%	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 0.16%

Climate Change & Environment

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Planning and Environment						
CCE 001	Annual emissions: tonnes	Annual	7,407 tonnes	Low	Step target based on annual allocations from the seven year carbon budgets	Available in June
CCE 002	Annual emissions: Percentage reduction	Annual	64%	High	Step target based on annual allocations from the seven year carbon budgets	Available in June
CCE 003	Number of Trees Planted	Annual	25,204	High	Cabinet Priority	New Indicator
Neighbourhood Services						
CCE 004	Percentage of waste collected for recycling, reuse, composting or anaerobic digestion from household sources	Quarterly	55%	High	Based on previous performance	Q3 2020/21: 44%
CCE 005	Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)	Quarterly	125kg	Low	Based on previous performance	Q3 2020/21: 130kg
CCE 006	Missed Bin Collections	Quarterly	0.15%	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2020/21: 0.24%
CCE 007	Number of Fly-Tipping clearances where an action has been taken	Quarterly	Monitor	Monitor	n/a	Q4 2020/21: 28



Communities

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Service Improvement						
COM 001	Household Support Fund (Helping Hand): Percentage of profiled spend achieved	Quarterly	Q1 25%, Q2 50%, Q3 75%, Q4 100%	High	Need to achieve 100% by end of Q4	New indicator
COM 002	Number of assets devolved to Town and Parish Councils, and Community Organisations	Quarterly	Q2: 1 Q3: 2 Q4: 10	High	Target needs to be lower at the beginning of the year as these are ongoing projects	New indicator
Public Health, Early Help and Prevention						
COM 003	Percentage of female victims supported by IDVAs who have their risk levels reduced	Quarterly	75%	High	Based on previous performance	83.6%
Partnerships, Policy and Communications						
COM 004	Amount of contributory funding secured for every £1 of council funds invested in a Community Board project.	Quarterly	55p	High	Target based on previous performance and changes to indicator calculation	New Indicator
Business Operations						
COM 005	Number of Community Resilience Plans in place	Quarterly	Q2: 1 Q3: 2 Q4: 5	High	Target needs to be lower at the beginning of the year as these are ongoing projects	New indicator



Culture and Leisure

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Culture, Sport and Leisure						
CLE 001	Number of visits to main cultural venues	Quarterly	480,000 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 283,256
CLE 002	Country and Town Park Satisfaction Ratings (Trip Advisor & Google)	Quarterly	4.4	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 4.4
CLE 003	Number of visitors to leisure centres and pools	Quarterly	2,900,000 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 2,375,284
CLE 004	Number of library information enquiries (signposting and referrals)	Quarterly	17,000 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 15,816
CLE 005	Number of downloads (e-audiobooks, e-magazines and e-news)	Quarterly	700,000 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 670,443
CLE 006	Engagement with Archives through Social Media and in-person visits	Quarterly	45,000 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 40,074
CLE 007	Hours contributed by archive volunteers	Quarterly	840 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 205
CLE 008	Number of visitors to Country Parks	Quarterly	1,200,000 pa	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2020/21 1,389,154

Education and Children's Services

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Children's Social Care						
ECS 001	Percentage of assessments completed in 45 working days.	Quarterly	80%	High	England 88%, South East 89%, Statistical Neighbours 92% (2020/21).	April 2022: 75%
ECS 002	Percentage of 19-21 year olds who have left care that are in education, employment or training.	Quarterly	65%	High	England 52%, South East 51%, Statistical Neighbours 52% (2020/21).	April 2022: 74%
ECS 003	Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan seen within 4 weeks.	Quarterly	95%	High	The target ensures children continue to be seen within timescales, in line with statutory requirements.	April 2022: 96%
ECS 004	Percentage of children with Initial Child Protection Conferences completed within 15 working days of the strategy discussion.	Quarterly	82%	High	England 83%, South East 82%, Statistical Neighbours 87%, (2020/21).	April 2022: 83%
ECS 005	Percentage of children who became the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time within 2 years.	Quarterly	10%	Low	Target is set at 10% to maintain a low level of repeat CP plans in line with previous performance.	April 2022: 21%. (Q4 2021/22: 7%).
ECS 006	Percentage of Children in Need seen within 4 weeks.	Quarterly	90%	High	The target ensures that children continue to be seen regularly and that they are safeguarded.	April 2022: 84%
ECS 007	Percentage of children looked after visited within timescales.	Quarterly	90%	High	The target ensures that children continue to be seen regularly and that they are safeguarded.	April 2022: 87%



Education and Children's Services

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Children's Social Care (continued)						
ECS 008	Percentage of re-referrals within 12 months	Quarterly	28%	Low	England 23%, South East 28%, Statistical Neighbours 23% (2020/21).	April 2022: 38%
Education						
ECS 009	Key Stage 4 - average Attainment 8 score	Annually	55.1	High	2019 (last full exam series) England 46.8, Statistical Neighbours 49.6, Buckinghamshire 55.1.	n/a
ECS 010	Key Stage 4 - average Attainment 8 score for disadvantaged pupils	Annually	37.6	High	2019 (last full exam series) England 36.8, Statistical Neighbours 35.2, Buckinghamshire 37.6.	n/a
ECS 011	Percentage of new Education, Health and Care plans issued within 20 weeks (excluding exceptions).	Quarterly (cumulative)	75%	High	2021 calendar year: South East 49.3%, National 59.9%, Buckinghamshire 82.0%.	Jan to April 2022: 80%
ECS 012	Percentage of pupils attending schools rated good and outstanding by Ofsted.	Quarterly	89%	High	State-funded schools (31/03/22) in: England 86.4%, South East 91.6%.	April 2022: 90.4%
ECS 013	Percentage of eligible two-year-olds registered and receiving funded early education entitlements (take up).	Termly	75%	High	National (2021) 62%.	Autumn 2021: 75%



Education and Children's Services

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Education (continued)						
ECS 014	Percentage of initial Family Support Plans completed within 31 working days	Quarterly	85%	High	Target set to maintain performance, following increased demand.	April 2022: 84%
ECS 015	Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Annual Reviews – Percentage of CYP with an EHCP who have had an annual review within the last 12 months	Quarterly (cumulative)	75%	High	Target set above last year's performance to support continuous improvement.	April 2022: 73%

Health and Wellbeing

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Adult Social Care						
HWE 001	Percentage of service users due an annual review that receive their review	Quarterly	90%	High	South East (2020/21) 56% England (2020/21) 55%	Q4 2021/22: 55%
HWE 002	Percentage of people who use services who have control over their daily life.	Annual	78%	High	South East (2019/20) 78% England (2019/20) 77%	Q4 2020/21: 83.3%
HWE 003	Number of younger people (aged 18-64) admitted permanently to residential or nursing care.	Quarterly	13.7	Low	South East (2020/21) 13.7 England (2020/21) 13.3	Q4 2021/22: 12.7
HWE 004	Number of older people (aged 65+) admitted permanently to residential or nursing care	Quarterly	489	Low	South East (2020/21) 489 England (2020/21) 498.2	Q4 2021/22: 506.2
HWE 005	Percentage of younger adults (aged 18-64) with a learning disability living in their own home or with friends/family	Quarterly	75.6%	High	South East (2020/21) 75.6% England (2020/21) 78.3%	Q4 2021/22: 77.2%
HWE 006	Percentage of adults in contact with secondary mental health services (aged 18- 69) living in their own home or with friends/family	Quarterly	61%	High	South East (2020/21) 61% England (2020/21) 58%	Q4 2021/22: 65%
HWE 007	Percentage of people that live independently after receiving short term services	Quarterly	74.1%	High	South East (2020/21) 74.1% England (2020/21) 74.9%	Q4 2020/21: 79.4%

Health and Wellbeing

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Adult Social Care (continued)						
HWE 008	Percentage of safeguarding enquiries where personal outcomes were fully or partially achieved	Quarterly	96%	High	South East (2020/21) 96% England (2020/21) 94%	2021/22: 93.2%
HWE 009	Percentage of young people whose Adult Social Care assessment was completed before they turned 18.	Quarterly	65%	High	Target set above last year's performance to support continuous improvement.	Q4 2021/22: 63%
HWE 010	Percentage of safeguarding eligibility decisions made within 2 working days of the concern being received	Quarterly	70%	High	Target set above last year's performance to support continuous improvement.	59% March 2022.
HWE 011	Percentage of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person that they care for	Quarterly	70%	High	South East (2018/19) 70% England (2018/19) 70%	2018/19: 57%
Public Health, Early Help and Prevention						
HWE 012	Percentage of births that receive a face-to-face New Birth Visit within 14 days by a health visitor in the quarter	Quarterly	90%	High	South East (2020/21) 88.8% England (2020/21) 88.8%	Q3 2021/22: 69.3%
HWE 013	Percentage of successful alcohol treatment completions of those in treatment	Quarterly	37%	High	England 37.5%, South East 38.1% (Q3 2020/21)	Q3 2021/22: 38.3%
HWE 014	Percentage of successful drug treatment completions of those in treatment	Quarterly	15.2%	High	England 14.4%, South East 17.3% (Q3 2020/21)	Q3 2021/22: 15.4%

Health and Wellbeing

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Public Health, Early Help and Prevention (continued)						
HWE 015	Percentage of all clients attending GUM clinics seen or assessed by a healthcare professional within 48 hours (2 working days) of first contacting the service	Quarterly	80%	High	This is a clinical standard which has to be achieved by all sexual health services and links to the requirement for the provision of open access services.	Q3 2021/22: 86%
HWE 016	Percentage of those who have set a quit smoking date who have successfully quit at 4 weeks	Quarterly	50%	High	England 59% (2020/21)	Q3 2021/22: 58%
HWE 017	Percentage of those in most deprived quintiles (DQ 4/5) who have set a quit smoking date who have successfully quit at 4 weeks	Quarterly	50%	High	This target is linked to the contracted target of 50% for the indicator HWE 016.	Q3 2021/22: 50.6%

Housing, Homelessness and Regulatory Services

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Housing and Homelessness						
HHR 001	Number of applicants with/expecting children who have been in non-self-contained B&B accommodation for longer than 6 weeks	Quarterly	0	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 1 (at end of the quarter)
HHR 002	Total homeless approaches into service	Quarterly	Monitor	Low	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 911
HHR 003	Homelessness Cases Closed because Homelessness has been prevented	Quarterly	Monitor	High	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 313
HHR 004	Bucks Home Choice Lets	Quarterly	Monitor	High	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 297
Registrars, Coroners, Trading Standards						
HHR 005	Financial impact on residents as a result of scams intervention (direct & future savings)	Quarterly	£600,000	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: £710,884
HHR 006	Number of businesses registered as primary authorities - provision of advice to large businesses (maintain and increase)	Quarterly	127	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 147
HHR 007	Percentage of customers rating the registration service as good or excellent	Bi-annual (Q2 & Q4)	95%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 100%



Housing, Homelessness and Regulatory Services

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Environmental Health						
HHR 008	Number of unrated premises which are awaiting an inspection and are trading	Quarterly	Monitor	Low	n/a	Q4 2020/21 479
Neighbourhood Services						
HHR 009	Average number of days to issue taxi vehicle licence and plate from valid application received	Quarterly	<10 working days (SLA)	Low	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 7.5

Planning and Regeneration

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Planning and Environment						
PRE 001	Percentage of major planning approvals determined in 13 weeks, or with agreed extension of time	Quarterly	80%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 88%
PRE 002	Percentage of minor planning approvals determined in 13 weeks, or with agreed extension of time	Quarterly	75%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 72%
PRE 003	Percentage of other applications determined in 8 weeks, or with agreed extension of time	Quarterly	80%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 85%
PRE 004	Percentage of building control applications checked within 21 days	Quarterly	90%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22: 90%
PRE 005	Number of planning appeals received	Quarterly	Monitor	Low	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 79
PRE 006	Number of 'other' formal actions taken (e.g. Temporary stop notice, stop notices, S215's, Breach of Condition Notices, Injunctions, Direct Action)	Quarterly	Monitor	Monitor	n/a	n/a
PRE 007	Number of enforcement cases logged	Quarterly	Monitor	Monitor	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 491
PRE 008	Number of enforcement cases closed	Quarterly	Monitor	Monitor	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 454

Planning and Regeneration

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Planning and Environment (continued)						
PRE 009	Number of enforcement notices issued	Quarterly	Monitor	Monitor	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 36
PRE 010	Number of homes built against housing requirements	Annual Q3	2,759	High	Adopted Local Plans for Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe. From Government's 'standard method' for assessing local housing need for Chiltern and South Bucks legacy districts.	2021/22: 1,990
Economic Growth and Regeneration						
PRE 011	Town centre occupancy rate (%)	Quarterly	Monitor	High	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 91.9%
PRE 012	Town Centre footfall	Quarterly	Monitor	High	n/a	Q4 2021/22: 11,342,676



Transport

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Highways and Technical Services						
TRA 001	Percentage of gullies cleaned against the cyclical gully programme	Quarterly	98%	High	Contract KPI	Q4 2021/22: 83%
TRA 002	NHT Public Satisfaction on the condition of road surfaces (HMBI 01)	Annual	NHT regional average	High	NHT benchmarking average	2021/22: 20%
TRA 003	Highways capital programme percentage spend against forecast/profiled	Quarterly	95%	High	Contract KPI	Q4 2021/22: 91%
TRA 004	Percentage of Category 1 and 2H defects repaired in 2 and 5 working days respectively.	Quarterly	94%	High	Contract KPI	Q4 2021/22 100%
TRA 005	NHT Public Satisfaction with their local rights of way network (KBI 15)	Annual	NHT regional average	High	NHT benchmarking average	2021 54%
TRA 006	Percentage of strategic carriageway network in fair/good and very good condition	Annual	93%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22 94%
TRA 007	Percentage of Local Road network in fair/good and very good condition	Every 2 years	68%	High	Based on previous performance	2020: 68%
TRA 008	Percentage streetlights in light	Quarterly	95%	High	Stretch Target	June 2022: 89%
TRA 009	Percentage of invalid PCNs (on and off street)	Quarterly	4%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22 3%

Transport

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Highways and Technical Services (continued)						
TRA 010	Number of ticket sales managed by Buckinghamshire Council	Quarterly	Monitor	High	n/a	Q4 2021/22 1,522,690
TRA 011	Number of publicly accessible electric-vehicle charging bays on- and off-street in Buckinghamshire	Annual	263	High	Cabinet Priority	2021/22: 175
Strategic Transport and Infrastructure						
TRA 012	Major transport schemes: Percentage of profiled spend achieved (A41 PPTC, Abbey Barn Lane, Eastern Link Road Dual, Princes Risborough, Westhorpe)	Quarterly	100%	High	Set against budget	Q4 2021/22 93.97%
TRA 013	HS2 highways approvals: Percentage responded within time limit	Quarterly	95%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22 100%
TRA 014	HS2 planning approvals: Percentage responded to within time limit	Quarterly	95%	High	Based on previous performance	Q4 2021/22 100%
TRA 015	Average daily cycling count per active cycle counter per day	Quarterly	75	High	Based on previous performance	2021/22: 70.5

Transport

Reference	Indicator	Reporting Frequency	Proposed Target	Good to be High or Low?	Benchmarking / Target Rationale	Latest Performance
Transport Services						
TRA 016	Percentage of eligible clients who are provided with transport before the required start date, or no later than 15 working days from transport assessment completed (SEN D) or all information received to provide transport (mainstream)	Quarterly	95%	High	Target set by service	Q4 2021/22 95.02%
TRA 017	Number of public transport bus routes in Buckinghamshire	Quarterly	Monitor	High	n/a	Q4 2021/22 96



Report to Cabinet

Date:	12 July 2022
Title:	Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report 2022-23
Relevant councillor(s):	John Chilver
Author and/or contact officer:	Dave Skinner, Finance Director & S151 Officer
Ward(s) affected:	none specific
Recommendations:	<p>Cabinet is asked to note the report and the risks and opportunities contained within it.</p> <p>Cabinet is requested to approve the drawdown of £1.5m from the “Mitigating Future Financial Risks” reserve to fund the unconsolidated element of the 2022/23 pay award as approved by the Senior Appointments & Pay Committee (SAPC). This can be funded from reserves as it is a one-off element and will not be incorporated into the base budget going forwards.</p>
Reason for decision:	To understand the financial position of the Council in respect of 2022-23 Budgets.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the Revenue and Capital outturn position for Buckinghamshire Council for the financial year 2022/23 as at Quarter 1.
- 1.2 This is the first budget monitoring report for the new financial year, and comes at a time when the Council is experiencing significant financial pressures due to the current economic situation and the high levels of inflation.
- 1.3 Inflation is currently running at a 40-year high of 9%, and the Bank of England has warned it could exceed 11% later this year. This is due to oil, gas and food prices

which have been affected by the Ukraine conflict and also the expected rise in the energy price cap in October 2022. In addition the cost of living crisis will put pressure on wage bills which may drive inflation up yet further.

- 1.4 The Revenue outturn position for 2022/23 is an adverse variance of £3.8m, 1% of Portfolio budgets.
- 1.5 The main drivers for this variance are;
 - a) An adverse variance on Portfolio spend of £10.4m (2%) offset by £6.6m of corporate mitigations.
 - b) The £10.4m adverse variance in Portfolios includes:
 - i. £3.1m pressure in Health and Wellbeing from demand pressures and fee uplifts in Adult Social Care.
 - ii. £5.3m pressure in Children's Services, in staffing costs due to requirement for agency staff £1.9m linked to complexity of cases and workloads, client costs in Children's social care £1.4m due to the cost of placements, and £0.9m in Adoption and Special Guardianship Order allowances due to increased volumes.
 - iii. £1.8m in Accessible Housing and Resources, of which £1.5m is attributable to inflation on energy costs in Property & Assets due to the exceptional price increases in 2022/23.
 - iv. £1m adverse variance in Transport Services due to increased contract costs and a 3% increase given to Home to School Contracts to mitigate rising fuel prices.
 - v. A favourable variance of £1.1m in Climate Change & Environment from additional income from the sale of electricity from the council's Energy for Waste (EfW) site.
 - c) The £6.6m of corporate mitigations include:
 - i. A forecast surplus of £0.4m: £0.3m in additional income from unringfenced grant income, where the budget was set prudently but a small amount of additional income is expected, and a surplus of £0.1m on loan interest, following extension of a loan agreement.
 - ii. Corporate Contingencies: a £6.2m favourable variance is forecast on contingencies expected to be released. Specific contingencies have been forecast to be released to offset pressures as shown below.
 - iii. Available reserve balances: in addition to the Corporate Contingencies, the newly created reserve "Mitigating Future Financial Risks" which was set up following outturn 2021/22 as a result of unused contingencies and the overall favourable variance, contains £9.9m. £1.5m of this has been earmarked to fund the unconsolidated element of the 2022/23 pay award as agreed by

SAPC, but a balance of £8.4m remains which could be called upon if required.

Figure 1: Corporate Contingencies & Mitigating Future Financial Risks Reserve

2022-23 Revenue Contingencies	Budget	Favourable Variance - Mitigating pressures in monitoring	Remaining to cover pressures that may arise in remainder of the year
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Pay & Pension Contingency			
Pay Inflation	4,245	-	4,245
Pay - c/fwd (non consolidated)	710	-	710
Redundancy (non unitary)	500	-	500
Total Budget Risk	5,455	-	5,455
Service Risk Contingency			
Inflationary Pressures (incl. NI)	2,950	1,500	1,450
National Living Wage	250	-	250
Adult Social Care Pressures / Demography	3,210	3,100	110
Adult Social Care Provider Market	1,700	-	1,700
Home to School Transport	1,000	200	800
Children's Services Demography	1,410	1,410	-
High Cost Children's Placements	500	-	500
General Contingency - Economic Uncertainty	866	-	866
Total Service Risk	11,886	6,210	5,676
Total Contingency	17,341	6,210	11,131
Total Variation on Contingencies		6,210	
Available balance from newly created reserve "Mitigating Future Financial Risks"	9,900		
£1.5m recommended by SAPC to support pay award	(1,500)		8,400
Total resources earmarked to mitigate further pressures			19,531

- 1.6 The Appendix provides further detail for each Portfolio and information about performance relating to overdue debts and late payments of commercial debt.

2. Revenue

- 2.1 The forecast revenue budget outturn is summarised in Figure 2. The key Portfolio variances are explained in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Overall an adverse variance of **£3.8m** is forecast (**1% of the net budget**) after allowing for £6.6m of corporate mitigations.

Figure 2: Revenue Budgets

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Revenue			
Expenditure	10,700	10,700	0
Income	(900)	(900)	0
Leader	9,800	9,800	0
Expenditure	39,400	39,500	100
Income	(10,800)	(12,000)	(1,200)
Climate Change & Environment	28,600	27,500	(1,100)
Expenditure	11,500	11,400	(100)
Income	(4,500)	(4,400)	100
Communities	7,000	7,000	0
Expenditure	8,900	8,800	(100)
Income	(3,900)	(3,700)	200
Culture & Leisure	5,000	5,100	100
Expenditure	630,100	634,300	4,200
Income	(541,400)	(540,300)	1,100
Education & Childrens Services	88,700	94,000	5,300
Expenditure	243,700	248,800	5,100
Income	(79,300)	(81,300)	(2,000)
Health & Wellbeing	164,400	167,500	3,100
Expenditure	18,500	18,800	300
Income	(11,600)	(11,600)	0
Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Serv	6,900	7,200	300
Expenditure	16,700	16,700	0
Income	(10,600)	(10,600)	0
Planning & Regeneration	6,100	6,100	0
Expenditure	67,600	67,500	(100)
Income	(11,900)	(10,600)	1,300
Transport	55,700	56,900	1,200
Expenditure	168,500	169,500	1,000
Income	(117,200)	(116,700)	500
Accessible Housing & Resources	51,300	52,800	1,500
Portfolios	423,500	433,900	10,400
Expenditure	42,300	36,100	(6,200)
Income	(4,400)	(4,500)	(100)
Corporate	37,900	31,600	(6,300)
Expenditure	0	0	0
Income	(461,400)	(461,700)	(300)
Funding	(461,400)	(461,700)	(300)
Corporate & Funding	(423,500)	(430,100)	(6,600)
Revenue Total	0	3,800	3,800

- 2.3 The adverse variance of **£3.8m (1%)** comprises:
- a) **£10.4m (2%)** adverse variance on Portfolio budgets;
 - b) **£6.2m** favourable variation on Corporate Contingencies: specific contingency budgets are forecast to be utilised to meet pressures in Portfolios;
 - c) **£0.4m** minor favourable variation on Corporate Budgets, principally unringfenced grant income.

2.4 **Appendix 1** provides further detail on the revenue forecast outturn by Portfolio.

3. Achievement of Savings

3.1 £19.2m of savings were incorporated into the approved 2022-23 Revenue budgets. The table below shows performance against those targets.

Figure 3 Savings Targets by Portfolio

Portfolio	Target £k	Forecast £k	Shortfall £k
Accessible Housing and Resources Portfolio	2,520	2,520	0
Climate Change & Environment	2,916	2,876	40
Communities	1,900	1,900	0
Culture & Leisure	1,634	1,634	0
Education & Children's Services	713	463	250
Health & Wellbeing	3,258	3,438	-180
Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Services	395	320	75
Leader	595	595	0
Transport	5,259	5,259	0
Total	19,190	19,005	185

- a) Achievement of the £19.2m savings targets is summarised in the above table. Overall there is a shortfall of £0.2m as follows:
 - i. Health & Wellbeing – a favourable forecast variance of £180k. The review and relocation of clients from expensive out-of-county placements is forecast to deliver more savings than budgeted for.
 - ii. Children's Services – an adverse variance of £250k. Agency staff budgets are currently projected to overspend, therefore the initial forecast is that the related saving will not be achieved.
 - iii. Housing and Homelessness – an adverse variance of £75k is forecast. Additional income is at risk due to delayed opening of Bridge Court Temporary Accommodation scheme and possible use for Ukraine response.

4. Capital

- a) At this early point in the year, Portfolios are forecasting that the Capital Programme will be managed to the agreed budget level (with no forecast variance). However, the current exceptional level of inflation will have a significant impact on what can be delivered within the approved budget for the year. The Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) data indicates that construction materials are currently experiencing inflation in excess of 20%, as a result of high oil and gas prices pushing up the cost of concrete and tarmac, the availability of steel due to the conflict in Ukraine, and shortages of labour and general materials. An early high-level review of the capital programme indicated a pressure of circa £50m across the 4 year programme.
- b) There is a risk that shortages of building materials could further drive up prices and cause delays and slippage in the programme:
 - i. Shortages in semiconductors potentially until 2023, which could result in longer lead in time for vehicles and technology equipment;
 - ii. The impact of the war in Ukraine on the manufacture of steel – (the Azovstal steel plant is one of the largest in Europe and its closure is having a knock on effect across the whole of Europe);
 - iii. Sanctions against Russia who are a large steel producer;
 - iv. Covid in China has disrupted the country's manufacturing activity and led to increased demand of steel imports.
- c) It has been agreed that a moratorium will be put in place on uncommitted capital schemes (excluding rolling maintenance programmes) whilst an urgent review of the impact of inflation is carried out, and the capital programme is re-prioritised via a Member and Officer Task and Finish group. Urgent sign off measures will be put in place to ensure that key schemes can commence before the review is complete.
- d) The effect of inflation will be felt differently across the Capital Programme, for example in maintenance programmes (including Roads & Buildings), the amount of work undertaken is driven by the available resources. This means that if costs rise, this will impact on the volume of work that can be undertaken. Expenditure will be managed within the available resources and focussed on the highest priority maintenance projects to minimise any impact on future years revenue costs.

Further details for each portfolio may be found in **Appendix 1**.

Figure 4: Capital Budgets

Portfolio	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Children's Services	-1,061	42,426	2,694	45,120	42,426	2,694	45,120	0
Climate Change & Environment	-289	1,314	10,880	12,194	1,314	10,880	12,194	0
Communities	-82	210	0	210	210	0	210	0
Culture & Leisure	-244	3,115	3,818	6,933	3,115	3,818	6,933	0
Accessible Housing & Resources	363	4,526	2,878	7,404	4,526	2,878	7,404	0
Health & Wellbeing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing, Homelessness & Regulation	-246	8,629	158	8,787	8,629	158	8,787	0
Leader	615	1,203	29,155	30,358	1,203	29,155	30,358	0
Planning and Regeneration	811	4,877	10,533	15,411	4,877	10,533	15,411	0
Transport	3,326	36,153	1,142	37,294	36,153	1,142	37,294	0
Grand Total	3,193	102,453	61,257	163,710	102,453	61,257	163,710	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

5. Other options considered

5.1 None arising directly from this report.

6. Legal and financial implications

6.1 This is a Finance report and all the financial implications are included in the report.

6.2 There are no legal implications arising from the report.

7. Corporate implications

7.1 Actions resulting from consideration of this report may influence future expenditure in areas of concern / interest.

8. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

8.1 Not applicable.

9. Communication, engagement & further consultation

9.1 Not applicable.

10. Next steps and review

10.1 An updated position as of the end of Quarter 2 will be brought to Cabinet in November.

11. Background papers

11.1 Appendix 1 – Portfolio level summaries.

12. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 12.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk].

BUDGET MONITORING @ End May 2022

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Please note that the rounding of numbers gives rise to minor differences in the totals for each Portfolio between the covering report and this appendix.

1. Leader

Figure 1: Leader Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	820	820	0
Income	0	0	0
Chief Executives Office	820	820	0
Expenditure	3,540	3,540	0
Income	(370)	(370)	0
Economic Growth & Regeneration	3,170	3,170	0
Expenditure	6,180	6,180	0
Income	(550)	(550)	0
Policy & Communications	5,630	5,630	0
Expenditure	210	210	0
Income	0	0	0
Strategic Infrastructure	210	210	0
Leader	9,830	9,830	0

Figure 2: Leader Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Rural Broadband	0	0	600	600	0	600	600	0
Economic Growth Total	0	0	600	600	0	600	600	0
A355 Improvement Scheme (Wilton Park)	5	409	0	409	409	0	409	0
Aylesbury Eastern Link Road	7	184	0	184	184	0	184	0
Grid Reinforcement Works	3	610	12,190	12,800	610	12,190	12,800	0
Cycle Infrastructure	0	0	872	872	0	872	872	0
Marginal Viability Works	0	0	181	181	0	181	181	0
Abbey Barn - HIF / S106	87	0	46	46	0	46	46	0
Stoke Mandeville Relief Road / SEALR II	-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Princes Risborough Relief Road	42	0	988	988	0	988	988	0
SEALR (South East Aylesbury Link Road)	490	0	14,277	14,277	0	14,277	14,277	0
Strategic Infrastructure (HIF) Total	615	1,203	28,555	29,758	1,203	28,555	29,758	0
Grand Total	615	1,203	29,155	30,358	1,203	29,155	30,358	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

1.1 Leader Revenue Budget £9.8m, Forecast £9.8m, Var **£nil**

- a) Leader Revenue is on track with small immaterial variances across services

1.2 Leader Capital Budget £30.4m, Var **£0.0m**

- a) There are currently no in-year (2022-23) variances being reported against budgets in the Leader's Capital Programme.

2. Climate Change and Environment

Figure 3: Climate Change and Environment Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	3,520	3,520	0
Income	(1,690)	(1,690)	0
Environment	1,830	1,830	0
Expenditure	2,940	3,020	80
Income	(380)	(350)	30
Street Cleaning	2,560	2,670	110
Expenditure	32,910	32,970	60
Income	(8,740)	(9,990)	(1,250)
Waste	24,170	22,980	(1,190)
Climate Change & Environment	28,560	27,480	(1,080)

Figure 4: Climate Change and Environment Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Flood Defence Schemes	-24	494	384	878	494	384	878	0
Strategic Flood Management	0	50	0	50	50	0	50	0
Flood Management Total	-24	544	384	928	544	384	928	0
Biowaste Treatment	-111	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern Waste Contract - Vehicles	0	0	6,605	6,605	0	6,605	6,605	0
Southern Waste Contract-Depot Improvmnt	-157	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recycling Centres Vehicles & Plant	0	0	360	360	0	360	360	0
Recycling Centre Welfare Facilities	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aylesbury Waste Vehicles Replacement	0	0	2,556	2,556	0	2,556	2,556	0
Recycling Initiatives & Waste Containers	0	650	0	650	650	0	650	0
Buckingham HRC & Waste Transfer Station	0	0	275	275	0	275	275	0
Recycling Centres Drainage EA Compliance	0	0	700	700	0	700	700	0
Waste Total	-264	650	10,496	11,146	650	10,496	11,146	0
Solar Car Port & Electric Fleet	0	120	0	120	120	0	120	0
Climate Change & Air Quality Total	0	120	0	120	120	0	120	0
Grand Total	-289	1,314	10,880	12,194	1,314	10,880	12,194	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

2.1 Climate Change and Environment Revenue: Budget £28.6m, Forecast £27.5m, Favourable Variance **£1.1m**

- EFW & Residual Waste - Budget -£0.1m, Var Favourable £1.1m
Additional income in relation to sale of expected electricity income in year and a favourable variance in business rates at EfW.
- Grounds Maintenance – Budget £0.8m, Var Adverse £0.1m
Overspend due to additional grant awards to voluntary organisations and

unachievable income streams from Higginson Park Trust and miscellaneous licences.

- c) Household Waste Recycling Centres - Budget £3.1m, Var Favourable £0.4m
Underspend due to savings achieved from the current 9 site contract as 10 site contract envisaged to commence in September 22.
- d) Waste Disposal – Budget £2.6m, Var Adverse £0.3
Overspend due to inflationary pressures on current costs in Green Food Bulky Wood (GFBW) contract.
- e) Environment – Budget £1.8m, Nil Variance

2.2 Climate Change & Environment Capital: Budget £12.2m, Var **£0.0m**

- a) Biowaste project carry forward of £2.4m expected due to delay in construction start date (build commenced Nov 21) - this also includes landscaping and retention costs - anticipated to be completed this financial year. An overspend of £800k is expected due to increased fuel, steel costs and the disposal of contaminated soil. This will be funded from in-year revenue and reserves contributions. Expected slippage of £1m within Recycling Centre Welfare (refurbishment of kitchens and toilets and Pembroke Rd Depot facilities, roof repairs and internal structural configurations) due to sourcing contractors and unavailability of materials.
- b) No other projects in this portfolio are currently reporting in-year variances.

3. Communities

Figure 5: Communities Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	3,230	3,230	0
Income	0	0	0
Community Boards	3,230	3,230	0
Expenditure	300	300	0
Emergency Planning	300	300	0
Expenditure	6,150	6,110	(40)
Income	(4,050)	(4,050)	0
Localities & Strategic Partnerships	2,100	2,060	(40)
Expenditure	1,810	1,790	(20)
Income	(430)	(400)	30
Special Expenses	1,380	1,390	10
Communities	7,010	6,980	(30)

Figure 6: Communities Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
CCTV Projects	-82	210	0	210	210	0	210	0
Community Safety Total	-82	210	0	210	210	0	210	0
Grand Total	-82	210	0	210	210	0	210	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

3.1 Communities Revenue: Budget £7.0m, Forecast £7.0m, Var -£0.0m

- a) Communities Revenue is on track with small immaterial variances across services.

3.2 Communities Capital: Budget £0.2m, Var £0.0m

- a) CCTV projects are forecast on target against budget.

4. Culture and Leisure

Figure 7: Culture and Leisure Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	8,880	8,780	(100)
Income	(3,860)	(3,730)	130
Culture & Leisure	5,020	5,050	30
Culture & Leisure	5,020	5,050	30

Figure 8: Culture and Leisure Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Leisure Centres Maintenance	4	500	0	500	500	0	500	0
Chalfont & Chesham Leisure Centres	-448	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chilterns Lifestyle Centre	72	1,987	0	1,987	1,987	0	1,987	0
Leisure Centres Total	-373	2,487	0	2,487	2,487	0	2,487	0
Libraries Self-Service Replacement	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Libraries Enhanced Technology	0	0	210	210	0	210	210	0
Libraries Total	8	0	210	210	0	210	210	0
Parks & Play Areas	0	443	0	443	443	0	443	0
Parks & Play Areas Total	0	443	0	443	443	0	443	0
S106 Funded Projects	121	185	3,608	3,793	185	3,608	3,793	0
Sport and Leisure Projects Total	121	185	3,608	3,793	185	3,608	3,793	0
Grand Total	-244	3,115	3,818	6,933	3,115	3,818	6,933	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

4.1 Culture and Leisure Revenue: Budget £5.0m, Var Minor

- Arts & Culture - Budget £1.3m, Var Favourable £22k
Underspends within Archives and Film Office of salaries and Theatre management fees offset by overspends on Theatre maintenance and grants, Wycombe Swan insurance bill and Community Development underachieved income.
- Museums & Heritage - Budget £0.6m, Var Favourable £4k
Agreed grant and management fees have been forecast leaving a small underspend.
- Country Parks, Parks & Play Areas - Budget £-152k, Var Adverse £38k
The adverse forecast overspend is due to an unachievable historical income budget of £48k carried forward from legacy Aylesbury Vale District Council.

This is expected to be addressed in the Service Review. The service is looking to mitigate the overspend from within Parks & Play Areas.

- d) Leisure Centres – Budget £-395k, Var Adverse £18k
Unachieved forecast on income from PV Cells on Chiltern Leisure and an increase in management fee due to the Wycombe Athletics Centre.
Operator income is still being forecast in line with MTFP predictions last year. There is a focus on the ongoing energy price increase and conversations with operators are ongoing.

- 4.2 **Culture and Leisure Capital:** Budget £6.9m, Var £0.0m
Budgets are forecast to be mostly fully spent with risks being monitored closely through the Service Project Boards. Slippage of £590k expected within Country Park Visitor Centre due to construction and landscaping occurring in 2023.24

5. Education & Children's Services

Figure 9: Education & Children's Services Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	78,530	83,460	4,930
Income	(4,240)	(4,090)	150
Children's Social Care	74,290	79,370	5,080
Expenditure	21,190	20,590	(600)
Income	(6,800)	(5,960)	840
Education	14,390	14,630	240
Expenditure	530,350	530,240	(110)
Income	(530,350)	(530,240)	110
Education - Dedicated Schools Grant	0	0	0
Education & Children's Services	88,680	94,000	5,320

Figure 10: Education & Children's Services Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Children's Homes	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Social Care Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Primary School Places	-1,052	2,543	1,991	4,534	2,543	1,991	4,534	0
Provision for Early Years	-18	0	-8	-8	0	-8	-8	0
School Property Maintenance	28	5,582	0	5,582	5,582	0	5,582	0
Secondary School Places	-97	33,832	-2,369	31,463	33,832	-2,369	31,463	0
Provision for Special Educational Need	89	20	3,079	3,099	20	3,079	3,099	0
School Toilets	0	250	0	250	250	0	250	0
School Access Adaptations	-11	200	0	200	200	0	200	0
Schools Total	-1,062	42,426	2,694	45,120	42,426	2,694	45,120	0
Grand Total	-1,061	42,426	2,694	45,120	42,426	2,694	45,120	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

5.1 Education & Children's Services Revenue: Budget £88.7m, Forecast £94.0m, Var +£5.3m

- a) An adverse variance of £5.3m is projected for the year. Continued high levels of demand are expected to impact on costs during the current financial year with the main areas of risk projected as follows:
 - i. Staffing budgets across Children's Social Care – adverse variance of £1.9m. High levels of demand across front line teams have led to increased requirements for agency staff across the service.

- ii. Client costs budgets – adverse variance of £1.4m. This includes pressures against domiciliary care and direct payment budgets and higher levels of spend across front line teams.
 - iii. Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders – adverse variance of £0.9m due to increased volumes.
- b) Other pressures include operational costs across the fostering and adoption service, contract costs and pressures against travel budgets.
 - c) Placement budgets for looked after children are currently not fully committed and are forecast to be within budget at this stage in the year. Early indications are that unit costs are higher than budgeted and therefore if numbers of placements are in line with budgeted activity there will be pressure against this budget. The impact of placement numbers and unit costs is being monitored closely.
 - d) Action plans are being developed to reduce these pressures and financial impact of those proposals will be incorporated into the forecast in future months in order to minimise the variance against the budget.

5.2 Education & Children's Services Capital: Budget £45.1m, Var **£0.0m**

- a) At this stage in the year budgets are forecast to be fully spent with risks and inflationary pressures being monitored closely.

6. Accessible Housing and Resources Portfolio

Figure 11: Accessible Housing and Resources Portfolio Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	11,440	11,410	(30)
Income	(410)	(380)	30
Business Operations	11,030	11,030	0
Expenditure	600	600	0
Digital	600	600	0
Expenditure	101,320	101,100	(220)
Income	(89,830)	(89,360)	470
Finance & Revenues	11,490	11,740	250
Expenditure	4,920	4,920	0
Income	(380)	(380)	0
Human Resources & Organisational Development	4,540	4,540	0
Expenditure	11,740	11,740	0
Income	(130)	(130)	0
ICT	11,610	11,610	0
Expenditure	12,190	12,190	0
Income	(1,390)	(1,390)	0
Legal & Democratic Services	10,800	10,800	0
Expenditure	21,530	22,990	1,460
Income	(25,030)	(25,010)	20
Property & Assets	(3,500)	(2,020)	1,480
Expenditure	3,520	3,520	0
Income	(60)	(60)	0
Service Improvement	3,460	3,460	0
Expenditure	1,300	1,080	(220)
Income	40	0	(40)
Resources Director and Bus Mngmnt	1,340	1,080	(260)
Accessible Housing & Resources	51,370	52,840	1,470

Figure 12: Accessible Housing and Resources Portfolio Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Delivery of Technology Strategy	-8	636	49	685	636	49	685	0
Buckinghamshire Network	349	800	0	800	800	0	800	0
Device Refresh & Windows 10	147	15	0	15	15	0	15	0
ICT Total	488	1,451	49	1,500	1,451	49	1,500	0
Agricultural Estate	54	660	0	660	660	0	660	0
Corporate Investment Portfolio	30	1,125	1,500	2,625	1,125	1,500	2,625	0
Enhancement of Strategic Assets	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property Management Programme	-212	1,290	0	1,290	1,290	0	1,290	0
Rowley Farm	2	0	364	364	0	364	364	0
Improvements to Capswood 1 & 2	0	0	215	215	0	215	215	0
Council Own Sites - Housing Development	0	0	750	750	0	750	750	0
Property & Assets Total	-125	3,075	2,829	5,904	3,075	2,829	5,904	0
Grand Total	363	4,526	2,878	7,404	4,526	2,878	7,404	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

6.1 Accessible Housing and Resources Revenue: Budget £51.3m, Forecast £52.8m, Var +£1.5m

- The main variances are as follows:
- 250k net adverse variance in Finance and Revenues of which: +£410k unfavourable income shortfall on Council Tax/Business Rates Court costs recovered due to the inherited overly optimistic (£1.9m) budget, together with an expected drop in the number of Court summons during the closure of the legacy systems planned for later in the year, as part of the second phase Revenue and Benefits system implementation. A further risk of +£332k has been identified but not currently included in the forecasts and modelling of the risks will be undertaken early summer. This is offset by (£160k) favourable variances in pay from in-year staff vacancies/staff turnover.
- £250k favourable variance in Resources (Director and Business Management) from top sliced Service area budgets reflecting Better Buckinghamshire /Contract harmonisation savings, which had the potential to be delivered in advance of full service reviews. The savings will now be used to offset in year pressures in the first instance. A further saving of (£665k) is noted as opportunity and not included in the forecasts as it is currently uncertain. Further scrutiny is required to determine whether these savings will materialise and whether they can be shown as accelerated savings in the current MTFP period.
- £1.5m adverse variance in Property & Assets from projected increases in Energy Prices due to inflationary pressures.

6.2 **Accessible Housing and Resources Capital:** Budget £7.4m, Var £0.0m

- a) ICT Capital programme is expected to progress as planned, with nil variances at year-end.
- b) Property & Assets capital projects are currently reporting nil variances.

7. Health & Wellbeing

Figure 13: Health & Wellbeing Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	220,610	225,720	5,110
Income	(56,180)	(58,180)	(2,000)
Adult Social Care	164,430	167,540	3,110
Expenditure	23,100	23,120	20
Income	(23,100)	(23,120)	(20)
Public Health	0	0	0
Health & Wellbeing	164,430	167,540	3,110

Figure 14: Health & Wellbeing Capital Table

[No Capital Projects]

7.1 Health & Wellbeing Revenue: Budget £164.4m, Forecast £167.5m Var **+£3.1m**

- Adult Social Care shows an adverse variance of +£3.1m relating predominately to Nursing +£2.3m (linked to growth brought forward from 2021-22) and Supported Living +£1m. This is partly offset by favourable variances on Residential placements, employee costs and additional income.
- The total Nursing pressure is £4m but reduces to £2.3m after adjustment for Joint Funded posts (£1.6m). The figures include the full year effect of new starters, the 3% fee up-lifts and an allowance for 22/23 growth. Mitigating plans include home first approach, proactive reablement work to reduce the pressure, however this remains a key risk due to the ongoing discussions around the future of D2A and the risk that growth could outstrip forecast due to winter pressures.
- The pressure in Supported Living, relates predominately to the full year effect of new starters in 2021/22 (£1.9m), new starters so date and fee uplifts since 1 April. £1.7m is included in the budget growth and 3% fee uplifts this year, however this has not been sufficient to cover the full year effect of last year's starters.
- There are a significant number of risks linked to the forecast in particular inflationary pressures now estimated to be around 7%, the outcome of the Fair Cost of Care exercise linked to Adult Social Care reforms, the future funding of discharge to assess and the risk of additional growth in client numbers, complexity and one-off price rises.

7.2 **Health & Wellbeing Capital:** Budget £-m, Var £0

- a) The approved budget for 2022-23 includes £1.3m of adult social care equipment funded from DFG. This is included within the overall Disabled Facility Grant budget line in the capital programme, currently reported under Housing & Homelessness.

8. Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Services

Figure 15: Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	7,850	8,190	340
Income	(4,540)	(4,540)	0
Housing & Homelessness	3,310	3,650	340
Expenditure	10,650	10,610	(40)
Income	(7,040)	(7,020)	20
Regulatory Services	3,610	3,590	(20)
Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Serv	6,920	7,240	320

Figure 16: Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Affordable Housing - S106 Funded	-26	0	158	158	0	158	158	0
Affordable Housing Total	-26	0	158	158	0	158	158	0
Chiltern & Bilton Crematoria	36	1,609	0	1,609	1,609	0	1,609	0
Cemeteries & Memorial Gardens	0	70	0	70	70	0	70	0
Cemeteries and Crematoria Total	36	1,679	0	1,679	1,679	0	1,679	0
Homelessness Mitigation	0	150	0	150	150	0	150	0
Temporary Accommodation	263	2,700	0	2,700	2,700	0	2,700	0
Homelessness Total	263	2,850	0	2,850	2,850	0	2,850	0
Disabled Facility Grants	449	3,848	0	3,848	3,848	0	3,848	0
Enabling Schemes	-968	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Home Renovation Grants	0	100	0	100	100	0	100	0
Raynes Avenue Park Drainage Replacement	0	152	0	152	152	0	152	0
Housing Total	-519	4,100	0	4,100	4,100	0	4,100	0
Grand Total	-246	8,629	158	8,787	8,629	158	8,787	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

8.1 Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Revenue: Budget £8.8m, Var £0.0m

- £340k adverse variance in Housing & Homelessness from increased demand on Temporary Accommodation, and a risk that will increase further during the year. There may be some Government in-year funding which comes available mid-year for this pressure, as has happened for the previous 2 years.
- £20k favourable variance in Regulatory Services, of which £40k favourable variance on service costs in Environmental Health, offset by a small reduction in grant income in Environmental Health compared to budget, for which the budget will be realigned.

8.2 Housing & Homelessness & Regulatory Capital: Budget £8.8m, Var £0

- a) Housing & Homelessness programmes currently forecasting to budget year. 3 budgets – Enabling Schemes, Homelessness Mitigation and Home Renovation grants – are not formally committed and will be reviewed via the MTFP process.
- b) Cemeteries & Crematoria forecast to budget and expect to complete projects this financial year.

9. Planning and Regeneration

Figure 17: Planning & Regeneration Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	16,720	16,720	0
Income	(10,620)	(10,620)	0
Planning	6,100	6,100	0
Planning & Regeneration	6,100	6,100	0

Figure 18: Planning & Regeneration Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
LEP 3rd Party Schemes	552	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
LEP 3rd Party Schemes Total	552	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aylesbury Town Centre	0	0	800	800	0	800	800	0
CIL Funded Regeneration	0	0	260	260	0	260	260	0
Employment & Regeneration Led Opportunit	203	371	0	371	371	0	371	0
Environment Led Opportunities	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Future High Street Funds	14	4,452	5,673	10,125	4,452	5,673	10,125	0
High Wycombe Town Centre	4	0	200	200	0	200	200	0
Retasking of Winslow Centre	34	30	500	530	30	500	530	0
Waterside North Development	0	0	3,050	3,050	0	3,050	3,050	0
Ashwells	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amersham Regeneration (St John's Build)	0	0	50	50	0	50	50	0
Wycombe District Centres	0	25	0	25	25	0	25	0
Regeneration Total	259	4,877	10,533	15,411	4,877	10,533	15,411	0
Grand Total	811	4,877	10,533	15,411	4,877	10,533	15,411	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

9.1 Planning & Regeneration Revenue: Budget £5.9m, Outturn £6.0m, Var £0.1m

- No variances currently reported in Planning Regeneration; Income and Expenditure forecasting to budget. A clearer picture of whether last year's trend of increased planning income will continue should be available at Qtr 2.

9.2 Planning & Regeneration Capital: Budget £15.4m, Var £0.0m

- All Capital Projects are currently reporting to be spent to profile this year. There is a risk around the profile of the Future High Street funding (as we liaise with Government on future projects) and the Waterside North Development (Old County Offices project) has been not commenced yet due to cost increases (options are being revisited).

10. Transport

Figure 19: Transport Revenue Table

	Budget	Y/E Outturn	Variance
	£000	£000	£000
Expenditure	29,520	28,660	(860)
Income	(8,880)	(7,840)	1,040
Highways & Technical Services	20,640	20,820	180
Expenditure	1,090	1,490	400
Income	(390)	(790)	(400)
HS2	700	700	0
Expenditure	35,370	35,510	140
Income	(2,420)	(1,510)	910
Transport Services	32,950	34,000	1,050
Expenditure	1,600	1,860	260
Income	(250)	(500)	(250)
Transport Strategy	1,350	1,360	10
Transport	55,640	56,880	1,240

Figure 20: Transport Capital Table

Service / Project	Actuals to Date £000	Released Budget £000's	Unreleased Budget £000's	Total Budget £000's	Forecast Outturn Released £000's	Forecast Unreleased £000's	Forecast Outturn £000's	Forecast Variance £000's
Car Parks	-50	-194	427	233	-194	427	233	0
Car Parks Total	-50	-194	427	233	-194	427	233	0
ADEPT Live Labs	185	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Globe Park Access / Westthorpe Junction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Haydon Hill Cycle Way	2	27	0	27	27	0	27	0
Highways & Cycleway Funded Schemes	29	1,442	0	1,442	1,442	0	1,442	0
HS2 Funded Schemes	-114	163	0	163	163	0	163	0
NPIF Schemes	0	125	0	125	125	0	125	0
Active Travel Tranche II - Emerald Way	81	800	0	800	800	0	800	0
Highways & Cycleway Funded Schemes Total	183	2,557	0	2,557	2,557	0	2,557	0
Improvements to Rights Way	-19	0	200	200	0	200	200	0
Denham Bridleway Bridge Replacement	0	108	0	108	108	0	108	0
Berryhill Footbridge Repair	0	0	334	334	0	334	334	0
Rights of Way Total	-19	108	534	642	108	534	642	0
Bridge Maintenance	67	1,020	0	1,020	1,020	0	1,020	0
Footway Structural Repairs	443	2,050	0	2,050	2,050	0	2,050	0
Maintenance Principal Rds - Drainage	547	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	0
Plane & Patch	925	4,425	0	4,425	4,425	0	4,425	0
Replacement Traffic Signals	12	490	0	490	490	0	490	0
Strategic Highway Maintenance Program	1,460	15,400	0	15,400	15,400	0	15,400	0
Street Lighting	40	2,100	0	2,100	2,100	0	2,100	0
Safety Fences	-96	250	0	250	250	0	250	0
Failed Roads Haunching & Reconstruction	0	3,000	0	3,000	3,000	0	3,000	0
Marlow Suspension Bridge	-52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abbey Way Flyover High Wycombe	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Road Safety - Casualty Reduction	-31	750	0	750	750	0	750	0
Strategic Highway Maintenance Total	3,316	31,485	0	31,485	31,485	0	31,485	0
Public Transport	0	125	0	125	125	0	125	0
Purchase of Fleet Vehicles	27	240	0	240	240	0	240	0
Transport Services Total	27	365	0	365	365	0	365	0
East West Rail	-131	1,382	180	1,562	1,382	180	1,562	0
Other Highway & Technical	0	200	0	200	200	0	200	0
Electric Vehicle Charging Points	0	200	0	200	200	0	200	0
Wycombe Parking Review	0	50	0	50	50	0	50	0
Other Transport & Infrastructure Total	-131	1,832	180	2,012	1,832	180	2,012	0
Grand Total	3,326	36,153	1,142	37,294	36,153	1,142	37,294	0

Note: negative actuals relate to accruals and retentions – where the value of work done / completed has been charged to last year, but invoices not yet paid.

10.1 Transport Revenue: Budget £55.6m, Outturn £56.9m, Adverse Variance **£1.2m**

- Transport Services £1.1m adverse variance. £1m cost pressure within Home to School Transport due to increased contract costs and a 3% increase given to all Home to School Contracts to mitigate rising fuel prices. There is an expected increase in Personal Transport Budget costs as more people are transferred over. There is also a £0.1m adverse variance currently forecast within Client Transport due to staffing costs pressure.
- Highways & Technical Services £0.2m adverse variance. £0.3m adverse variance as a result of the impact on parking income due to a reduction in Penalty Charge Notices enforcement officers. There is currently 45% of enforcement officer posts vacant across both on street and off-street

parking and the forecast is on the basis that vacant posts will be recruited to with permanent staff by October 22 and mitigations in place to improve the recovery rate. There is a favourable variance of £0.1m due to vacancies within the Highways Client Team.

- c) Transport Strategy £10k adverse variance. £0.25m favourable variance on income from Active Travel and HIF staffing in-year grant funding; £0.26m adverse variance on staffing and consultancy costs which will utilise this grant income. The resultant £10k variance is expected to be manageable within wider Strategic Transport budgets.

10.2 **Transport Capital:** Budget £37.3m, Var **£0.0m**

- a) Strategic Highway Maintenance – Budget £31.5m, nil variance - carry forward balance from 2021/22 expected to be £1.5m; Car Parks – Budget £0.2m, nil variance - carry forward balance from 2021/22 expected to be £0.4m; Rights of Way – Budget £0.6m, nil variance - carry forward balance from 2021/22 expected to be minimal. All carry forward balances from 2021/22 planned to be fully spent within 2022/23 leaving no variance.
- b) Highways and Cycleways funded schemes budget (funded by s.106) due to reprofiled following a recent paper to Highways Board. All projects currently forecasting to spend to the 22/23 budget profile once slippage has been applied from last year.

11. Corporate & Funding

Figure 21: Corporate & Funding Revenue Table

	Budget £m	Y/E Out- turn £m	Forecast Variance £m	%
Capital Financing	27.1	27.1	-	-
Corporate Costs	19.6	13.4	(6.2)	(32%)
Reserves	(6.2)	(6.2)	-	-
Treasury Management	(2.6)	(2.7)	(0.1)	(4%)
Corporate Total	37.9	31.6	(6.3)	(17%)
Business Rates	(58.2)	(58.2)	-	-
Council Tax	(377.4)	(377.4)	-	-
New Homes Bonus	(5.8)	(5.8)	0.0	0%
Unringfenced Grants	(20.0)	(20.3)	(0.3)	(1%)
Funding Total	(461.4)	(461.7)	(0.3)	(0%)
Total	(423.5)	(430.1)	(6.6)	(2%)

11.1 Corporate & Funding Revenue: Budget -£423.5m, Outturn -£430.1m, Var -£6.6m

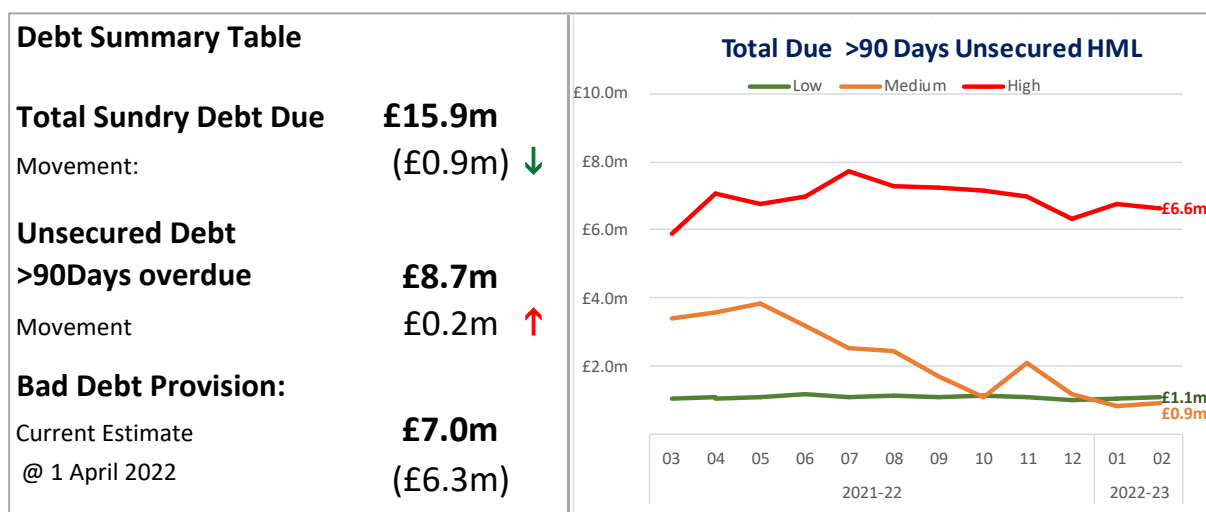
- The £6.6m favourable variance forecast comprises:
- A forecast surplus of £0.3m due to additional income from unringfenced grant income, where the budget was set prudently but a small amount of additional income is expected.
- A surplus of £0.1m on loan interest, following extension of a loan agreement.
- Corporate Contingencies: a £6.2m favourable variance on contingencies expected to be released. Specific contingencies have been forecast to be released to offset pressures as shown in the following table.
- Available reserve balances: in addition to the Corporate Contingencies, the newly created reserve “Mitigating Future Financial Risks” which was set up following outturn 2021/22 as a result of unused contingencies and the overall favourable variance, contains £9.9m. £1.5m of this has been earmarked to fund an element of the 2022/23 pay award as agreed by the Senior Appointments and Pay Committee (SAPC), but a balance of £8.4m remains which could be called upon if required.

Figure 21 Corporate Contingencies & Mitigating Future Financial Risks Reserve

2022-23 Revenue Contingencies	Budget	Favourable Variance - Mitigating pressures in monitoring	Remaining to cover pressures that may arise in remainder of the year
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Pay & Pension Contingency			
Pay Inflation	4,245	-	4,245
Pay - c/fwd (non consolidated)	710	-	710
Redundancy (non unitary)	500	-	500
Total Budget Risk	5,455	-	5,455
Service Risk Contingency			
Inflationary Pressures (incl. NI)	2,950	1,500	1,450
National Living Wage	250	-	250
Adult Social Care Pressures / Demography	3,210	3,100	110
Adult Social Care Provider Market	1,700	-	1,700
Home to School Transport	1,000	200	800
Children's Services Demography	1,410	1,410	-
High Cost Children's Placements	500	-	500
General Contingency - Economic Uncertainty	866	-	866
Total Service Risk	11,886	6,210	5,676
Total Contingency	17,341	6,210	11,131
Total Variation on Contingencies		6,210	
Available balance from newly created reserve "Mitigating Future Financial Risks"	9,900		
£1.5m recommended by SAPC to support pay award	(1,500)		8,400
Total resources earmarked to mitigate further pressures			19,531

12. Outstanding Sundry Debts

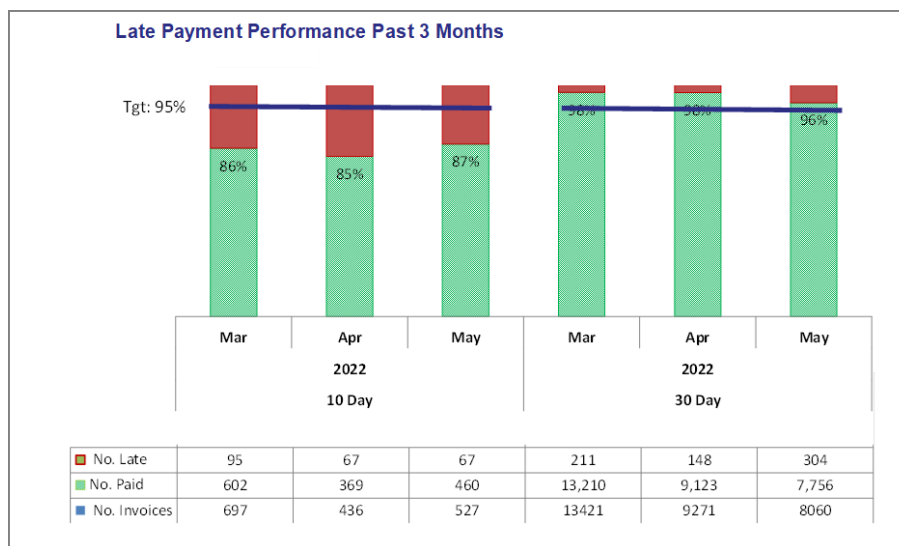
Figure 21: Sundry Debts Table



- 12.1 Total Sundry Debt has seen a downward trend over the last year reducing to £15.9m. Unsecured debt over 90 days has also seen this downward trend, reducing by £1.7m over the last 12 months but with a small net increase (£0.2m) since March.

13. Late Payments

Figure 22: Late Payments Table



- 13.1 Overall performance in May was 95.8% on-time, above the 95% corporate target. Whilst within target it is the lowest performance since February and the average for the last three months is 97.4% on-time. The detail for May has identified a payment file processing error which will be addressed with the relevant team.



Report to Cabinet

Date:	7 th June 2022
Title:	Request for Cabinet approval to submit an Outline Planning Application for a proposed residential development at the site of former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club Land
Cabinet Member(s):	John Chilver – Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources
Contact officer:	David Pearce, Capital Projects Performance Manager 01296 383984 david.pearce@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	Aylesbury South East and Wendover, Halton and Stoke Mandeville.
Purpose of this report:	Ask Cabinet for approval to Submit an Outline Planning application for the land at Stoke Mandeville.

There is a confidential part to this report, which is exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Recommendations:

- 1. Cabinet authorises the Director for Property and Assets in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance Resources and Property & Assets to instruct the submission of an Outline Planning Application consisting of up to 100 residential units including 30% affordable Housing, a new road link between Booker Park School and Lower Road, an increase in size of the existing access road to Lower Road and the provision of a sports and leisure area for community and school use.**
- 2. Cabinet notes that this site being Council owned land provides an opportunity to provide services to the benefit of Buckinghamshire residents, such as affordable and keyworker housing in excess of statutory requirements and homes for clients of adults and children's services that cannot be imposed on privately owned development sites.**
- 3. Should an outline planning application be successful, Cabinet authorises the Director for Property and Assets in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance Resources and Property & Assets and relevant service Directors and heads of service to develop a draft and bring forward a proposed detailed development scheme for further consideration by Cabinet**

Reason for decision:

- The proposed Outline Planning Application will set out the proposed number of accommodation units, the proportion of affordable housing, the provision of a sports and leisure area for community and school use, an expanded access road and a new road link to Booker Park School. It is not proposed to consider the detail of accommodation. This will be dealt with as reserved matters.
- There is insufficient information available at this point to decide on the mix and proportion of different proposed uses. This will be the subject of a business case that will be drafted through consultation with relevant services and submitted for a future decision.
- Submitting an early outline planning application will enable the application to be considered ahead of or together with, the emerging Stoke Mandeville Local Area Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1** An Outline Planning Application is intended to preserve the flexibility of future design and composition of the development and represents a good opportunity to

provide mainly affordable and key worker homes in an ideal location due to the proximity with Stoke Mandeville Hospital and this same specific location provides a rare prospect to include a provision for bespoke and adaptable housing for the special exigent needs of clients of both adult's and children's services.

1.2 Following a successful outline planning determination, there are several stages that will need to be completed before any development work can start. These works include but not exhaustively:

- a) Business cases for affordable housing additional to statutory requirements, keyworker housing, Step down accommodation, housing for both Adult's Services and Children's Services clients
- b) Fulfilment of any planning conditions
- c) Preparation of a detailed masterplan including phasing
- d) Approval of detailed design
- e) Fulfilment of Asset of Community value considerations.
- f) Finalisation of development appraisals and funding requirements

This detailed design work will be a process that stretches over several months

1.3 The former Bucks CC Sports and Social Club ('the site') is located off Lower Road in Stoke Mandeville. It is approximately 3.7 hectares in size. The Site currently comprises a closed club house surrounded by open land which was formerly used as sports pitches and tennis courts. The former Sports and Social Club Land has remained unused for some years and as currently stands represents a drain on the Council's resources in ensuring public safety while enforcing security.

1.4 The proposal is for the demolition of all existing structures and the Outline Planning Application sets the scene for the future development in seeking consent for the construction of up to approximately 100 residential units with a re-provision for open space for day-to-day use and includes the LPA's statutory requirement that 30% of that number be affordable accommodation. Consent is also sought for improving the main access road and extending the main estate road to provide Booker Park School with a second vehicular access point that would greatly relieve congestion adjacent to the existing school entrance.

1.5 The scheme was revised following pre-app advice and then again following consultation with Stoke Mandeville Parish Council and SMPC's retained architects. No doubt there will be further detailed refinements, but the hope would be that the quantum of development is now fairly settled.

- 1.6 The specific uses of the residential units are not referenced in this application as they will be dealt with as reserved matters once the mix of accommodation is agreed.
- 1.7 The Stoke Mandeville site is also identified as the preferred location for a new primary electricity substation which is part of Bucks Council's HIF investment programme and is targeted to bring in substantial HIF funding, which will hugely benefit the Council and Buckinghamshire residents and supports the future growth of Aylesbury by alleviating any existing grid capacity constraints. A separate planning application will be submitted by UKPN soon.

2. Content of report: This document including the following appendices:

Appendices: -

- 2.1 A1 Site plan
- 2.2 A2 Proposed master plan
- 2.3 CA1 Confidential Appendix

3. Other options considered

- 3.1 Doing nothing would result in the site being potentially being designated as open space in the emerging neighbourhood plan which would greatly inhibit any opportunity for development and risk the forecasted capital receipt expected from this property. **This is not a recommended option.**
- 3.2 Submit a fully worked up detailed planning application for a scheme. Unless the Council intend to build out the scheme themselves, this approach will cost an additional £250k to £400K and is unlikely to deliver an application consistent with that which an external developer would find to be acceptable and could potentially reduce the site disposal value. **This is not a recommended option.**
- 3.3 Gift the site to the Local Community and re-open the former Sports and Social Club and to use as sports pitches. This approach would result in the loss of future potential revenue or capital receipts to the Council and was tried at the time when the facility was first closed with negotiations to allow the local community to provide a workable model to allow the facility to continue being persevered for two years without any realistic proposal coming forward. Since then, the property and site have fallen into substantial disrepair and would require significantly more financial investment to reinstate. **This is not a recommended option.**
- 3.4 Sell the site now as an unconditional offer or possibly an unconditional offer plus overage on receipt of planning. There are some good planning prospects to the site – surrounded by development, sustainable location etc – but equally, the site has no

planning status and could be considered an important local open space etc – so any unconditional buyer would be taking on a significant risk that planning permission for development may be less than initially assumed, and/or take longer than expected to secure or may not come at all if the land is allocated as a protected open space for example. We are advised by Consultants that a prudent buyer might pay in the region of say 25% of potential value (based on the open space exemplar, affordable housing policy compliant scheme) fully unconditionally – or say 15% plus an uplift clause where circa 50% of the uplift in value derived from a future planning permission is paid back to the Council. It is worth noting that the Council would have very little if any control over the planning process after a sale, so control is lost. Having regard to the rest of the report, **this is not a recommended option.**

- 3.5 Submit an Outline Planning Application at the earliest possible opportunity for approximately 100 residential units including 30% affordable Housing, a new road access between Booker Park School and Lower road, an increase in size of the existing access road and the provision of a sports area for Community and school use. **This is the recommended option.**

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 As a result of delegation set out in the property and assets schemes of delegation for officers 2.10 giving authority to the Director for Property and Assets in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Property and Assets.
- 4.2 This site is registered as an asset of Community value (ACV) and as such if BC decides to dispose of the asset then it would first need to publicise the fact and allow an opportunity for local people to make a bid. The maximum moratorium period is 6 months from receipt of the notice of intention to dispose, from the landowner. Upon receipt of the notice this triggers an initial 6-week moratorium which is only extended to the full 6 months if the community group express an intention to bid. An 18 month period to sell runs from the landowners notice, effectively giving the landowner a minimum of 1 year to sell following the six month moratorium or, 16.5 months if only the six week moratorium applies. After the moratorium period the owner is free to sell to whomever they choose and at whatever price, and no further moratorium will apply for the remainder of a protected period lasting 18 months.
- 4.3 This report was sent for clearance to Legal & Democratic Services who confirm that subject to compliance with the Contracts Procedure Rules and subject to availability of funding and decision-making processes being followed, the Council has power under S111 of the Local Government Act 1972 and/or Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (Local authority's general power of competence) to undertake the development described in this report.

5. Financial implications for this report:

Costs incurred:

Quoted cost of OL planning application

and desk top valuation £150,000

Contingency sum @5% £7,500

Total Cost £157,500

The costs have so far been met from the Strategic Asset Reserve

6. Corporate implications and risks

- 6.1 Property & Assets are aware of the emerging Stoke Mandeville local area plan and Attempts have been made to reach an accommodation with Stoke Mandeville Parish Council and Stoke Mandeville Local Plan Steering Group regarding the Development. These negotiations have proved successful and as a result amended proposal are to be included in the proposed Stoke Mandeville Local Area Plan. However, SMPC have added the caveat that if agreement is not reached, the plan will revert to a proposed designation of Green Open Space. The positive Interaction between SMPC and BC indicates that the risk, although still existing is greatly diminished. If realised this would seriously inhibit the chances of a future development and realisation of Capital Receipts.
- 6.2 Sports England will need to be consulted to reach an agreement that the sports provision to be re-provided is an acceptable replacement for that historically in place.
- 6.3 Adjacent Council owned premises may need some alteration to accommodate a wider access road and the effect on Children's Services Clients must has been determined to be dominions and will be mitigated.
- 6.4 Both Adults and Children's services have expressed an interest in acquiring units on this site. A business case is currently being drafted to show how the costs of providing adults and children's accommodation can be considered against savings that can be made elsewhere by Children's and Adults Services to offset the financial investment required.

7. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

Cllr Sue Chapple-	Local Member for Aylesbury South East
Cllr David Thompson-	Local Member for Aylesbury South East
Cllr Denise Summers-	Local Member for Aylesbury South East
Cllr John Chilver-	Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources, Property & Assets
Cllr Angela Macpherson-	Cabinet Member Health and Wellbeing

Cllr Timothy Butcher-	Deputy Cabinet Member for Resources
Cllr Gareth Williams-	Cabinet Member Planning and Regeneration
Cllr Stephen Bowles-	Local Member for Wendover Halton and Stoke Mandeville
Cllr Richard Newcombe-	Local Member for Wendover Halton and Stoke Mandeville
Cllr Peter Strachan-	Local Member for Wendover Halton and Stoke Mandeville

The above Councillors have been consulted in August / September 2021 and invited to express their views by way of email correspondence. All responses received to date have been supportive. A further email was sent in September 2021 regarding further communication. A refresher was sent in February and another in March 2022.

8. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 8.1 Pre-planning application consultation ran between the 4th April and the 9th of May and includes community groups, residents, Stoke Mandeville Parish Council, the Stoke Mandeville local neighbourhood area plan steering group and other stakeholders. The results of this consultation will be available prior to this report being submitted to Cabinet.
- 8.2 A meeting was held with BC Schools team and Booker Park School where the school indicated that they were broadly supportive of the proposed development.

9. Next steps and review

- 9.1 The results of the pre-planning consultation process will be considered ahead of a final decision being made
- 9.2 The Director for Property and assets instruct Consultants to submit an outline planning application for the Land at Stoke Mandeville.
- 9.3 Subject to Cabinet approval of this report and to the conclusion of 11.1, a further report on the options for development appraisals for the site which will consider the various development options highlighted in this report. . Options will consider an adult size all-weather sports pitch for use by the adjacent school and by the local community, open Market Houses, Affordable Homes, Keyworker Homes and apartments for adults and Children's services.

10. Background papers

- 10.1 Report by Savills titled 'Land at Stoke Mandeville – former sports and social club' dated 1st Feb 2022.

11. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 11.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by **telephone 01296764814** or: **email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk**



1. Lower Road

2. Entrance to site

3. Car Park, currently used
for Hospital staff parking

4. Former Clubhouse

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Development to be predominantly two storey houses with some opportunities for three storey houses and apartment buildings

Improved Junction to Lower Road

Potential for Sports provision

Garden Square

- Key
- Site boundary
 - New homes (mix of houses and apartments)
 - Public green space
 - Private green space
 - Parking zone
 - Access road
 - Potential path
 - Existing trees
 - Proposed trees

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Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports
and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke
Mandeville

DRAFT

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



1.0 Consultation Activity

Engaging with Key Stakeholders

Local Councillors

- 1.1. Prior to engaging local residents, local council members and other stakeholders were contacted via email to be invited to an hour session ahead of the public exhibition events on 25th April and 27th April. A number of Councillors attended these sessions, were introduced to the proposals and were offered a briefing on the scheme.

Stoke Mandeville Parish Council (SMPC) & Stoke Mandeville Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (SMNPSG)

- 1.2. Meetings with SMPC and SMNPSG were held in December 2021 and February 2022. Following the February 2022 meeting, it was decided that Buckinghamshire Council (BC) would work with SMPC on the design of the proposal. Accordingly design work collaboratively began with Untitled Practice, the architectural advisors for the project to SMNPSG.
- 1.3. Broadly the design developed from a loose residential estate style (by Savills) into a more formal garden square style development (following the influence of Untitled Practice). This was the plan displayed at the Public Exhibition events. BC representatives were present at the events to explain the proposals and plan with members of SMPC also often in attendance.

Sports England

- 1.4. A pre-application request to discuss the proposals with Sport England was submitted on 18th February 2022. Sport England has since reviewed the proposals and provided an initial response by email on 7th March 2022. A meeting was suggested and will be held on 26th May 2022.

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



Buckinghamshire Council

- 1.5. A pre-application request was submitted to Buckinghamshire Council LPA on 1st March 2022, and a meeting is arranged for 27th May 2022 to discuss the proposals.

Consultation with the local Community

- 1.6. Consultation with the local community comprised of an online consultation, and two in-person public drop in events. The local community were informed about both types of engagement through a letter-drop to residents in the boundary highlighted in the plan below. Advertising details of the consultation was carried out and information was posted on notice boards in local businesses and community centres. The distribution area can be seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1 – Invitation letter drop distribution area

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



Consultation Webpage

- 1.7. A dedicated webpage was hosted by Your Voice Bucks and found at:

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/planning/stoke-mandeville-consultation/>.

- 1.8. The website ran live from 4th April 2022 until 9th May 2022 and included access to the plans and details of the proposals at a time that was suitable and convenient for them. An online questionnaire was also included where the local community could provide their thoughts.

- 1.9. Overall, 340 online feedback forms were received with the key themes detailed in Table 1 below.

Phone calls and Emails

- 1.10. The website also provided an email address and phone number for the local community to provide feedback. In total, 25 responses via this method of feedback were received. The key themes of these responses are detailed in Table 1 below.

Public Exhibition Events

- 1.11. Two public exhibition events were held at Eskdale Community Hall on 25th April 2022 from 10:00-16:00 and 27th April 2022 from 15:00-20:00. A variety of times were chosen to ensure members of the public with other commitments were not excluded from attending the events.
- 1.12. The first hour of each exhibition was for the Local Councillors to attend, review the proposals and ask any questions to the applicant team.
- 1.13. Registration forms were provided at both events. Whilst attendees were encouraged to complete registration forms, it was not compulsory and some declined. On 25th April, 36 attendees registered and on 27th April 27 attendees registered. The applicant's representatives at the events physically counted 71 attendees on the 25th April and 40 on the 27th April.

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



- 1.14. Feedback forms were available to fill out during these events, and we received 8 in total. The key themes of these forms are outlined in Table 1 below.

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Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



2.0 Feedback

2.1 Summary of Feedback Received

Response Type	Key Themes							
	Loss of Green Open Space	Objection to building houses on the site / in the area	Lack of infrastructure e.g. roads, schools, GP's	Traffic Concerns	Loss of Sports Facility	Loss of Community Facility	Re-build the Sports and Social Club	Disruption / Loss of wildlife
Online	164	149	148	108	88	87	40	27
Phone/ Email	9	17	14	6	4	1	4	1
Written	5	3	3	5	5	1	2	2
TOTAL	178	169	165	119	97	89	46	30

Table 1 – Summary of key themes from consultation responses received.

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



2.2 It is key to note that the 'total' figures in Table 1 represent the number of respondents who raised each of the key themes. It was common within the results for each respondent to raise more than one theme within the 373 responses received.

2.3 We have chosen three representative comments for each key theme to provide an example of what was said within the feedback.

Loss of Green Open Space

- *"Large areas of greenspace are essential for the health and wellbeing of the local communities... To keep this greenspace will be for the benefit of not just the existing residents but future ones too."*
- *"We need more accessible open spaces for the public to enjoy. Regenerate the tennis court!"*
- *"We moved to this area due to the wide open space for our children to play. It is very disappointing that the fields at Bucks CC have been shut up for the last few years. There is very little open space for children to play. New estates have been built off lower road with no park facilities and very little green space."*

Objection to Building Houses on the Site / in the Area

- *"I question the 'need' and 'demand' for more houses. It was recently announced that Buckinghamshire has the lowest number of homeless people in the country. Each of those is of course a tragedy and needs help but I think the 'demand' comes from the construction industry leaders, who seem to have convinced our Government that only they can fix our broken economy and provide jobs. How about those workers being diverted to the massive task of converting our existing homes to be fossil fuel free?"*

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



- *"There are too many houses being built without the necessary infrastructure."*
- *"I do not feel like more housing is needed in that location as recently two developments have been going right by this site."*

Lack of Infrastructure e.g. roads, schools, GPs

- *"The roads need to be improved before any more development in Aylesbury. I commute into Aylesbury and it is completely gridlocked it is appalling!"*
- *"The plans state near Mandeville school – I doubt very much they would have capacity to take any more students for a completely new states. Doctors in Aylesbury are stretched. The hospital itself is barely coping at the moment. As usual roads & infrastructure don't appear to feature in what is probably already a done deal."*
- *"The primary issue is the lack of infrastructure to accompany these new homes. It is all but impossible to find an NHS dentist in Bucks, as waiting lists are at least 2 years long – at least one dentist has closed their waiting list. We do not have enough school places to accommodate existing children in their local schools let alone hundreds more."*

Traffic Concerns

- *"The total grid lock already experienced morning and evening around this whole area has become ridiculous, and now another 100 houses! Based on 2 cars per house that equates to an extra 400 vehicle movements minimum per day, without delivery vehicles etc. Already ambulances struggle to get through at peak times, as do other vehicles attempting to get to and from the hospital."*
- *"Traffic and parking since recent developments over the past years have increased massively what with housing developments, Asda, HS2, etc."*
- *"100 more houses will equal another 200+ cars on an already gridlocked road. No additional roads are being built around here to cope with the extra traffic."*

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



Loss of Sports Facility

- *"With the lack of sporting areas in the area where are people allowed to now go for outdoor activities which has been seen during the Pandemic there needs to be a larger range of accessible public open spaces."*
- *"There is almost nowhere left for people to relax or for children to play in this area, and Eskdale Park is simply too far away in most respects. Children used to play ad-hoc cricket, football and other sports on this area, people jogged around the perimeter every day... It was an utterly invaluable much used and loved local resource."*
- *"I believe the space should be used as community green space and reopen the Bucks club with proper management and updated facilities like "Aston Clinton" park has. Bring back the sport e.g. football, cricket, pool, darts, family fun days, family discos. Some of my best time as a child was going to the Bucks Club and seeing friend/family/local residents and attending fun days and family discos. There is nothing like this unless you want to travel to Aston Clinton. Also on the plans all you have said is "POTENTIAL" sports facilities!!!!"*

Loss of Community Facility

- *"But we are lacking the community facility and ground for sports in Aylesbury and Stoke Mandeville. This site should be restored to its former glory for all to use."*
- *"Shocking that this wonderful protected community asset, that Buckinghamshire Council own, is being considered for housing. Yes we need affordable housing which this location could be used for, 100% of the land. But we are lacking the community facility and ground for sports in Aylesbury and Stoke Mandeville. This site should be restored to its former glory for all to use."*
- *"This is a real kick in the teeth, a perfectly good safe community facility that has been closed off to the people you serve all for profit. Where are our children supposed to play and exercise safely?"*

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



Re-build the Sports and Social Club

- *"Rather than redeveloping the site for residential housing, I think the site should be reinstated as a sports and social club and the existing facilities improved."*
- *"In addition to the housing etc and the sports facilities, I feel that the former Sports and Social club should be rebuilt to house an area for a cafe/bar for the use if the residence of the new houses also the estates adjacent, to be used by young families, working people, elderly and people who like to walk their dogs and sit and have a drink etc with their friends."*
- *"If you want to develop this area invest in the social club and sports aspect."*

Disruption / Loss of Wildlife

- *"My views are what will happen to the hedgerows and wildlife which there are plenty on those grounds."*
- *"Development will necessitate the need to remove the ancient hedgerow currently behind properties on Lennon Way. It was previously a planning requirement to maintain the ancient hedgerow for wildlife and to preserve the history of the area. Losing this hedgerow will greatly impact the natural wildlife."*
- *"The beautiful green space we have will be taken and the wildlife will be further displaced."*

Consultation Summary

Former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club Land, Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville



2.4 The key themes collated from all the responses are outlined in Table 1 above. It is evident from the feedback that the loss of green open space raised a lot of concern from the local community, with 174 responses including comments regarding this. Other key themes which were discussed frequently included objection to building houses on the site or within the local area due to the amount of recent residential development in Stoke Mandeville. The majority of these responses linked this to the impact on the local infrastructure, with many suggesting that until more infrastructure is provided in the area, such as GP surgeries and schools, no more houses should be built. Traffic concerns were also mentioned within many responses, with comments about the high traffic levels on Lower Road at present and how it was considered that if more houses were added, the traffic would become a lot worse.

2.5 However, not all responses were responding negatively to the proposals. Out of the 377 responses received, 30 of these were in support of the proposals and these responses acknowledged the need for housing, particularly affordable housing within the Borough. In addition, 14 responses received were neutral where they stated that they weren't opposed to the proposals however they weren't for them either. The total breakdown of the 368 responses is outlined in Table 2 below.

	Support	Neutral	Objection	TOTAL
No. of responses	30	14	329	373
% of responses	8%	4%	88%	100%

Table 2 – Breakdown of responses.



Call-in Request Form

Decision title:	Proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club Land
Decision reference no:	Cabinet meeting held on 7 June 2022
Decision taker:	Cabinet
Date decision made:	7 June 2022

Reasons for the call-in:

Please provide supporting information on the reasons for your call-in request. Please limit your summary to no more than 1,000 words for this entire section. Grounds for a call-in request should relate to one of the following categories:

- a. The decision has not been made in accordance with this Constitution, Council policies or Council procedures and processes;
- b. The decision is outside of the Council's policy framework or the budget approved by the Council;
- c. The decision is outside of the powers of the Council;
- d. The decision is unlawful

The callers-in requested that the decision made by Cabinet on 7 June 2022 in relation to the development of the Buckinghamshire County Council Sports & Social Club be called in for the following two reasons:

3.3 of the report to Cabinet does not address the option of a sale to a current residents group or the Parish Council. The site is listed as a community asset and I do not believe this fact has been adequately considered in the report or decision making process. Having met with a residents group last night there was not a proposal from residents in relation to 'gifting' the site. They have been asking for a meeting to discuss purchasing the site but this has been declined by Buckinghamshire Council. The basis of this option under 3.3 is therefore not representative of the options cabinet could or should have considered.

9.1. States that the results of a 'pre-planning consultation will be considered' before a decision is made. The result of that consultation was not included in the papers before cabinet and have yet to be published to either members or the public. Until the results of the pre-planning

<p>consultation are published I do not believe the decision to proceed with the development of the site can be considered Safe.</p> <p>I also not from the Stoke Mandeville Parish Council meeting minutes from the 25th of April 2022 that they were promised a meeting as a part of the consultation that then didn't take place rendering the promised consultation process incomplete.</p>	
<p>Desired outcome/alternative course of action sought:</p> <p>As detailed in the reasons for call-in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request the Council to consider options of a sale to a current residents' group or the Stoke Mandeville Parish Council - That the Council undertake further consultation including meeting with the Stoke Mandeville Parish Council - That Cabinet awaits for the results of a pre-planning consultation to be published and considered before finalising any decision to proceed with the development of the site. 	
<p>Lead Member: <i>(who will attend the meeting and be the main contact and spokesperson for this call-in request)</i></p>	<p>Councillor Anders Christensen</p>
<p>Supporting Member: <i>(who will attend the meeting)</i></p>	
<p>Names of other Members supporting the call-in request: <i>(a minimum of 21 is required)</i> <i>(written evidence of the support of additional members is required by providing a copy of an email from a Member confirming their support for this call-in. Alternatively, a Member can email confirming their support direct to the Democracy mailbox)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr A Poland-Goodyer 2. Cllr S Lambert 3. Cllr S Morgan 4. Cllr P Cooper 5. Cllr T Hunter-Watts 6. Cllr A Wheelhouse 7. Cllr S Wilson 8. Cllr M Knight 9. Cllr G Wadhwa 10. Cllr M Baldwin 11. Cllr A Baughan 12. Cllr P Griffin 13. Cllr T Dixon 14. Cllr R Khan 15. Cllr N Rana 16. Cllr S James 17. Cllr I Hussain 18. Cllr W Raja 19. Cllr P Drayton 20. Cllr K Bates 21. Cllr M Fayyaz

	22. Cllr N Hussain 23. Cllr T Hussain
Date:	10 June 2022

Please refer to the call-in procedure detailed in Part G Para 2.60 onwards in the [constitution](#).

This form will be submitted to the democracy mailbox at democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

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Call-in Request Notice

A call-in request has been submitted from Councillor Anders Christensen, supported by 23 Councillors. The call-in request will be considered at a forthcoming meeting of the Growth, Infrastructure & Housing Select Committee, details of which will be advertised when confirmed. The reasons for the call-in request are set out below.

Title

Proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club Land

Cabinet meeting

7 June 2022

Reasons for the call-in request

The request for Call-In is attached. The Monitoring Officer considers that the first ground Call-In relating to the ACV is not valid but the second ground for Call-In is valid, namely the statement from Councillor Anders Christensen that:

"9.1. States that the results of a 'pre-planning consultation will be considered' before a decision is made. The result of that consultation was not included in the papers before cabinet and have yet to be published to either members or the public. Until the results of the pre-planning consultation are published I do not believe the decision to proceed with the development of the site can be considered Safe."

The call-in request is supported by the following Councillors:

1. Cllr A Poland-Goodyer
2. Cllr S Lambert
3. Cllr S Morgan
4. Cllr P Cooper
5. Cllr T Hunter-Watts
6. Cllr A Wheelhouse
7. Cllr S Wilson
8. Cllr M Knight
9. Cllr G Wadhwa
10. Cllr M Baldwin
11. Cllr A Baughan

12. Cllr P Griffin
13. Cllr T Dixon
14. Cllr R Khan
15. Cllr N Rana
16. Cllr S James
17. Cllr I Hussain
18. Cllr W Raja
19. Cllr P Drayton
20. Cllr K Bates
21. Cllr M Fayyaz
22. Cllr N Hussain
23. Cllr T Hussain

Background papers

[7 June 2022 Cabinet meeting](#)

Contact Officer

Sarah Ashmead Monitoring Officer

**Councillor David Carroll****Councillor for Ridgeway West Ward**

Buckinghamshire Council

The Gateway

Gatehouse Road

Aylesbury

HP19 8FF

David.carroll@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Councillor Martin Tett
 Leader of the Council
 Buckinghamshire Council
 The Gateway
 Gatehouse Road
 Aylesbury HP19 8FF

6 July 2022

Dear Martin,

I am writing to inform you of the outcome of the recent call-in of the Cabinet decision on the Proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Sports and Social Club land which was taken at Cabinet on 7th June 2022. The Call-in request form and the Call-in notice can be found at the following links:

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s44952/Call-in%20request.pdf>

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s44951/Call-in%20Request%20Notice.pdf>

As you know, the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee met at The Oculus yesterday to consider the call-in request which had been submitted by Cllr Anders Christensen and was supported by a further 22 members of the Council. The meeting was attended by a number of local residents and was also webcast.

The Committee heard a submission from Cllr Anders Christensen and Cllr Susan Morgan explaining their concerns about the Cabinet decision and their reasons for requesting a call-in. Committee Members were then able to ask questions. Cllr John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources, then responded to the key points that had been raised and presented his own explanation of what the Cabinet decision was aiming to achieve and his knowledge of the outcome of the pre-planning public consultation exercise. Committee Members were then able to ask questions to the Cabinet Member and also to Mr David Pearce, Capital Projects Performance Manager who had written the 7th June Cabinet report.

At the outset of the Select Committee's deliberations, I reminded members that the accepted grounds for the call-in were as follows:

'9.1 states that the results of a 'pre-planning consultation will be considered' before a decision is made. The result of that consultation was not included in the papers before cabinet and have yet to be published to either members or the public. Until the results of the pre-planning consultation are published I do not believe the decision to proceed with the development of the site can be considered safe.'

Therefore, Members focussed their discussion and deliberations on the pre-planning consultation. After inviting members comments and in light of a difference of views, I proposed a vote and the Select Committee agreed to uphold the call-in by a vote of 7-3 and refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

The Select Committee recommends that all members of Cabinet and the public should have sight of the pre-planning public consultation report, in the interests of transparency. Whilst we heard that this report was referred to in discussions at Cabinet on 7th June, it was not included in the agenda pack, despite reference being made to it at both 8.1. and 9.1 of the Cabinet report.

Best wishes

Councillor David Carroll
Chairman, Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee



Supplementary Report to Cabinet

Date: 12th July 2022

Reference number:

Title: **Reconsideration of the request for Cabinet approval to submit an Outline Planning Application for a proposed residential development at the site of former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club Land**

Relevant councillor(s): John Chilver – Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources

Author and contact officer: David Pearce, Capital Projects Performance Manager
01296 383984 david.pearce@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Ward(s) affected: Aylesbury South East and Wendover, Halton and Stoke Mandeville.

Purpose of this report: A Supplement to a paper submitted to Cabinet on the 7th June 2022 drafted in light of the comments made at the Scrutiny Committee 4th July. The supplement includes additional detail around public consultation to aid Members in a decision to grant approval to Submit an Outline Planning application for the land at Stoke Mandeville.

Recommendations:

- 1. Cabinet re-consider their decision in light of information now available to them.**
- 2. Cabinet confirm their decision to approve the submission of an outline planning application.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 June 7th Cabinet decided to authorise the submission of an outline planning application for land at Stoke Mandeville. Following which a successful application was made to call in the decision that followed due process as set out in the Council's constitution.
- 1.2 At a meeting of the Growth Infrastructure and Housing Scrutiny Committee on the 5th July the decision was upheld, and a decision made to return the report to Cabinet with additional information.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Committee raised concerns that there had been no official consultation with either Stoke Mandeville Parish Council or SM Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Contained in the appendices are two letters that clearly show the steps taken to consult with the Parish Council. Regular meetings have and continue to take place with the Chairman of both groups, and this has greatly informed the scheme to date.
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decision made by Cabinet on the 7th June was made without Cabinet Members having had sight of information that could have influenced the decision reached and therefore ruled that Cabinet should re-consider when in receipt of the consultation summary document.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 This Paper
- 2.2 Appendix 1 Sports and Social Club Consultation Summary report (already attached to the main agenda)
- 2.3 Appendix 2 Letter from Stoke Mandeville Parish Council
- 2.4 Appendix 3 Letter from Stoke Mandeville Parish Council Local Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- 2.5 Appendix 4 Link to video about proposed development released by SMPC
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkajsUsYcbU&feature=emb_imp_woyt

3. Next steps and review

- 3.1 An outline planning application will be submitted in August and the Local Planning Authority consultation will proceed as part of the statutory planning process

4. Background papers

- 4.1 None other than those attached as appendices

5. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 5.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone 01296764814 or: email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

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Community Centre • Eskdale Road • Stoke Mandeville • Bucks HP22 5UJ

Clerk: Tony Skeggs

Telephone: (01296) 613888

E-mail: clerk@stokemandevillepc.gov.uk

18/03/2022

David Pearce

Capital Projects Performance Manager

Strategic and Major land and developments Team

Planning, Growth & Sustainability Directorate

Buckinghamshire Council

Dear David

Bucks Sports & Social Club

I refer to recent correspondence and meetings regarding the above site. Discussions have taken place between Buckinghamshire Council (BC), our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG), your consultants, Savills, and ours, Untitled Practice (UP).

At the Stoke Mandeville Parish Council (SMPC) meeting on 15th March, it was agreed by councillors that SMPC would take part in the joint public consultation on the outline plans for this site. You have indicated that the public consultation is likely to commence on 4th April, with drop-in sessions for the public at the Eskdale Road Community Centre on 25th and 27th April. I have made members of SMPC and NPSG aware of these intended dates and asked for attendees. The quicker the dates and times can be confirmed, the better we can support them.

There are of course matters still to be resolved before a 'nearer final' plan for the site can be produced, and we understand that you intend further meetings with all parties to work on these. The topics of parking, of the dimensions of the football pitch, the sporting facilities available, and of access and egress arrangements from the existing road network have all to be finalised. We have indicated that as the current preferred design borrows most from the work done on our behalf by UP, we are content for you to engage directly with them. In turn, you have indicated that a financial contribution from BC to us towards UP's work to date would not form a stumbling block to our partnership.

As all parties move towards the production of an agreed masterplan for the site, there is a reliance on everyone acting in good faith. We have already mentioned that our forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan



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will not designate the site as 'Local Green Space', provided the development comes forward in accordance with that masterplan. Otherwise, we will reinstate the designation. Clearly this is not an outcome we, or you, would welcome, and the production of some form of Memorandum of Understanding between us at the end of this process is the preferred option.

We will doubtless be hearing from you again shortly and look forward to a successful collaboration.

Best regards

Graham W. Stewart

Graham W. Stewart

Chairman – Stoke Mandeville Parish Council



A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR STOKE MANDEVILLE

1 June 2022

Councillor Martin Tett
c/o Buckinghamshire Council
The Gateway Offices
Gatehouse Road
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP19 8FF

Dear Cllr Tett,

I am writing as requested by David Pearce to summarise Stoke Mandeville Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group's views about the development of the former Bucks Sports and Social Club site on Lower Road, Stoke Mandeville. While we believe this letter to represent the views of the Parish Council as a whole, there has been insufficient time as yet to get their formal approval of it.

In summary, we feel:

1. **The aspiration of local residents to re-open the former club as a going concern is admirable but impractical.** There is no realistic way for residents to raise the considerable capital required to purchase and refurbish the club building and sports facilities and, in our view, the residents lack the business knowledge and skills to effectively manage a challenging community facility. Neither, in our view, would there be sufficient demand and income from sporting users to make the club viable as a going concern. Those users likely to be able to pay high fees require correspondingly high levels of sporting facilities which the site could not deliver; and casual and community users cannot pay the high fees needed to maintain sporting facilities. We recognise the strong local feelings, but we do not think residents' ideas are practical or sustainable.
2. More importantly, **there are strong reasons why the site is not now suitable for a large sporting complex.** Vehicle access to the site is very constrained and there is insufficient space for the high level of car parking needed to service a large sports complex. Traffic congestion on Lower Road is a major issue. The proximity of housing and a SEND school mean that intensive sporting use, under floodlighting and with spectators, is inappropriate.

3. **We strongly support the ‘Garden Square’ concept and design developed for the BSSC site by Buckinghamshire Council with our own landscape architects.** We feel the Garden Square is fully in keeping with Aylesbury Garden Town ideas, with a large central green space, access to significant informal ‘turn up and play’ green play, sporting and leisure facilities, and a focus on disabled accessibility and inclusion reflecting the Paralympic legacy of nearby Stoke Mandeville hospital and stadium. We intend to work with BC, through the Neighbourhood Plan and by planning conditions, to ensure this vision is delivered for local residents. We support the use of the site to deliver much needed non-market housing.
4. **We agree with Sport England’s view that the club-standard sporting facilities of the former club should be re-provided so as to meet current unmet needs.** The evidence gathered for the evolving Neighbourhood Plan underlines the need for significant additional club-standard sporting facilities in Stoke Mandeville and southern Aylesbury, a conclusion supported by the evidence base for the VALP and the evolving sporting provision and pitch strategy for the AV area. But we feel these club-standard sporting facilities would be better provided on an alternative site, not at the former BSSC site.
5. **We have a clear deliverable vision for a club-standard sporting complex within easy walking distance of the former BSSC site, at our projected Parish Centre site on Lower Road.** Our proposed Parish Centre site is well located between the AGT1 and AGT2 strategic developments and close to existing neighbourhoods, has the space needed for a wide variety of uses including lit club-quality and artificial surface pitches, will have its own mobility hub and has vehicle access direct from the SEALR. Our intention is to bring forward this sporting complex as quickly as possible, in collaboration with BC and with a commercial partner. There are no insuperable barriers to delivery (landowners agree in principle, for example), and the delivery of facilities on this site would allow any Grampian conditions imposed by Sport England to be fulfilled. As a facility serving the needs of major developments, it would be eligible for s106 funding as well as national sports and community grants.
6. **We strongly oppose the tentative proposal by UK Power Networks to site a major substation on the BSSC site.** We recognise the need for the substation, but a small site with limited road access close to a SEND school and housing is not an appropriate site. We intend to propose to UKPN that they consider an alternative and more appropriate site off the SEALR and closer to HS2 (possibly adjacent to the proposed Parish Centre), which could be designated and safeguarded for that use through the Neighbourhood Plan.

We are very happy to meet to discuss these points in more detail if that would be useful.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Andrew Clark
Chair of Stoke Mandeville Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group



Report to Cabinet.

Date: 12th July 2022

Title: Highways Service – Term Maintenance Contract Award.

Relevant councillor(s): Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport

Contact officer: Richard Barker, Corporate Director Communities

Author: David Farquhar

Ward(s) affected: All wards, as a council wide service

Recommendations:

- 1. To note the progress made to date on the procurement of the new Highways Services Contracts.**
- 2. To agree the recommendation to award the Highways Term Maintenance contract to the preferred bidder as detailed within Confidential Appendix 1.**

Reason for decision:

- i. The contracts required for the future delivery of this key service are ranked as 'Platinum Plus', requiring a council Key Decision by Cabinet.
- ii. There are three elements/contracts, with the procurement of each undertaken in a phased approach to manage workload.
- iii. The Term Maintenance Contract (TMC) is the first of the three to be taken to Cabinet and this report details the outcome of the procurement exercise, making recommendations for a decision to award the TMC in accordance with the previously agreed procurement process.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The procurement project team, with support from other disciplines from across the Council and externally, have made positive progress with the delivery of the new Highways operating model and the associated procurement activity and are on programme to deliver these key contracts for the Council.
- 1.2 One of these contracts is the appointment of a new Term Maintenance Contractor. This paper, and the confidential Appendix 1 attached, report on the outcome of the procurement exercise and recommends the award of contract to the preferred bidder with the most economically advantageous tender as in accordance with the agreed assessment model for quality and price.
- 1.3 The Term Maintenance Contract is a key component of the new Highway service contracts, and this award will enable the smooth transfer to the new operating model for the Highways Service and ensure business continuity. It will reflect value for money and is lower than current costs on a like for like basis.

2. Content of report

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The Council's ca. £45m per annum contract for Highways Service delivers all aspects of highways services. The current service is provided by Ringway Jacobs (RJ) and this contract ends on 31st March 2023.
- 2.1.2 Cabinet agreed the new Highways service contracts operating model and the associated procurement strategy for the new contracts on 2nd March 2021.
- 2.1.3 On 29th June 2021 Cabinet agreed the evaluation and quality criteria that would be used to determine the selection process and outcome of the procurement exercise as well as the criteria and process for determining any potential future extensions of the contracts. This paper also sets out the proposed governance arrangements and format of how the proposed alliance for Buckinghamshire Highways would function and operate.
- 2.1.4 Because of the size and nature of the contracts, and to assist with the demands placed on the service in terms of resource, it was agreed to stagger the procurement process and carry it out in 3 parts.
 - **a Term Maintenance Contract (TMC)** comprising the routine maintenance works, the largest in terms of work and value,
 - **a Term Consultancy Contract (TCC)** comprising design, project management and client top up services,

- and finally, **Two Frameworks**, the first framework comprising 3 lots, one for Conventional Surfacing, one for Surface Dressing and Micro Surfacing and one for Minor works up to £500k. The second framework is for larger projects and works in excess of £500k.
- 2.1.5 Cabinet agreed to use a Competitive Procedure with Negotiation (CPN) under the New Engineering Contract 4 (NEC 4) suite of documents as the most appropriate mechanism for the procurement of both the Term Maintenance Contract (TMC) and the Term Consultancy Contract (TCC) and a Restricted Procurement exercise to be used for the 2 frameworks on 29th June 2021.
- 2.1.6 The project is managed by a Project Board, with representation from across the council.
- 2.1.7 The project including the new operating model, the procurement exercise, the proposed performance approach for the new Term Maintenance and Consultancy contracts and other elements have been presented and discussed at a number of the Member Highways Task and Finish group meetings. In addition, the project has also been the subject of scrutiny at 2 meetings of the Transport and Environment Community Committee (TECC) as well as a dedicated briefing session for all Council Members.

2.2 The Procurement Process

- 2.2.1 To launch the procurement exercise, a Market Engagement Day was held on 8th July 2021, to advise and explain to the potential tenderers, how the new model will operate, the procurement process and procedures that we would be using, the indicative timetable and programme and setting out what we are expecting and looking for going forward. 57 organisations attended the event.
- 2.2.2 A Selection Questionnaire (SQ) for the TMC was issued on 10th August 2021 and subsequently returned on 13th September. From the initial 7 returns received, 5 were invited to proceed to the Initial Tender stage with initial tenders issued on 21st October 2021. 1 unfortunately withdrew from the process at this point because of other commitments leaving 4 to continue. Initial tender returns were subsequently received on 28th January 2022 and following evaluation, the 2 tenderers with the highest combined quality and price score were selected and invited to progress to the next stage of the procurement process comprising participating in a series of negotiation meetings. These 2 tenderers also had submitted the 2 lowest priced documents.

- 2.2.3 All parties involved agreed that the negotiation meetings were extremely valuable and provided an insight into the future working relationships and approach to the contract. The Client team agreed that the meetings enabled them to ensure the specification and price list were robust and fit for purpose and reduced any future risk to the Council. In addition, the meetings ensured the team were able to clearly explain the Council's expectation of the new contract and how the Buckinghamshire Highways alliance and new operating model would work. It also allowed the team to highlight key elements of the service that are important to Members and stakeholders, and clearly led to improved proposals in these areas within the final submissions.
- 2.2.4 Following the conclusion of these negotiations, the remaining two tenderers were invited to submit a final tender, and these were returned on 3rd May 2022.
- 2.2.5 The submitted final tenders were evaluated in accordance with the agreed criteria to determine the preferred tenderer and a paper reporting on that evaluation and making a recommendation for award of the TMC is attached as Appendix 1 of this paper.
- 2.2.6 The project team remain confident of being on track to be able to commence all the new contracts on 1st April 2023 allowing for a minimum period of 6 months for mobilisation for the Term Maintenance Contract. This is accepted as a good minimum period, to allow a smooth and seamless transfer and ensure business continuity.
- 2.2.7 **Appendix 2** shows the overall programme with key dates and milestones along with the latest progress for the entire procurement project.

3. Legal, Procurement, Financial and HR implications

- 3.1 The paper has been shared and agreed with Legal Services, Procurement, HR and Finance Services and representatives from these areas sit on the Project Board and were involved in the negotiation sessions. Procurement and Finance have also been an integral part of the tender evaluations.
- 3.2 The estimated costs are within the current budget envelope. However, due to recent inflationary pressures, notably for essential materials, the overall contract costs are likely to increase and so there will need to be careful management of the budget. This will be further considered as part of the MTFP process.
- 3.3 The Council is of the opinion that TUPE applies and TUPE related data was issued to all tenderers.

4. Corporate implications

- 4.1 Equality. An equalities impact assessment was undertaken and is kept under review and updated as and when required.
- 4.2 Data. A data protection and security implication assessment was undertaken, to assist and inform the procurement process where necessary, and to ensure that any decisions take account of data security and GDPR requirements. These assessments are kept under review and updated as and when required.
- 4.3 To date all personal information and data that has been requested and shared with the prospective tenderers have been processed accordingly. The people information was password protected and the tenderers also had to sign confidentiality agreements prior to receiving any people information.
- 4.4 Throughout the process we will also ensure that the successful bidder complies with all relevant legislation in relation to EqlA and GDPR.

5. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

- 5.1 Significant Member engagement has taken place through a range of activities regarding the new Highways Service including:
 - The Highways Task and Finish Group. This project and the new Operating Model has been presented and debated at a number of the Highways Task and Finish group meetings.
 - The Transport, Environment and Climate Change Select Committee. The project has also been the subject of scrutiny at 2 meetings of the Transport and Environment Community Committee (TECC)
 - All Member Briefings.
- 5.2 In addition to the activities above, a further briefing session is planned for Community Board Chairmen to highlight the plans and progress with the procurement and facilitate a discussion on the role of Community Boards and opportunities with the future Highways Service.

6. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 6.1 There has been and there continues to be consultation with other service areas from across the Council who have either used the highways services contract in the past or

may have call for using it in the future. Their feedback has and is used to assist in determining what and how any new arrangements will function and operate.

- 6.2 Officers have been in contact with a number of other highways authorities from across the country and have regular meetings with neighbouring councils to glean and share information.

7. Next steps and review

- 7.1 Should the recommendation be accepted, then the necessary steps will be taken to award the Term Maintenance Contract and commence mobilisation.
- 7.2 A transition Board will be established with Member oversight to ensure the mobilisation of the new contract, complete the transfer of staff to the client team under TUPE regulations and implement service improvements.

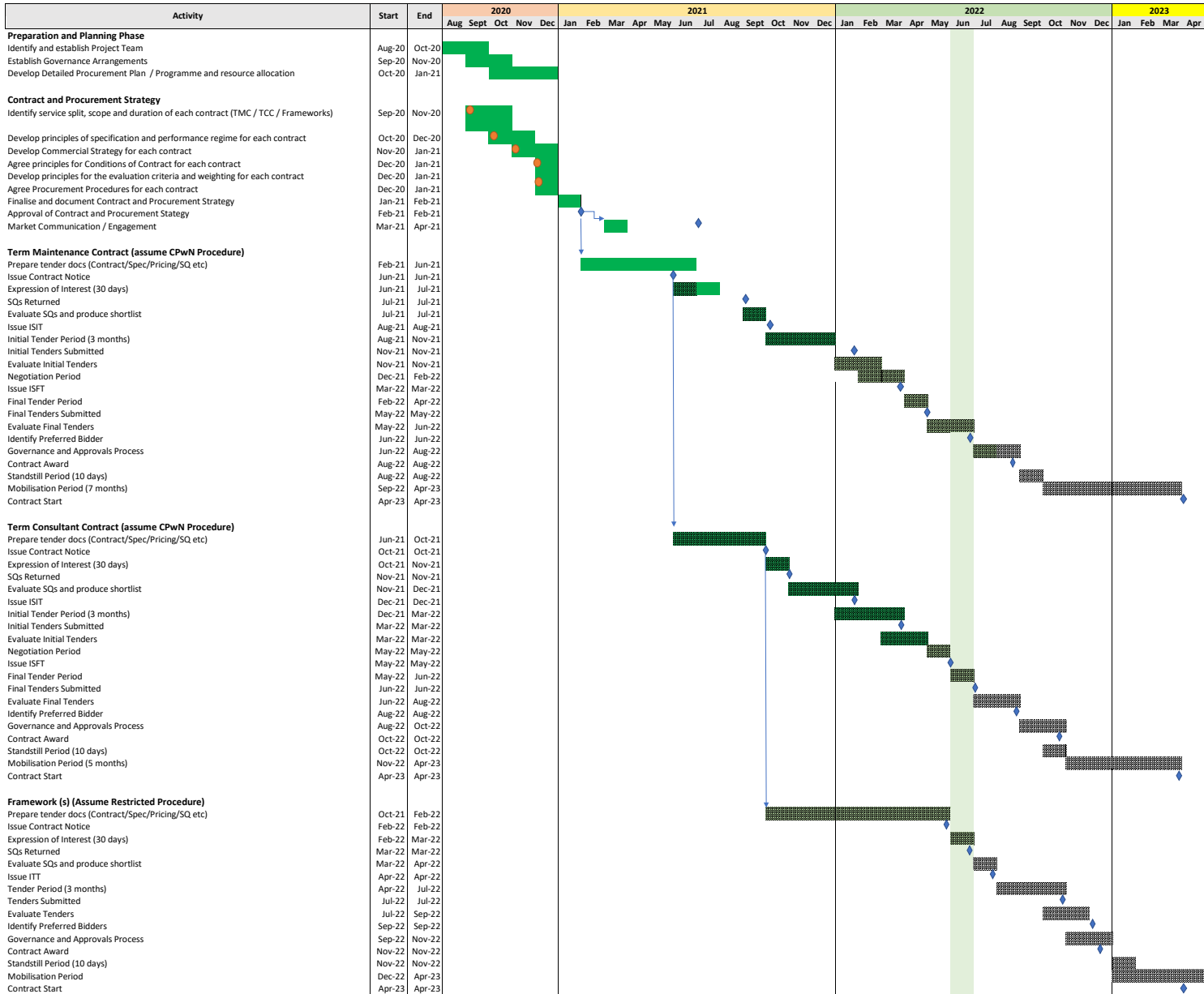
8. Background papers

- 8.1 The background paper, Appendix 1, is a confidential paper.
The other papers are the previous cabinet papers.

9. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 9.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone [01296 382343] or email [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk]

Buckinghamshire Future Highway Services Contracts - Headline Procurement Programme



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