

**SHADOW EXECUTIVE**

**TUESDAY, 3RD DECEMBER, 2019**

**Present:** Councillor Martin Tett in the Chair

Councillors K Wood (Vice-Chairman), J Chilver, A Cranmer, I Darby, T Green, C Harriss, P Hogan, A Macpherson, D Martin, N Naylor, M Shaw, W Whyte, G Williams, F Wilson, D Dhillon and C Paternoster

**Also in Attendance:**

Councillors Stuchbury

**1 Apologies**

The Leader advised the Shadow Executive that they were still in Purdah due to the General Election. Mr Tett stated that for the Shadow Authority, it still remained business as usual, which is formal meetings were continuing. However he asked members to ensure that any comments made during discussions related directly to the agenda items and were not seen as, or could be perceived to be, political in nature.

Apologies had been received from S Bowles with C Paternoster deputising. Apologies had also been received from A Small, Assistant Chief Executive AVDC and R Shimmin, Chief Executive Buckinghamshire Council.

**2 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

**3 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**RESOLVED:** The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**4 Question Time**

The Leader advised that due to Purdah rules it would be inappropriate to respond publically to the question received by Councillor Robin Stuchbury. The advice given from the Monitoring Officer was to respond to the questions in written form only and it was agreed that these would be circulated to R Stuchbury following the meeting and would be published along with the minutes of the meeting.

**ACTION: Democratic Services**

## **5 Forward Plan (28 Day Notice)**

Members considered the 28 Day Notice of executive decisions due to be taken.

The Leader advised that the forward plan was available for members of the public to review online and that it was regularly updated.

**RESOLVED: The Shadow Executive NOTED the forward plan.**

## **6 Armed Forces Protocol**

The item was deferred to the next meeting in order for the Armed Forces Champion to be able to attend the meeting.

## **7 Keeping it Local - Community Boards**

Members received a report which outlined the proposed approach in the set-up of the new Community Boards following a 10 week consultation feedback. It was highlighted that the community boards was a key deliverable of the Executive for the new authority.

It was highlighted that the proposal was for 16 community boards and this reflected feedback received as part of the consultation and fitted with community areas within reflective maps of where they work together. Areas of best practice had been used within the design and staff resource was also built in.

Members praised the report and thanked officers and members that had worked on the development of the boards and those that had taken part in the consultation. The boards were seen as an exciting part of the new authority and would be a work in progress that would be reviewed moving forward.

Some concerns were raised that only Buckinghamshire Council members could be voting members and that the Chairman would be appointed by the Portfolio Holder and a proposal was put forward to amend to the Chairman to be elected by the Community Board members and that all members of the board could vote. The amendment was not agreed. It was also noted that the Chairman of a board could allow indicative votes if required.

It was raised that the Local Infrastructure Fund Allocations 2020/21 had been based on the number of houses in existing local plans and that parish boundaries needed to be looked at in order to identify the correct housing numbers for a particular community board area. Ms Turnbull agreed to review.

**ACTION:Ms Turnbull**

It was highlighted that localism was not just about Community Board but a wide range of solution which included devolution to town and parish councils, resident's community access points and large amounts of money being devolved to make a difference in local communities. It was also highlighted that communication going forward was key and the need to encourage resident participation. It was stated that a communications plan was in place and community board would also be a part of the Member Induction programme in particular Chairman's training.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. To agree to set up 16 community boards, with terms of reference as set out in Appendix 2, and boundaries as set out in Appendix 4.**
- 2. To agree to allocate funding to community board areas to support local projects in accordance with the funding framework as set out in Appendix 3. In 2020/21 there will be three funding streams:**
  - i. Community Area Priorities Fund**

- ii. Health & Wellbeing Fund (one year only)
  - iii. Local Infrastructure Fund
3. To agree to give delegated authority to the portfolio holder for localism to appoint community board chairmen, normally the term of office shall be two years.

To agree to review the performance of community boards annually, following the production of annual reports by each board, and to review boundaries in light of any future changes in electoral divisions.

## **8 Local Enterprise Partnerships Boundary Overlaps**

Members were asked to consider a report which made recommendations about the new authority's membership of a Local Enterprise Partnership, addressing the overlap of membership in the Buckinghamshire area between the Buckinghamshire LEP (BLEP) and the South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP).

It was highlighted that all five sovereign authorities were currently members of BLEP and Aylesbury Vale was also a member of SEMLEP. As per the structural change orders, as AVDC were a current member of SEMLEP, on 1st April 2020, this would transfer over and Buckinghamshire Council would become a member. This was the same for BLEP, which meant the new authority would be a member of two LEPs and the overlap needed to be addressed.

It was asked what impact the suggested change would have on any current funding bids for SEMLEP funding. It was agreed that AVDC would continue to seek funding from SEMLEP whilst it remained a member. It was questioned if whether the Bucks LEP was 'too small' to be viable. It was confirmed that the Bucks LEP was in the top quartile for success as evaluated by central government. Nevertheless, there was an option to look at merging with other LEPs in the future. It was confirmed that AVDC would be removed from SEMLEP in February.

### **RESOLVED:**

**Option 1 is the preferred option as this gives the new Buckinghamshire Council a stronger link into central government through the BLEP. This will ensure that funding levered by BLEP will be spent wholly in Buckinghamshire rather than shared amongst a wider area.**

## **9 New Customer Service Standards**

Members were asked to consider a report that sought approval for the proposed, new set of Customer Service Standards and Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy to be adopted by Buckinghamshire Council. The policy also proposed that the ownership fell within the remit of the Monitoring Officer.

The standards had been created using best practice across all five existing councils and there would be a heavy focus on staff training. Complaints would have one single standardised process and independent checks would be implemented as part of stage 2 of the process in the hope that it would lead to quicker resolutions. Adults and Children's Services also had separate complaint processes and best practice would be implemented across them both.

Members were in support of the recommendations in the report and welcomed the uniformed approach. It was raised that training staff would be key, especially for those that would deal with more complex queries.

**RESOLVED:**

**That Formal Shadow Executive approves for the proposed, new Customer Service Standards and Feedback, Compliments and Complaints Policy as set out in the report.**

**10 Programme Update**

An update was provided to Members on the progress being made with the programme that was establishing the new unitary Buckinghamshire Council. The following points were highlighted.

- Tier two appointments had been made with a number already in post and getting involved in the delivery of the programme.
- The new branding had been agreed and a branding strategy was in development.
- The council tax reduction scheme had been agreed
- The consultation on the budget and priorities for the new council had taken place with over 2600 responses.
- New payscales and terms and conditions for the new authority had been agreed and the majority of staff would be TUPE'd over.
- The new Buckinghamshire Growth Board had had its first meeting.
- The 128 critical must haves had been reduced to 116 as a number of areas for joined up working had been identified. There were a high number of must haves for March and these were being reviewed to see if they could be brought forward.
- Regular meetings with the MHCLG were in place to give assurances the programme was on track and the implementation budget was also on track.
- There would be a detailed communications plan rolled out after Christmas to promote the new council.

Members questioned the exact number of must haves completed and R Goodes agreed to confirm via email following the meeting.

**ACTION: R Goodes**

Communication was raised as an important part of the transition into the new council. The PMO were also evaluating if an additional meeting on the Shadow Executive would be needed in March in order to take the high number of decisions required.

**RESOLVED:**

**The Shadow Executive NOTED the update report.**

**11 Values and Behaviours**

Members were asked to consider a report that sought approval of the revised organisational values and behaviours for Buckinghamshire Council. These had evolved from discussions that commenced over the summer as part of stakeholder engagement and have been developed further in response to earlier feedback.

It was recommended that the new Organisational Values for Buckinghamshire Council were:

- Proud
- Ambitious
- Collaborative
- Trustworthy

The values spelt an acronym PACT and would be used so that they would be easy to remember.

The Leader highlighted his personal view that although there had been a lot of good work in the development of the values there was a significant gap in not including a

value based on customer focus and therefore could not support the proposal and hoped that the new council would review the values.

Some members highlighted that in their opinion all the values had a strong element of customer focus within them. There was also a separate diagram within the report which showed that the customer would be the heart of everything the council did. The Leader noted this, but commented that the diagram was not 'the values' and that in his opinion there remained insufficient focus on all those that the council was there to provide services to.

Some members felt that the framework graphic could be more succinct. It was also suggested that there should not be multi logo devices e.g. lanyards.

There was a suggestion to change the wording of the recommendation to say 'new organisational and customer centred values are'. A vote was taken and the amendment was not agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

**It was agreed, with two members voting against, that the new Organisational Values for Buckinghamshire Council are**

- **Proud**
- **Ambitious**
- **Collaborative**
- **Trustworthy**

The date of the next meeting was 7 January 2020.

**12 Exclusion of the public**

Not required.

**13 Confidential Minutes**

**RESOLVED: The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 12 November were AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.**

Chairman at the meeting on  
Tuesday, 3 December 2019

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**Shadow Executive  
3 December 2019  
Members Questions**

Cllr Stuchbury

**Question**

**The future of democratic processes**

With the launch of another General Election campaign, the Electoral Services teams in our four District Councils are once again working very hard - and we should all take this chance to recognise the amazing work that they do. They have a busy six months ahead, with elections to the new unitary authority and parish councils next May, plus the election of the Police and Crimes Commissioner at the same time. By then, the District Councils will have ceased to exist and there will no longer be any reason to divide our 5 parliamentary constituencies and 149 divisions up between these four offices.

How does the Shadow Executive expect the electoral services function in Buckinghamshire to be structured after May 2020 and what steps are they taking to ensure Buckinghamshire residents will continue to have full access to the services they need to express their democratic voice in future elections and by-elections?

**Response**

All staff in the five councils will transfer to the new council in their current roles. As senior managers are appointed, they will work with teams to design their future operating models. In the case of electoral services, a key priority for the next six months is to ensure continuity so that the teams are able to support the successful delivery of the May elections. The individual electoral services teams are already working together very effectively to achieve this.

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