

SHADOW EXECUTIVE

Date: Tuesday, 18th February, 2020
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: The Oculus, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Gatehouse Road,
HP19 8FF - Aylesbury

Membership: Councillors: M Tett (Chairman), K Wood (Vice-Chairman), S Bowles, B Chapple OBE, J Chilver, A Cranmer, I Darby, T Green, C Harriss, P Hogan, A Macpherson, D Martin, N Naylor, M Shaw, W Whyte, G Williams and F Wilson

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AGENDA

No	Item	Page No
1.	Apologies	
2.	Minutes	3 - 10
	To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020.	
3.	Declarations of interest	
4.	Question Time	
5.	Forward Plan (28 Day Notice)	11 - 22
6.	Budget Scrutiny 2020 Report	23 - 78
7.	Final Budget 2020/ 2021	To Follow
8.	Corporate Plan	To Follow
9.	Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools Funding 2020-21	To Follow

10.	Pay Policy Statement	79 - 86
11.	Final Draft Constitution	To Follow
12.	Members Allowances	87 - 116
13.	VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Continuing Grants	To Follow
14.	Spending Protocol	To Follow
	14a Westhorpe Globe Park (Spending Protocol)	117 - 126
	14b Use of S106 Accrued Funds for Affordable Housing in Wycombe (Spending Protocol)	127 - 130
	14c HQube/Bellfield/Ashwells (Spending Protocol)	To Follow
	14d Cressex Island (Spending Protocol)	To Follow
15.	Waste collections arrangements for the South of the county	To Follow
16.	Exclusion of Press and Public	
	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 the information)	
17.	Use of S106 Accrued Funds for Affordable Housing in Wycombe (Spending Protocol)	131 - 136
18.	HQube/Bellfield/Ashwells (Spending Protocol)	To Follow
19.	Cressex Island (Spending Protocol)	To Follow
20.	Waste collections arrangements for the South of the county – Evaluation of tenders	To Follow
21.	Date of next meeting	
	10 March 2020.	

SHADOW EXECUTIVE

TUESDAY, 28TH JANUARY, 2020

Present: Councillor Martin Tett in the Chair

Councillors K Wood (Vice-Chairman), S Bowles, B Chapple OBE, J Chilver, A Cranmer, I Darby, T Green, C Harriss, P Hogan, A Macpherson, D Martin, N Naylor, M Shaw, W Whyte and G Williams

Also in Attendance:

Councillor R Stuchbury

Apologies: F Wilson

1 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr F Wilson. Cllr L Walsh attended as deputy.

2 Minutes

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 7 January were AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of interest

Cllr A Macpherson declared that she was a paid board member of The Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust and under advice from the Monitoring Officer would withdraw from item 11.

4 Question Time

Question- Cllr R Stuchbury

The Shadow Executive, the body overseeing transition of Local Government in Bucks, has now issued initial budget plans for Buckinghamshire Council over the next three years (2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23). The full plans can be viewed [here](#):

Does the Shadow Executive recognise these figures below taken from their own published accounts forming part of the precept for the new Buckinghamshire Council, and do they believe the proposed reduction in spending will make it difficult for the new Buckinghamshire Council to meet its obligations in all those areas of service delivery referred to in the attached:

- Overall spending on council services in 2020/21 will be £374 Million, the same as in 2018/19
- Capital expenditure (investment in infrastructure etc) will be £163 Million, 25% lower than in 2018/19
- Capital expenditure in 2022/23 will be 40% lower than in 2018/19
- Proposed cuts of £11 Million in placements of Children in Care between 2020 and 2023

- Proposed cuts of nearly £19 Million in SEND and Early Help services between 2020 and 2023
- Capital investment in strategic road maintenance will be £15 Million in each of the next 3 years, which is £1 Million/year less than previously planned

Response – Cllr M Tett

Looking at how we're spending council money can be complicated and confusing when you don't look at the whole picture.

At a time when all local councils are facing financial challenges the proposed budget for Buckinghamshire Council aims to address the unavoidable cost pressures the council faces with the growing costs of looking after our elderly and most vulnerable children and young people.

Our plans for 2020 therefore propose much needed additional funding in these areas - £9.5m to care for our older people and adults with learning disabilities and difficulties (£23.2m by 2022/23) and £4.2m to protect our vulnerable young people and children (£6.9m by 2022/23).

We've proposed a substantial capital investment programme of £163m for 2020/21 which includes an additional £4m to fix the county's roads and £2.3m to clear blocked gullies to help prevent road flooding issues in the future which we know are really important issues for residents.

Over the next 3 years we'll be investing £494m which will see £111m to improve and enhance our town centres in Aylesbury and Wycombe and £69m for maintaining and improving our roads, street lights, pavements, and bridges. A further £62m will be invested in new roads in Princes Risborough, Abbey Barn (High Wycombe) and Aylesbury. Some £107m is earmarked for new and existing schools and school places, including the new Kingsbrook Secondary School. And a further £18.3m has been set aside to support housing and homelessness including affordable housing action plans and disabled facilities grants.

It's difficult to compare capital spend from one year to the next. This type of investment goes up and down depending on the major projects at the time, based on the needs of our services. For example, one year there could be a higher capital spend due to building a new school, which isn't something the council would need to do every year – a bit like buying a car!

The proposed day to day budget of £435m for Buckinghamshire Council brings together all the current council budgets. These budgets have naturally increased over the last couple of years due to rising costs of living alongside the growing need for some of our most complex and costly services such as looking after our most vulnerable elderly and young people. This has been partly funded by council tax alongside grants and other funding to make sure we are able to protect the frontline services that our residents rely on every day.

It's no secret that councils across the country continue to face financial challenges and there continues to be significant uncertainty on the level of funding for local councils. We are always working to make best use of council tax money and deliver the right services in the best way for our residents - and we'll continue to do this in the new council. In particular we have focused our efforts in the last few years on increasing the use of our own foster carers and children's homes to reduce the need for costly external placements – which we know is much better for our children.

Similarly, the level of service provided by the council on important services to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities hasn't reduced and in fact has been enhanced through a review of how the service is provided. We are working closely with schools to help them meet pupils' needs more quickly and effectively at school as part of our early intervention programme.

Protecting our vulnerable is and will continue to be our top priority and I'm confident that as a new council we'll be able to meet these challenges head on and improve services for our residents, communities and businesses."

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 Treasury Management Strategy

Cllr K Wood introduced the item and stated that the strategy was compulsory for all local authorities and conformed to statutory requirements.

Mr R Ambrose, Section 151 Officer and Mr M Preston, Head of Finance - Investments and Projects gave an overview of the report and highlighted the following points in response to questions raised by members:

- Interest rates had been increased by the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and other options were being considered for future borrowing.
- The total combined borrowing figure for all Buckinghamshire local authorities was £330.7 million with combined investments of £192.6 million.
- The authorised limit for gross borrowing was £630 million. The limit could not be exceeded without approval from the shadow authority. The budget was calculated based on the current borrowing levels, current borrowing plans and an allowance for future budget requirements. It was highlighted that the operational boundary was a more accurate estimation of what was expected to be borrowed.
- Treasury Management advisors would provide advice and guidance over investments.
- The current five existing authorities followed similar institutions and policies regarding cash investments.
- A large percentage of five year debt had matured. The borrowing rates continued to remain low despite the increase in interest from the PWLB.
- The investments in the property fund were not counted as capital investment. This was a safe fund which helped to diversify the investment portfolio. The total investment figure across the Buckinghamshire authorities was £21.2 million.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive CONSIDERED and APPROVED the draft Treasury Management Strategy for the new Council.

7 Revenues and Benefits Policies and Schemes

Cllr Wood, Mr Ambrose, Section 151 Officer and Mr A Green Revenues and Benefits Service Manager provided an introduction to the item. An overview was given of the scheme as an amalgamation of the existing policies used by the district councils to ensure safe and legal operations as of 1 April 2020. It was highlighted that the first two recommendations as laid out in the report were the most significant. The recommendations were explained in detail for context and the following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members:

- Housing benefits would be automatically calculated on 1 April 2020 and residents in receipt of the benefit would be notified of their calculation for the financial year.
- Funding for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) was provided from central government and dispersed via local government. The agreement of the updated policy would have no effect on the application or allocation process for residents.
- The policy around Business Relief had taken into consideration changes to the national government policy. All elements listed within the policy would be in addition to these changes.
- The introduction of Local Access Points would promote the various benefit schemes available to residents and how they could be accessed. The information around available schemes was also made known to the public via information bills.
- The council tax discretionary policy was reviewed on a case by case basis by officers.
- It was unknown how much funding for DHPs would be allocated in the next financial year. The aim of officers was to delegate the full amount of allocated funding.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive AGREED:

1. **To recommend to the Shadow Authority that effective from 1 April 2020, 100% of all income from War Disablement or War Widows Pension be disregarded when calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit in line with the resolution at Appendix A.**
2. **To adopt the Discretionary Housing Payments & Discretionary Award Policy set out at Appendix B & B(ii).**
3. **To adopt the attached Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy at Appendix C.**
4. **To adopt the Business Rates Revaluation Support Scheme set out at Appendix D.**
5. **To adopt the Business Rates Hardship Relief Policy set out at Appendix E.**
6. **To adopt the Local Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy set out at Appendix F.**

8 Learning Disability Strategy

Cllr Macpherson, Cllr W Whyte and Ms J Bowie, Service Director for Integrated Commissioning provided an introduction to the item and gave an overview of the strategy. It was emphasised that the strategy focused on an important and fast growing group of people and that it was of high importance that the model of service did not become outdated. The detailed implementation plan was in place and had been developed using engagement events. The following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members:

- The cohort was growing rapidly in line with the demographic growth area. The death rate in older people was lower than in other parts of the country. The pattern needed to be researched and explored further.
- Carers had been involved with devising the strategy to promote enablement. Other existing strategies had been referred to in order to avoid duplication of services.
- The budgetary constraints of provisions for learning disabilities needed to be communicated to central government to ensure that the essential services could continue to be provided.
- The strategy provided an opportunity to make better use of the current resources held.
- The strategy strongly endorsed the smooth transition of children to adult services.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive AGREED the Adults with Learning Disabilities Strategy.

9 Capital Investment Strategy

Cllr Wood, Mr Ambrose, Section 151 Officer and Mr Preston, Head of Finance - Investments and Projects introduced the item and provided members with an overview of the strategy. The

strategy was developed in line with compulsory guidelines and highlighted the strategic approach to capital investment with a focus on restructure and development opportunities for the new council.

It was highlighted that with the current climate and increases from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) there would be a decrease in opportunities for pure investment but the strategy considered alternative borrowing opportunities that would come into play at an appropriate time. The following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members:

- Alternative loan opportunities would be considered if they were of higher value than the current PLWB rate. Available market opportunities would be low therefore this would not be a key focus in the initial stages of the new council. The strategic approach would be regularly reviewed to explore potential opportunities.
- A sub analysis would be provided on property investments used to generate income in order to provide more insight into the property portfolio and avoid any misunderstanding from members or residents.
- There was a significant capital programme that included various projects at different stages of development and progress. The proposed strategy would ensure that a consistent approach was used going forwards into the new council.
- Sustainability targets were included in the strategy.
- Different projects received funding from different sources. Therefore certain projects would need to undergo separate scrutiny processes. The proposed governance arrangements took into account the growth board that would focus on significant regeneration schemes.
- Members were pleased that regeneration featured in the strategy. This would allow derelict properties to be renovated and put to good use.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive AGREED:

- 1. To CONSIDER and APPROVE the Capital and Investment Strategy.**
- 2. To APPROVE the MRP Policy set out in Section 7.**

10 All Age Mental Health Strategy

Cllr W Whyte, Cllr Macpherson and Ms Bowie, Service Director for Integrated Commissioning provided an introduction to the item and gave an overview of the strategy. National statistics around mental health were highlighted to provide context for the importance of ensuring correct provision of services. The strategy reflected the national standards and would combine two previous strategies to produce a four year plan that included children to adopt an “all age” approach. Extensive consultation had taken place which had included workshops and conferences.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive AGREED the All Age Mental Health Strategy.

11 A Proposed Single Housing Enforcement, Improvement Grants and Adaptations Approach for Buckinghamshire

Cllr I Darby and Ms A Starsmore, Private Sector Housing Team Leader introduced the item and highlighted that the aim of the paper was to streamline housing enforcement, improvement and adaptation policies from District Councils. It was essential that all items were in place by vesting day.

The private sector was currently a larger housing association than the public sector, which emphasised the importance of implementing consistent enforcement to ensure the protection of vulnerable people in that environment. A significant exercise had been carried out in Wycombe to calculate the fees as set out in the report. The following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members:

- The policy had been designed with Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care services in mind.
- Grants were offered to carry out necessary adaptations to properties to aid a timely discharge from hospital.
- Grants would be provided to fund adaptations as a preventative measure to avoid hospitalisation. There would be a benefit of moving into a unitary authority through closer working between professionals.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive AGREED:

1. **A single Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy for the new Authority to be adopted for vesting day (in addition to the proposed overarching Regulatory Enforcement Policy) (see Appendix A)**
2. **HMO licence fees and housing enforcement charges for the new Authority to be harmonised for vesting day adopting the model currently used by Wycombe District Council (see Appendix B)**
3. **A single Housing Improvement and Adaptations Policy for the new Authority to be adopted for vesting day (see Appendix C)**
4. **A decision for the new Authority to remove the separate grant offerings currently provided by Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council for measures funded by them separately and outside of the proposed harmonised Housing Improvement and Adaptations Policy (see Appendix D).**

12 Spend Protocol - High Wycombe New Cemetery

Cllr Darby and Mr N Dicker, Head of Housing, Environment and Community Standards introduced the item and provided an overview of the plans already advanced by Wycombe District Council to create a new cemetery in Hazlemere. Members were asked to endorse the existing plan and release funds in order to begin building work. Planning permission had already been obtained. The following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members:

- The need for a new cemetery was now critical due to full capacity and had been a priority for eight years.
- A designated area for children and babies would be the first to be laid out in the new cemetery.
- The lifespan of the cemetery before the process would have to be repeated would be 25 years.

RESOLVED: The Shadow Executive AGREED:

1. **To note the content of this report.**
2. **That the Shadow Executive:**
 - (a) **Consents to a project budget increase of £253,210.**
 - (b) **Consents to the release other project funds of £389,790.**
 - (c) **Consents to the grant of delegated authority to enter into a build contract for the project.**
 - (d) **Consents that the £50,000 annual maintenance cost of the new facility will be contained within the Special Expenses Reserve (SER) precept.**
3. **To note that this matter is also being reported to Wycombe District Council's Cabinet on February 3rd 2020.**

13 Programme Update

Mr R Goodes, Programme Manager presented an update on the current progress of the unitary plan as set out in the report. Assurance was given that the plan would be delivered by vesting day, but the level of work required by officers could not be underestimated. The following points were highlighted in response to questions raised by members:

- It was an unsettling time for staff and a strong focus needed to be placed on staff communication, particularly staff members currently based at HQ.
- It was crucial that effective communication was used with members of the public with an emphasis on the expected changes.
- The election process and timings was yet to be finalised. Parish councils would be contacted with information once the process was in place.
- There remained a lot of work still to be delivered prior to vesting day. However there were no particular causes for concern and the programme plan and delivery was monitored regularly.
- Processes were initiated to ensure that the Corporate and Service Director vacant posts were filled by vesting day. In instances where posts were not filled, alternative arrangements would be implemented to support staff effectively.

RESOLVED: Shadow Executive NOTED the update.

14 Exclusion of the public

Exclusion of the public was not required.

15 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED: The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7 January were AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

16 Date of next meeting

18 February 2020, The Oculus, AVDC

Duration of the meeting: 10.03 - 11.40 am

Chairman at the meeting on
Tuesday, 28 January 2020

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**Shadow Authority
For delivering the Buckinghamshire Council**

**THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS) (MEETINGS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (ENGLAND)
REGULATIONS 2012**

**SHADOW EXECUTIVE
28 Day Notice**

This is a notice of an intention to make a key decision on behalf of the Shadow Authority for the 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 5 working-days before the date of the Shadow Executive meeting and will be available via the [Shadow Authority website](#)

Y = key decision *All reports will be open unless specified otherwise

Report title & summary	Key	Decision maker	*Private report (Y/N) and reason private	Lead Member / Officer(s) & Contact Officer(s)
TUESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2020				
Budget Scrutiny 2020 Report For the Shadow Executive to consider the Budget Scrutiny report	N	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor John Gladwin Kelly Sutherland Contact Officer(s): Kelly Sutherland

<p>Final Budget 2020/2021 Consideration of the final draft budget 2020/2021 for recommendation to the Shadow Authority.</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Richard Ambrose</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Richard Ambrose</p>
<p>Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools Funding 2020-21 To seek approval from the Shadow Executive for the proposed local schools funding formula and agreement to other Dedicated Schools Grant funded budgets</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Anita Cranmer Richard Ambrose</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Liz Williams</p>
<p>VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Continuing Grants To consider a report on VCS continuing grants</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Isobel Darby Elaine Jewell</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Elaine Jewell</p>
<p>Final Draft Constitution To recommend the draft constitution to the Shadow Authority</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Catherine Whitehead</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Catherine Whitehead</p>

Members Allowances Consideration of Members Allowances	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Catherine Whitehead Contact Officer(s): Mathew Bloxham
Corporate Plan To consider the final draft of the corporate plan	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Sophie Payne Contact Officer(s): Sophie Payne
Pay Policy Statement To consider a report on the pay policy statement	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Sarah Murphy-Brookman Contact Officer(s): Sarah Murphy-Brookman
Waste collections arrangements for the South of the county – Evaluation of tenders To consider a report on waste collections arrangements for the South of the County	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (para 3)	Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Bill Chapple OBE Martin Dickman Contact Officer(s): Chris Marchant

<p>Use of S106 Accrued Funds for Affordable Housing in Wycombe (Spending Protocol) To consider a report on use of S106 accrued funds for affordable housing in Wycombe</p>	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (para 3)	<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Nick Naylor Nigel Dicker</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Brian Daly</p>
<p>Westhorpe Globe Park (Spending Protocol) To consider a spending protocol report on Westhorpe Globe Park</p>	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (para 3)	<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Mark Shaw Rob Smith</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Ulrika Diallo</p>
<p>Spending Protocol Items referred to the s151 officer from the five existing councils under the Spending Protocol and referred to the Shadow Executive in accordance with the protocol.</p>	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (para 3)	<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Richard Ambrose</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Richard Ambrose</p>
<p>Programme Update Highlight report from the Programme Management Office covering the Programme update, Budget and Risk.</p>	N	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Rachael Shimmin</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Roger Goodes</p>

MONDAY 2 MARCH 2020

<p>Corporate Director Resources Appointment To consider a report on the Corporate Director Resources appointment</p>	<p align="center">Y</p>	<p align="center">Senior Appointments Sub Committee</p>	<p>Part exempt <i>(para 1, 3)</i></p>	<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett, Councillor Katrina Wood Rachael Shimmin</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Nicola Houwayek</p>
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TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2020

<p>Town and Parish Charter To consider the proposed charter and associated support required for delivery</p>	<p align="center">Y</p>	<p align="center">Shadow Executive</p>		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Sara Turnbull</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Sara Turnbull</p>
<p>Overarching Health & Safety Policy To consider the Health and Safety policy</p>	<p align="center">Y</p>	<p align="center">Shadow Executive</p>		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Katrina Wood John Reed</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): John Reed</p>
<p>Equalities Approach and Policy To consider a report on equalities approach and policy</p>	<p align="center">Y</p>	<p align="center">Shadow Executive</p>		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Catherine Whitehead</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Natalie Donhou-Morley</p>

<p>Modern Day Slavery Statement To consider a report on the modern day slavery statement</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Isobel Darby Gill Quinton</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Katie Galvin</p>
<p>Emergency Plan To consider the emergency plan</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Ben Coakley</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Ben Coakley</p>
<p>Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) – Policy and Procedural Guidance A report seeking approval for Buckinghamshire Council’s policy and procedural guidance on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 to ensure compliance with legal requirements when carrying out any covert surveillance</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Joanna Swift</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Joanna Swift</p>
<p>Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy To consider a report on the regulatory services enforcement policy</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Isobel Darby Nigel Dicker</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Nigel Dicker</p>

Financial Strategy To consider the financial strategy	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Katrina Wood Richard Ambrose Contact Officer(s): Richard Ambrose
Finance Policies To consider a report on finance policies	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Katrina Wood Richard Ambrose Contact Officer(s): Elspeth O'Neill
Risk Strategy To consider a report on the risk strategy	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Katrina Wood Maggie Gibb Contact Officer(s): Maggie Gibb
Carers Strategy To consider a report on the carer's strategy	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Angela Macpherson Jane Bowie Contact Officer(s): Elaina Quesada

<p>Managing the Care Market: Proposal for Fee Increases To consider a report on a proposal for fee increases</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Angela Macpherson Gill Quinton</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Matilda Moss</p>
<p>Prevention and Befriending Grants To consider a report on Prevention Grants</p>	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Angela Macpherson Jane Bowie</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Marie-Claire Mickiewicz</p>
<p>Registered Providers Charging Arrangements To consider a report on registered providers charging arrangements</p>	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (<i>para 3</i>)	<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Isobel Darby Michael Veryard</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Michael Veryard</p>
<p>MK Strategy 2050 To consider a report on the MK Strategy 2050</p>	Y	Shadow Executive		<p>Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Nick Naylor Ian Thompson</p> <p>Contact Officer(s): Sally Ovens</p>

Street Naming & Numbering Policy To consider a report on the street naming and numbering policy	Y	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Katrina Wood Neil Gibson Contact Officer(s): Jaqueline Williams
Abbey Barn Lane Realignment (ABLR) Decision to Award NEC 4 Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) Contract	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (para 3)	Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Mark Shaw Rob Smith Contact Officer(s): Robin Smith
Spending Protocol Items referred to the s151 officer from the five existing councils under the Spending Protocol and referred to the Shadow Executive in accordance with the protocol.	Y	Shadow Executive	Part exempt (para 3)	Lead Member / Officer(s): Richard Ambrose Contact Officer(s): Richard Ambrose
Programme Update Highlight report from the Programme Management Office covering the Programme update, Budget and Risk.	N	Shadow Executive		Lead Member / Officer(s): Councillor Martin Tett Rachael Shimmin Contact Officer(s): Roger Goodes

The Shadow Authority Constitution defines a 'key' decision as any decision taken in relation to a function that is the responsibility of the Shadow Executive and which is likely to:-

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.”

In determining the meaning of “significant” for these purposes the Shadow Authority will have regard to any guidance for the time being issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act and the value of any decision under consideration (e.g. £1 million or above could be regarded as significant but this has to be considered in the context of the particular decision).

As a matter of good practice, this notice may also include other items, in addition to key decisions, that are to be considered by the Shadow Executive.

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 5 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 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.

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Report for:	Shadow Executive
Meeting Date:	18th February 2020

Title of Report:	Budget Scrutiny 2020 – Report of the Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group
Shadow Portfolio Holder	Cllr Martin Tett, Leader of the Shadow Executive
Responsible Members	Cllr Chris Whitehead and Cllr Alex Collingwood
Report Author Officer Contact:	Kelly Sutherland, Committee & Governance Manager ksutherland@buckscc.gov.uk
Recommendations:	<p>The Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group recommend that:</p> <p>1a) There should be a consistent approach to how inflation and salary increases are applied across the budget.</p> <p>b) Where budgets include monies released from a reserve, this should be clearly noted in a separate budget line.</p> <p>c) Further work should be undertaken on Years 2 & 3 of the MTFP to ensure the robustness of the budgets in light of a number of external factors which are outside of the Council’s control.</p> <p>2) The Corporate Plan for Buckinghamshire Council should include a stronger commitment to Climate Change, with the aim of the Council being net Carbon Neutral by 2035(subject to consideration of the results of the Council’s Carbon Audit) and the County generally by 2050. This commitment should be explicit and transparent and will require strong political leadership to ensure delivery.</p> <p>3) The budget should include specific budget lines which demonstrate how it will deliver the Council being net Carbon Neutral by 2035.</p> <p>4) A specific Portfolio and Portfolio Holder should be nominated to be responsible for driving the Climate Change & Carbon Neutral agenda forward across Buckinghamshire Council and to take a leading role in championing this across the County and beyond.</p> <p>5) An overall recruitment and workforce strategy for Buckinghamshire Council as a whole should be developed as a priority.</p> <p>6) A strategy to reduce the number of agency staff should also be prioritised. The delivery & performance of this strategy should be monitored regularly.</p>

- 7) Buckinghamshire Council should ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver existing savings plans and an ambitious capital programme, as well as managing far-reaching service transformation.**
- 8) Buckinghamshire Council should invest in Key Worker Housing as a priority, to aid recruitment, reduce staff turnover and unlock additional skills capacity in the County.**
- 9) A robust centralised management system is put in place to manage all Developer Contributions across the County, including CIL, S106 and S278 monies which are so integral to successful delivery of the Capital programme.**
- 10) Risks around funding bids from Housing Infrastructure Fund and other government bodies are acknowledged and implications on cash flow/borrowing/interest and the timing of building projects should be clearly identified.**
- 11) Capital programme should be divided into those schemes which are fully funded, with deliverable business cases and those that are more aspirational, in order to give members and residents a clearer understanding of the programme. This detail should be included in the final budget.**
- 12) A detailed breakdown of the funding for each Community Board should be included in the final budget.**
- 13) Responsibility for Community Boards and the associated budgets should sit with the Communities Portfolio to drive Localism forward and have visibility of community grants and support in one place.**
- 14) Increased funding for feasibility work in years 2 & 3 should be investigated to reflect the quantum of Capital projects (£493m over 3 years)**
- 15) The balance of the Unitary Implementation transition fund should be added to the £14m transformation pot.**
- 16) Further assessment should be made during 2020-21 as to whether the £14m Transformation Pot will be sufficient to enable the required service transformation over the 3 year period of the MTFP.**
- 17) As soon as plans are finalised for the priority order of service transformation, these should be shared with all staff to enable them to understand the implications for them as individuals over the next 3 years.**
- 18) A robust and clearly understood approach to risk management be adopted by Buckinghamshire Council as a priority.**

19) The option of the Home to School Transport team being integrated in the Education service and the Client Transport team being integrated in Adult Social Care, to realise savings and improve outcomes for residents should be explored.

20) A management reporting system should be established which enables a true comparison of costs and key performance indicators, in particular the quality of service, between in-house and contracted services on a like-for-like basis to support Buckinghamshire Council's future decision-making.

21) Priority should be given to the recruitment of experienced staff to support the Planning service in dealing with increased demand and Members would recommend that a 'Grow your Own' programme such as those in Social Care should be investigated.

22) Additional funding should be set aside for the Local Plan reserve as £3m over the next three years is likely to be inadequate.

23) When the Planning Service is reviewed, adequate resources should be allocated to enable an effective and timely response to planning enforcement issues.

24) Development of a parking strategy, including how to increase capacity, should be a matter of priority for Buckinghamshire Council after the elections in May 2020.

25) A review should be undertaken ahead of the parking enforcement procurement, to investigate how the Council's on street and off street parking enforcement can be integrated to deliver an improved service and to review future requirements in light of the new parking strategy, to ensure quality service delivery and value for money.

26) During 2020-21, as Community Access Points are reviewed, consideration should be given to their future funding.

27) There should be continued investment in the Social Work Academy, which utilises the apprenticeship levy and will provide more stability in the Adult Social Care workforce and positive outcomes for clients.

28) There should be further investment in the ASYE Academy to enable Children's Services to recruit and retain more qualified staff, which will stabilise the workforce and lead to improved outcomes for children and families. In turn, this should also support the pace of change required for Ofsted Improvement.

	<p>29) A specific line should be included in the budget for Special Expenses.</p> <p>30) Voluntary sector organisations which provide vital community services at minimal cost should be nurtured and a full review carried out to establish how they have been funded to date and how grants and other funding from Buckinghamshire Council should be offered going forward to deliver improved outcomes for residents.</p> <p>31) A strategy for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping should be developed as a priority for Buckinghamshire Council.</p> <p>32) A consistent approach to licensing for HMOs and Taxis should be applied across the County as soon as practicable after 1st April 2020.</p> <p>33) The evaluation of the Wycombe Street Warden scheme, should be reported to the new Cabinet as part of a wider review of Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour.</p>
Corporate Implications:	These will be considered as part of the Shadow Executive's response.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Shadow Executive to consider the recommendations of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee delegated the responsibility for scrutinising the draft budget to a cross-party Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, which was chaired by Cllr John Gladwin.
- 2.2 The Shadow Executive agreed the draft budget at its meeting on 7th January 2020 and Budget Scrutiny meetings were subsequently held on 14th-17th January 2020, with each Shadow Portfolio Holder questioned in turn about their budget proposals.
- 2.3 The public were also able to submit questions via email or social media channels.
- 2.4 The Budget Scrutiny Group recognise that this is a unique budget to ensure a smooth transition from five Councils in Bucks to one new unitary council from 1st April 2020. Buckinghamshire Council will have a gross budget of £1.2bn and a net operating budget of £435m.
- 2.5 There has only been a short period of time for transition and we recognise the hard work of members and officers in preparing for this change. This budget is a consolidation of the 5 Council's existing financial plans and whilst the first year has

been robustly tested, it was acknowledged that more work will be needed on Years 2 & 3 following elections to Buckinghamshire Council in May 2020.

- 2.6 Whilst we acknowledge that the Leader and Portfolio Holders may be different after May 2020, the Shadow Authority should provide a clear direction to Buckinghamshire Council and must agree a balanced budget on its behalf.
- 2.7 We appreciate there is much uncertainty for staff but we welcome the enthusiasm of officers we met who are proactively seeking out new opportunities available as a Unitary, to work more effectively and improve outcomes for Bucks residents.
- 2.8 The Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group's key findings and recommendations are set out in the report attached - Appendix 1.

3. Financial Implications

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

4. Legal Implications

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

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The Shadow Executive will respond to the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group's report and recommendations and outline any implications for the final Budget.
- 5.2 The final budget will be considered by the Shadow Authority at its meeting on 27th February 2020.

Background Papers	<p>https://shadow-buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=155</p> <p>Agenda papers for the four Budget Scrutiny meetings can be found at the above link.</p>
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Report of the Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group

Published: February 2020

Chairman - Cllr John Gladwin

Contact Officer: Kelly Sutherland, Committee & Governance Manager

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Introduction

- The Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee delegated the responsibility for scrutinising the budget to a cross-party Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group.
- The Shadow Executive agreed the draft budget at its meeting on 7th January 2020.
- Budget Scrutiny meetings were held on 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th January 2020 to scrutinise the draft budget by questioning each Shadow Portfolio Holder on their budget proposals.
- The public were able to submit questions via email or twitter.
- This report of the Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group makes recommendations to the Shadow Executive. The Shadow Executive will respond to these recommendations on 18th February 2020.
- The final budget will be presented to the Shadow Authority at its meeting on 27th February 2020.
- The Budget Scrutiny meetings were webcast and can be viewed at <https://shadow-buckinghamshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>

Membership of the Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group

- Cllr John Gladwin, Chairman
- Cllr Chris Whitehead, Vice-Chairman
- Cllr Ralph Bagge
- Cllr Lesley Clarke OBE
- Cllr Alex Collingwood
- Cllr Peter Cooper
- Cllr Christopher Ford
- Cllr Guy Hollis
- Cllr Steven Lambert
- Cllr Richard Newcombe
- Cllr Paul Turner

Executive Summary

- The Budget Scrutiny Group recognise that this is a unique budget to ensure a smooth transition from five Councils in Bucks to one new unitary council from 1st April 2020. Buckinghamshire Council will have a gross budget of £1.2bn and a net operating budget of £435m.
- There has only been a short period of time for transition and we recognise the hard work of members and officers in preparing for this change. This budget is a consolidation of the 5 Council's existing financial plans and whilst the first year has been robustly tested, it was acknowledged that more work will be needed on Years 2 & 3 following elections to Buckinghamshire Council in May 2020.
- Whilst we acknowledge that the Leader and Portfolio Holders may be different after May 2020, the Shadow Authority should provide a clear direction to Buckinghamshire Council and must agree a balanced budget on its behalf.
- We appreciate there is much uncertainty for staff but we welcome the enthusiasm of officers we met who are proactively seeking out new opportunities available as a Unitary, to work more effectively and improve outcomes for Bucks residents.

Recommendations

The Budget Scrutiny Task & Finish Group recommend that:

Recommendation 1 –

a) There should be a consistent approach to how inflation and salary increases are applied across the budget.

b) Where budgets include monies released from a reserve, this should be clearly noted in a separate budget line.

c) Further work should be undertaken on Years 2 & 3 of the MTFP to ensure the robustness of the budgets in light of a number of external factors which are outside of the Council's control.

Recommendation 2- The Corporate Plan for Buckinghamshire Council should include a stronger commitment to Climate Change, with the aim of the Council being net Carbon Neutral by 2035(subject to consideration of the results of the Council's Carbon Audit) and the County generally by 2050. This commitment should be explicit and transparent and will require strong political leadership to ensure delivery.

Recommendations

Recommendation 3 - The budget should include specific budget lines which demonstrate how it will deliver the Council being net Carbon Neutral by 2035.

Recommendation 4 - A specific Portfolio and Portfolio Holder should be nominated to be responsible for driving the Climate Change & Carbon Neutral agenda forward across Buckinghamshire Council and to take a leading role in championing this across the County and beyond.

Recommendation 5 – An overall recruitment and workforce strategy for Buckinghamshire Council as a whole should be developed as a priority.

Recommendation 6 – A strategy to reduce the number of agency staff should also be prioritised. The delivery & performance of this strategy should be monitored regularly.

Recommendation 7 – Buckinghamshire Council should ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver existing savings plans and an ambitious capital programme, as well as managing far-reaching service transformation.

Recommendations

Recommendation 8 – Buckinghamshire Council should invest in Key Worker Housing as a priority, to aid recruitment, reduce staff turnover and unlock additional skills capacity in the County.

Recommendation 9- A robust centralised management system is put in place to manage all Developer Contributions across the County, including CIL, S106 and S278 monies which are so integral to successful delivery of the Capital programme.

Recommendation 10- Risks around funding bids from Housing Infrastructure Fund and other government bodies are acknowledged and implications on cash flow/borrowing/interest and the timing of building projects should be clearly identified.

Recommendation 11- Capital programme should be divided into those schemes which are fully funded, with deliverable business cases and those that are more aspirational, in order to give members and residents a clearer understanding of the programme. This detail should be included in the final budget.

Recommendation 12– A detailed breakdown of the funding for each Community Board should be included in the final budget.

Recommendations

Recommendation 13– Responsibility for Community Boards and the associated budgets should sit with the Communities Portfolio to drive Localism forward and have visibility of community grants and support in one place.

Recommendation 14 – Increased funding for feasibility work in years 2 & 3 should be investigated to reflect the quantum of Capital projects (£493m over 3 years)

Recommendation 15 – The balance of the Unitary Implementation transition fund should be added to the £14m transformation pot.

Recommendation 16 – Further assessment should be made during 2020-21 as to whether the £14m Transformation Pot will be sufficient to enable the required service transformation over the 3 year period of the MTFP.

Recommendation 17 – As soon as plans are finalised for the priority order of service transformation, these should be shared with all staff to enable them to understand the implications for them as individuals over the next 3 years.

Recommendation 18 - A robust and clearly understood approach to risk management be adopted by Buckinghamshire Council as a priority.

Recommendations

Recommendation 19– The option of the Home to School Transport team being integrated in the Education service and the Client Transport team being integrated in Adult Social Care, to realise savings and improve outcomes for residents should be explored.

Recommendation 20 - A management reporting system should be established which enables a true comparison of costs and key performance indicators, in particular the quality of service, between in-house and contracted services on a like-for-like basis to support Buckinghamshire Council's future decision-making.

Recommendation 21 – Priority should be given to the recruitment of experienced staff to support the Planning service in dealing with increased demand and Members would recommend that a 'Grow your Own' programme such as those in Social Care should be investigated.

Recommendation 22 - Additional funding should be set aside for the Local Plan reserve as £3m over the next three years is likely to be inadequate.

Recommendation 23 – When the Planning Service is reviewed, adequate resources should be allocated to enable an effective and timely response to planning enforcement issues.

Recommendations

Recommendation 24 – Development of a parking strategy, including how to increase capacity, should be a matter of priority for Buckinghamshire Council after the elections in May 2020.

Recommendation 25 – A review should be undertaken ahead of the parking enforcement procurement, to investigate how the Council's on street and off street parking enforcement can be integrated to deliver an improved service and to review future requirements in light of the new parking strategy, to ensure quality service delivery and value for money.

Recommendation 26 – During 2020-21, as Community Access Points are reviewed, consideration should be given to their future funding.

Recommendation 27 – There should be continued investment in the Social Work Academy, which utilises the apprenticeship levy and will provide more stability in the Adult Social Care workforce and positive outcomes for clients.

Recommendation 28 - There should be further investment in the ASYE Academy to enable Children's Services to recruit and retain more qualified staff, which will stabilise the workforce and lead to improved outcomes for children and families. In turn, this should also support the pace of change required for Ofsted Improvement.

Recommendations

Recommendation 29 – A specific line should be included in the budget for Special Expenses.

Recommendation 30 - Voluntary sector organisations which provide vital community services at minimal cost should be nurtured and a full review carried out to establish how they have been funded to date and how grants and other funding from Buckinghamshire Council should be offered going forward to deliver improved outcomes for residents.

Recommendation 31 – A strategy for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping should be developed as a priority for Buckinghamshire Council.

Recommendation 32 - A consistent approach to licensing for HMOs and Taxis should be applied across the County as soon as practicable after 1st April 2020.

Recommendation 33 – The evaluation of the Wycombe Street Warden scheme, should be reported to the new Cabinet as part of a wider review of Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour.

National Context

Local Government Settlement

- Council Tax Referendum Limit remains at 2%
- Adult Social Care Precept of 2% to be added to Council Tax meaning overall proposed increase of 3.99% for residents
- Negative Revenue Support Grant removed for 2020/21 meaning Buckinghamshire Council can retain an additional £13.360m
- New Social Care Grant* in 2020/21 = £5.919m additional funding
- One-off Funding from 2019/20 rolled forward* (Winter Pressures Grant = £1.671m, Social Care Support Grant = £2.855m)
- Government has also announced additional Pot Hole Funding (Total £500m p.a.) – allocations to be announced in early 2020

*Where additional funding is available for one year only, this is built into contingencies or used for one off projects, rather than being included in the base revenue budget.

National Context

- Local Government continues to face significant financial challenges as Government funding is withdrawn and increased demand pressures in Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are being seen nationally.
- A report published by the New Economics Foundation and the TUC in September 2019 predicts an overall funding gap of over £25bn in real terms by 2024-25, if Council's wanted to maintain the level and quality of services which were delivered in 2009-10.
- A Green Paper on Adult Social Care has still to come forward and whilst many NHS Trusts are also struggling financially, Local Government is working hard to bridge the gap.
- Some local authorities have been unable to manage the pressures, e.g Northamptonshire County Council was no longer financially viable and has been divided into two unitary councils which will come into existence in April 2021.

Local Context

- In 2016, Unitary Business Cases were submitted to Government by both the County Council and the District Councils within Buckinghamshire. Both Business Cases proposed that financial savings could be achieved by the creation of Unitary Councils.
- The decision from Government took some time, but on 1st November 2018 it was announced that a Unitary Council would be created to cover the whole geographical area of Buckinghamshire (excluding Milton Keynes).
- The Structural Changes Order passed through Parliament on 23rd May 2019. This established a Shadow Authority and a Shadow Executive to oversee the transition and set a vesting day of 1st April 2020. This would be particularly challenging as most recent unitary transitions have been over a two year period and in Buckinghamshire, the order did not allow for a continuing authority.

Overall Budget

- The Budget Scrutiny Group spent an intense four days scrutinising the Draft Budget for 2020-21 and the Medium Term Financial Plan to 2022-23. All Shadow Portfolio Holders were questioned in turn and the Budget Group's observations and recommendations are set out in this report.
- Many of the observations and recommendations are specific to individual portfolio areas, but we begin with a number of cross-cutting or corporate recommendations.

Presentation of the Revenue Budget

- Members acknowledge that this is a consolidated budget, pulling together existing plans from the five legacy Councils and includes proposals for transformation savings and efficiencies, whilst at the same time recognising that the newly elected Buckinghamshire Council may choose to set different priorities in the future.
- Members are aware that the final budget must ensure that the new authority will be financially viable, yet also allow the Council to be ambitious in its approach to harmonising and improving council services.

Overall Budget

- ***The Unitary Business case suggested that £18.2m of savings could be delivered. It is important that savings realised through the Unitary transformation can be clearly demonstrated and tracked in the presentation of the revenue budget in future. Members believe that sustained political will is vital to deliver these savings.***

- The Budget Scrutiny Group appreciate that the draft Budget had to be developed relatively quickly and the different councils managed and presented their budgets in a variety of ways. Whilst they found the specific Portfolio Information very helpful, in order to improve clarity and transparency in the budget figures, Members recommend the following:

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Recommendation 1 –

- a) There should be a consistent approach to how inflation and salary increases are applied across the budget.**
- b) Where budgets include monies released from a reserve, this should be clearly noted in a separate budget line.**
- c) Further work should be undertaken on Years 2 & 3 of the MTFP to ensure the robustness of the budgets in light of a number of external factors which are outside of the Council's control.**

Overall Budget

Council Tax Harmonisation

- The Budget Scrutiny Group questioned the Leader about the options which had been considered with regards to Council Tax Harmonisation for Buckinghamshire Council. It was noted that the Shadow Executive's preferred option of harmonising at a 'weighted average' level would result in a higher increase for residents in the Wycombe district.
- Once harmonised, Council Tax will then be increased by 3.99% (incl ASC precept). The impact on the average Band D property in 2020/21 within each district area is as follows:-
 - Aylesbury = £55.61 (3.72%)
 - Chiltern = £34.93 (2.30%)
 - South Bucks = £58.23 (3.90%)
 - Wycombe = £80.17 (5.45%)
- A minority of members would like to have seen a different approach taken to Council Tax Harmonisation. Whilst the Budget Scrutiny Group understand the rationale behind this decision, it is vital that this is communicated to residents in an open and transparent manner to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of the impact this change will have on their own council tax payments.

Overall Budget

Climate Change

- The Budget Scrutiny Group recognise that tackling Climate Change is now a top priority for residents, who regard this as an emergency rather than afterthought. This should be reflected strongly in the Buckinghamshire Council's Corporate Plan and backed up with budget commitments.
- A figure of £50m across all Council portfolios was mentioned as being invested in Green/Environmental projects, but this was not explicit in the draft budget. Whilst individual projects or initiatives were discussed with Portfolio Holders, there was not sufficient evidence of a necessary focus on carbon reduction, given the 2050 Carbon Zero commitment.

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Members welcome the news that a Carbon audit will be undertaken imminently, establishing essential baseline data for Buckinghamshire Council against which future carbon reductions can be measured.

Recommendation 2- The Corporate Plan for Buckinghamshire Council should include a stronger commitment to Climate Change, with the aim of the Council being net Carbon Neutral by 2035(subject to consideration of the results of the Council's Carbon Audit) and the County generally by 2050. This commitment should be explicit and transparent and will require strong political leadership to ensure delivery.

Recommendation 3 - The budget should include specific budget lines which demonstrate how it will deliver the Council being net Carbon Neutral by 2035.

Overall Budget

Recommendation 4 - A specific Portfolio and Portfolio Holder should be nominated to be responsible for driving the Climate Change & Carbon Neutral agenda forward across Buckinghamshire Council and to take a leading role in championing this across the County and beyond.

- Whilst there must be someone to take the lead, the Council as a whole should be demonstrating commitment to this aim. With this in mind, Members suggest that opportunities to encourage sustainable transport methods with Council contractors should be fully explored – e.g. by specifying the use of electric or hybrid vehicles for home to school transport or client transport contracts.

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Members welcome the allocation of a £5m fund for Corporate Priorities, which could provide the new Council with an opportunity to invest and make a material difference to residents in it's first year of operation.

Potential areas could include Carbon Neutral initiatives, Key Worker Housing, additional investment in footway maintenance.

Overall Budget

Capacity, Skills and Recruitment

- Members heard of significant recruitment difficulties and a reliance on agency staff across the whole Council, but particularly in Adult and Children's Social Care and Planning. Whilst Members support the individual recruitment initiatives in different service areas, especially the 'grow your own' programmes in Social Care, it was felt that an overall recruitment and workforce strategy for Buckinghamshire Council should be developed as a priority.

Recommendation 5 – An overall recruitment and workforce strategy for Buckinghamshire Council as a whole should be developed as a priority.

Recommendation 6 – A strategy to reduce the number of agency staff should also be prioritised. The delivery & performance of this strategy should be monitored regularly.

Recommendation 7 - Buckinghamshire Council should ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver existing savings plans and an ambitious capital programme, as well as managing far-reaching service transformation.

Overall Budget

Capacity, Skills and Recruitment continued

- Several Portfolio Holders and their teams mentioned the potential for Buckinghamshire Council to develop Key Worker Housing as a method of boosting current recruitment initiatives. This would be particularly helpful in the most problematic areas of Planning, Adult Social Care and Children's Services, where a national skills shortage has created an increasingly competitive recruitment marketplace.

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Members believe that Buckinghamshire Council has a great opportunity to invest in Key Worker Housing and would encourage the Senior Management team to proactively support this cross-cutting initiative.

Recommendation 8 – Buckinghamshire Council should invest in Key Worker Housing as a priority, to aid recruitment, reduce staff turnover and unlock additional skills capacity in the County.

Overall Budget

Capital Programme

- The Budget Scrutiny Group view this a very ambitious Capital programme especially in Year 1, but recognise this is due to many existing Capital projects being carried forward. It will be challenging to deliver in terms of securing funding and having sufficient staff with necessary expertise to oversee the delivery of complex projects.
- **Recommendation 9- A robust centralised management system is put in place to manage all Developer Contributions across the County, including CIL, S106 and S278 monies which are so integral to successful delivery of the Capital programme.**
- **Recommendation 10- Risks around funding bids from Housing Infrastructure Fund and other government bodies are acknowledged and implications on cash flow/borrowing/interest and the timing of building projects should be clearly identified.**
- **Recommendation 11- Capital programme should be divided into those schemes which are fully funded, with deliverable business cases and those that are more aspirational, in order to give members and residents a clearer understanding of the programme. This detail should be included in the final budget.**

Leader

Community Boards

- Members welcome the substantial budget of £5m available for Community Boards to fund initiatives which are identified as priorities in a local area.
- However with no clear indication of how this funding would be allocated across the 16 Community Boards, it is difficult for Members to take a view as to the robustness of the total budget and whether the funding for each Board will be sufficient and appropriate for the community's requirements in each locality.

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Recommendation 12– A detailed breakdown of the funding for each Community Board should be included in the final budget.

- The Budget Scrutiny Group had several discussions around exactly how the Community Boards will work, as they are central to Buckinghamshire Council's Localism agenda - an integral part of the Unitary Business case.

Recommendation 13– Responsibility for Community Boards and the associated budgets should sit with the Communities Portfolio to drive Localism forward and have visibility of community grants and support in one place.

Leader

Feasibility Funding

- It was noted that the Leader's Revenue Budget included a proposal to increase feasibility funding by £200k, to bring the annual base budget to £1.2m. In addition there is a reserve of £4.4m. Members agreed that funding for feasibility work is often overlooked when Capital projects are planned. Due to the ambitious nature of the Capital Programme, Members feel this is insufficient.

Recommendation 14 – Increased funding for feasibility work in years 2 & 3 should be investigated to reflect the quantum of Capital projects (£493m over 3 years)

Transition Budget

- Members noted that Unitary Implementation had been allocated funding of £22m in 2019-20 and a further £14m has been set aside in reserves to support further service transformation going forward.

Recommendation 15 – The balance of the Unitary Implementation transition fund should be added to the £14m transformation pot.

Deputy Leader & Resources

- This portfolio has a total spend of £185m and generates an income of £150m, although £122m is housing benefit which is 'passported' through the Revenue and Benefits service.
- Key financial risks highlighted include staffing pressures and possible loss of rental income due to property voids and delayed developments.

Capital

- It was noted that there is £13m in the draft Capital Programme which are existing commitments for ICT improvements, property maintenance and specific property improvement projects to be delivered over the next 3 years.

Capacity & Skills

- Although raised earlier as a corporate issue, members were particularly concerned about capacity and skills in this portfolio, as the back office services will lead and support the Council through the Unitary transformation.
- HR will be managing over 30 sets of terms and conditions, advising staff during service transformation and embedding a new culture. Finance will be consolidating onto one new system and unfamiliar budget management processes and Procurement will have a significant number of large contract renewals to manage in a short space of time. It is important that ICT works reliably from Day 1 and Property have stretching income targets to deliver.

Deputy Leader & Resources

Recommendation 16 – Further assessment should be made during 2020-21 as to whether the £14m Transformation Pot will be sufficient to enable the required service transformation over the 3 year period of the MTFP.

Service Transformation post-April 2020

- Members were advised that £1.7m of savings would be delivered on Day 1 of Buckinghamshire Council through the new Senior Management structure. Newly appointed managers are already developing plans to shape the transformation of services which will be staggered over a three year period.

Recommendation 17 – As soon as plans are finalised for the priority order of service transformation, these should be shared with all staff to enable them to understand the implications for them as individuals over the next 3 years.

Deputy Leader & Resources

Risk Management

- Members had concerns about the overall approach which was being taken towards Risk Management. Given the size and scale of the new Buckinghamshire Council, it is vital that risks are closely monitored and managed.

Recommendation 18 - A robust and clearly understood approach to risk management be adopted by Buckinghamshire Council as a priority.

Property

- Members were pleased to know that a detailed audit of all Council's assets had been undertaken and Buckinghamshire Council would have an asset base valued at approx. £1.2bn. Whilst this presents many opportunities for the future, Members were conscious that the Property team has challenging income targets and would like to be assured that property disposal would not become the default position.

Members expect to see a detailed Strategic Asset Management Strategy being published, alongside a Capital & Investment Strategy by April 2021.

Education

- This portfolio has a total spend of £503million, of which £472.2m is a grant from the Department of Education, which is 'passport' directly to schools across the county.
- The remaining £24m is mainly spent on Home to School Transport and additional services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Increased demand in both these areas had placed significant pressure on existing budgets and these were identified as key areas of risk in the draft budget.
- Whilst additional funding allocated for SEND from Government in the spending round for the 2020-21 was welcome, it was recognised that consistent long term funding was necessary to meet demand.

Capital

- £108m in the draft Capital Programme , primarily to create new Primary and Secondary school places and for school maintenance projects.

Members noted that regular review of the demand for school places and also re-profiling of capital spend would be necessary to ensure that the Council can deliver this statutory responsibility.

Education

Early Years

- It was recognised that it is important to invest in children's Early Years as this could drastically improve outcomes for individuals, thereby saving money for the Council in the longer term.
- Members therefore advocate a more active promotion of the availability of free early education for 3 and 4 years olds across the County, as data showed that Buckinghamshire has a low percentage take up in comparison with other Councils. The new Community Access Points could be utilised to support this work.

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Home to School Transport

- Budget Scrutiny were concerned to hear evidence of silo working, in that the budget and staff who understood the client's needs are based in Education, but Transportation staff commission the service. Members felt that the new Council could offer an opportunity to streamline the process.

Recommendation 19– The option of the Home to School Transport team being integrated in the Education service and the Client Transport team being integrated in Adult Social Care, to realise savings and improve outcomes for residents should be explored.

Environment

- This portfolio has a total spend of almost £33m, of which £29m is associated with waste collection and disposal. The portfolio also generates circa £8m of income through fees and charges and the sale of electricity generated from the Energy from Waste plant at Greatmoor.
- Main areas of financial risk highlighted include - budget pressures from the new Southern Waste Contract; pressures on waste budget generally from increased volumes of waste, housing growth and volatile recyclable market; harmonisation of fees and charges and possible regulatory changes following publication of the Defra Resources and Waste Strategy.

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Capital

- £30m in the draft Capital Programme, - mainly for purchase of Waste Collection vehicles for the new Southern Waste Contract, investment in a Biowaste treatment plant and a number of Flood Defence Schemes which attract match funding from the Environment Agency.

Environment

Southern Waste Contract

- Members discussed the budget implications of the new Southern Waste Contract which is currently out to tender. There was concern that having different arrangements for Waste collections in the North and South of the county could lead to disparity of service and costs, particularly as one service is in-house and the other would be contracted out.

Recommendation 20 - A management reporting system should be established which enables a true comparison of costs and key performance indicators, in particular the quality of service, between in-house and contracted services on a like-for-like basis to support Buckinghamshire Council's future decision-making.

- The costs in the draft Capital Programme for new vehicles appears high and the Budget Scrutiny Group would like this figure to be reviewed.
- Members would support a vigorous promotional campaign to encourage the recycling rate in the county up to 60%, as this supports the climate change agenda and would also increase capacity and the income generation potential of the Energy from Waste plant.

Planning

- This portfolio has a total spend of £15.4m, the majority of which is accounted for by staff costs. However this is offset by income of £11.8m generated through fees and charges.
- Main areas of financial risk highlighted include – stretching income targets; delivery of existing saving plans; staff recruitment and retention and balancing the challenges of national infrastructure projects, housing growth, Aylesbury Garden Town and development of a new Local Plan for the whole Buckinghamshire Council area.
- Members quickly identified issues of staff capacity, as recruitment and retention had already proved difficult this year and there is a national skills shortage in both planning and building control.
- Budget pressures were evident in this financial year due to a backlog of applications and income targets not being met - existing mitigation plans appear ambitious/optimistic. Whilst the new Service Director is very confident about building a strong performing team, Members remained concerned about the risks associated with the combination of demands in Planning, as outlined above.

Planning

- Members were also not convinced that the draft budget included sufficient resources dedicated to planning enforcement, which is particularly valued by residents.

Members would also encourage a more proactive approach to realising income opportunities from Building Control advice.

Recommendation 21 – Priority should be given to the recruitment of experienced staff to support the Planning service in dealing with increased demand and Members would recommend that a ‘Grow your Own’ programme such as those in Social Care should be investigated.

Recommendation 22 - Additional funding should be set aside for the Local Plan reserve as £3m over the next three years is likely to be inadequate.

Recommendation 23 – When the Planning Service is reviewed, adequate resources should be allocated to enable an effective and timely response to planning enforcement issues.

Transportation

- The Transportation portfolio has a total spend of £41.8m, whilst generating income of £16.2m, predominantly through car parking charges. It was noted that almost £23m of this expenditure is via the Transport for Buckinghamshire highways maintenance contract.
- Key financial risks highlighted include – impact of winter weather on road condition; Impact on income and parking supply next year if the parking strategy and renewal of the parking contract is delayed; inflationary pressures around fuel etc and issues with capital projects, which are often complex by nature.
- It was also noted that Buckinghamshire has the smallest road network of any English council but one of the highest traffic volumes.

Capital

- £94.5m proposed in draft Capital programme over 3 years, with a significant amount of £21.5m proposed annually for maintenance of footways, highways and associated infrastructure e.g. bridges, street lighting and traffic signals.

Transportation

- The Budget Scrutiny Group had a lengthy discussion with the Portfolio Holder and his team regarding the development of a Parking Strategy for Buckinghamshire and the renewal of the parking enforcement contract which is due in 2021. Apart from the opportunities to influence the local economy, traffic movements and increase parking capacity, considerable amounts of income included in the budget are predicated on setting the right strategy.

Recommendation 24 – Development of a parking strategy, including how to increase capacity, should be a matter of priority for Buckinghamshire Council after the elections in May 2020.

Recommendation 25 – A review should be undertaken ahead of the parking enforcement procurement, to investigate how the Council's on street and off street parking enforcement can be integrated to deliver an improved service and to review future requirements in light of the new parking strategy, to ensure quality service delivery and value for money.

Members noted that the £315m contract with Ringway Jacobs would shortly be up for renewal and would like assurances that an objective and professional team will lead the procurement exercise to ensure that the best possible contract terms are secured and that the new contract would be signed off by Cabinet.

Health & Culture

- This wide-ranging portfolio has a total spend of £31m, of which almost £20m is funded by a ring-fenced grant for Public Health activities. Country Parks, libraries and leisure centres all contribute a further income of approx £4m.
- It is recognised that Health & Culture services can potentially reduce spend in other service areas, such as Adult Social Care.
- Page 65 Main areas of financial risks highlighted include – potential changes to the Public Health grant which could confer additional responsibilities on the Council without a commensurate increase in funding and risks of non-delivery of savings or anticipated increases in income from the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre.

Capital

- Proposals in Capital Programme of £39m over the next 3 years, including £36m on new Chiltern Lifestyles centre, improvements to Chesham and Chalfont's leisure centres and investment of £1.5m in a new Visitors Centre at Black Park, to attract more visitors during the winter months.

Health & Culture

- It is acknowledged that on the whole Public Health in Buckinghamshire performs well, but the cumulative percentage of eligible 40-74 year olds offered an NHS health check who actually attended, remained low. This was also noted by members last year who hoped to see increased engagement with GPs and larger employers to increase reach for the health checks. Perhaps going forward, Community Access Points across the County could be offered as possible venues for this service.

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A number of libraries will be expanding their role in local communities by acting as new Council Access Points, but there was no obvious funding in the budget to either support revisions to existing buildings or to enable an extension of opening hours, particularly at weekends.

Recommendation 26 – During 2020-21, as Community Access Points are reviewed, consideration should be given to their future funding.

- Members noted that a number of Leisure contracts are due for renewal in the first 2-3 years of Buckinghamshire Council , which presents a good opportunity to consolidate and increase value for money

Adult Social Care

- This portfolio has a total spend of £190m, offset by an income of £43m, which represents 43% of the total Council spend in 2020-21. It was recognised that relatively small percentage overspends would mean budget pressure in the millions, not thousands.
- Adult Social Care is in crisis nationally and the absence of a long term funding solution makes budget planning very challenging. Key financial risks outlined include - increasing demand, due to demography and complexity of need; staff recruitment and retention and instability of the market, with recent examples of national care providers failing.
- The Committee noted that the new Government has undertaken to *'fix the crisis in social care once and for all, and with a clear plan we have prepared, we will give every older person the dignity and security they deserve.'*

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Capital

- Adult Social Care has £2.9m in the Capital programme which has been deferred to 2021-22. This investment is for a proposed purpose-built respite care facility on the site of the current Aylesbury Day Opportunities Centre, to replace existing facilities at Seeley's House in Beaconsfield. This project would be jointly funded with Health.

Adult Social Care

Staff Recruitment & Retention

- A national shortage of qualified social workers leads to competition for staff. Currently 9% of Adult Social Workers at the Council are agency staff and there is a staff turnover rate of 20%. Agency staff costs will be £2.1m in 2019-20.
- There is also concern about the current 50:50 ratio of qualified and unqualified Social Work staff. The service would like to achieve a 70:30 split and are working closely with local universities to promote Social Work as a career. Members were pleased to hear that a 'Grow your Own' programme has been introduced, where Social Work Assistants are sponsored by the Council to become fully qualified. A cohort of 10 will begin their course in Apr 2020.

Recommendation 27 – There should be continued investment in the Social Work Academy, which utilises the apprenticeship levy and will provide more stability in the Adult Social Care workforce and positive outcomes for clients.

Adult Social Care

- It was recognised that the cost of housing in Buckinghamshire might also impact on recruitment and Members commend the Portfolio Holder and her team who are keen to explore opportunities to work more closely with colleagues in Property and Housing to develop Key Worker housing and also bespoke housing for Adult Social Care clients, e.g. supported living arrangements for people with learning disabilities. ***(Please see earlier Recommendation)***

Integration with Health

- It was also noted that the continued integration of Health and Social Care is key to increasing efficiency, reducing duplication and costs and also improving outcomes for residents.

Market Instability

- Risks around provider failure were noted but Members were reassured that the service works closely with its largest providers through open book accounting and quality inspections and has a provider failure plan in place. There are also significant contingencies held centrally for Adult Social Care which could be accessed in this scenario.

Children's Services

- Children's Services has a total spend of almost £75m with grant contributions income of just under £1m. Children's Services in Buckinghamshire is on an Ofsted Improvement journey and has received additional investment in its budget to support this transformation work.
- Significant financial risk areas highlighted include increasing client costs due to the complexity of need and staff recruitment and retention, where the service faces similar issues to Adult Social Care in attracting qualified Social Workers.

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Client Costs

- Additional investment of £1.1m is proposed in the draft budget to support pressures in client costs. Members also welcome the commitment to both the Placement Sufficiency Strategy and Early Help as methods of managing demand and reducing placement costs.

The increased number of in-house foster carers is particularly commended and again it is recognised that early intervention can prevent families descending into crisis, improving outcomes for children and reducing demand for social care.

Children's Services

Staff Recruitment and Retention

- Children's Services has been reliant on the use of agency Social Workers, due to a shortage of skilled staff nationally. Currently agency staff account for approximately 30% of qualified Social Workers and whilst several initiatives to increase permanent recruitment have been introduced their impact will not be immediate.
- Member were pleased to hear about the success of the Assessed & Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Academy, which takes newly qualified Social Workers through a 12 month programme where they are mentored and supported with taking on casework. In this way Children's Services can 'grow their own' staff and by offering a dynamic but supportive work environment with clear career development opportunities, hopefully also retain staff for longer.

Recommendation 28 - There should be further investment in the ASYE Academy to enable Children's Services to recruit and retain more qualified staff, which will stabilise the workforce and lead to improved outcomes for children and families. In turn, this should also support the pace of change required for Ofsted Improvement.

Children's Services

Unitary Opportunities

- The Budget Scrutiny Group were pleased to see evidence of Portfolio teams seizing opportunities for closer collaboration with colleagues following Unitary transition. Children's Services is working with Adult Social Care on a new Transitions programme called 'Preparing for Adulthood' and Members were also noted that opportunities for both Key Worker housing and Supported Living accommodation for Care Leavers were being investigated with colleagues in Housing and Property. ***(Please see earlier Recommendation)***

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Ofsted Improvement Journey

- Members paid tribute to the hard work of all staff in Children's Services and the improvements that had been made in the last three years. Senior Managers were confident that their recruitment strategy would be successful which would contribute to sustaining the pace of change that Ofsted required.

The Budget Scrutiny Group hope to see continued improvement in Children's Services and recommend that a detailed report on progress to date should be presented at an early meeting of Buckinghamshire Council to ensure that all new members will understand and support this journey.

Communities

- Communities is a relatively small portfolio responsible for a wide-range of services including Housing, Regulatory services and Localities and Strategic Partnerships. The total spend of £20.3 m is offset by income of £10m, made up of fees and charges and grant income.
- Main financial risks are associated with possible regulatory changes and risks to Prevent and other grant funding.

Capital

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Communities has £29m in the draft Capital Programme across the next 3 years. £8.6m is for Temporary Accommodation and a further £8.4m for Affordable Housing and Enabling schemes. Disabled Facility Grants to adapt homes to meet residents' changing needs accounts for £6.4m and £5.4m is to be invested in Cemeteries and Crematoria.

Special Expenses

- Members noted that some cemeteries and community centres included in the portfolio had traditionally been funded by special expenses.

Recommendation 29 – A specific line should be included in the budget for Special Expenses.

Communities

Partnership Working

- The Portfolio Holder reminded Members that Communities relied on successful partnership working, e.g. with Police, Health & the Voluntary sector. With this in mind, the Budget Scrutiny Group raised concerns about ongoing funding for voluntary organisations, who currently received grant funding from any of the five existing Councils and were unsure if this would continue after April 2020.

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Members noted that around 75 larger organisations currently benefitted from grants and it was recognised that a relatively modest investment from the Council could leverage much more in terms of outcomes for residents via this route. A report was being drafted for the Shadow Executive to confirm the approach for the next financial year and beyond.

Recommendation 30 - Voluntary sector organisations which provide vital community services at minimal cost should be nurtured and a full review carried out to establish how they have been funded to date and how grants and other funding from Buckinghamshire Council should be offered going forward to deliver improved outcomes for residents.

Communities

Housing & Homelessness

- Members agreed that the provision of affordable social housing in Buckinghamshire should be a priority and were pleased that the Capital budget included provision for such schemes, as well as temporary accommodation.
- It was recognised that homelessness and rough sleeping required a partnership approach.

Recommendation 31 – A strategy for Homelessness and Rough Sleeping should be developed as a priority for Buckinghamshire Council.

- It was noted that significant work had been undertaken in Wycombe in respect of licensing and inspection of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO) which had uncovered terrible conditions and in some cases led to criminal prosecution.

Recommendation 32 - A consistent approach to licensing for HMOs and Taxis should be applied across the County as soon as practicable after 1st April 2020.

Communities

Community Safety

- The Budget Scrutiny Group heard about the Street Warden scheme which was currently being piloted in the Wycombe area.

Recommendation 33 – The evaluation of the Wycombe Street Warden scheme, should be reported to the new Cabinet as part of a wider review of Community Safety/Anti-Social Behaviour.

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Report for:	Formal Shadow Executive
Meeting Date:	18/02/2020

Title of Report:	Buckinghamshire Council Pay Policy Statement
Shadow Portfolio Holder	Katrina Wood
Responsible Officer	Sarah Murphy Brookman
Report Author Officer Contact:	Sandy Ayton sayton@buckscc.gov.uk
Recommendations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Pay Policy Statement; • Approve the delegation of decisions on all employee remuneration and severance packages over £100,000 to the Pay Committee;
Corporate Implications:	<p>Section 151 Officer: There are no direct financial implications associated with approving the pay policy.</p> <p>Monitoring Officer: None</p>
Options:	1) Accept the recommendations above;
Reason:	The policy statement is a statutory requirement. The recommendations regarding the delegated responsibilities to the Pay Committee are recommended as it allows for faster decision making and action in the case of remuneration and severance decisions higher than £100k, which will assist in the recruitment of senior leadership posts.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Pay Policy Statement, attached in Annex 1, is a requirement in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and must be updated annually. The pay policy statement sets out Buckinghamshire Council's policies relating to the pay of its corporate service workforce (excludes Schools employees) for the year 1 April 2020-31 March 2020.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Each Year a local authority must produce and publish on its website a Pay Policy Statement. The pay policy statement sets out the Council's policies relating to the pay of its corporate service workforce. The pay policy statement covers all employees including those who have been Tupe'd on their current Terms and Conditions into Buckinghamshire Council from the District and County Councils on 1 April 2020.

- 2.2 The pay policy statement sets out Buckinghamshire Council's policies relating to the pay of its corporate service workforce (excludes Schools employees) for the year 2020-21; in particular:
- a) The remuneration of its Chief Officers
 - b) The remuneration of its "lowest paid employees"; and the relationship between:
 - (i) The remuneration of its chief officers; and
 - (ii) The remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.
- 2.3 'Pay' in addition to salary includes charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in or enhancements to pension entitlements and termination payments.
- 2.4 Chief Officers are both statutory and non-statutory officers.

Statutory officers

- Head of paid service- Chief Executive
- Section 151 Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Corporate Director Children's Service
- Corporate Director Adults Health and Housing
- Director of Public Health

Non-Statutory officers

- Corporate Director Planning Growth and Sustainability
- Corporate Director Communities
- Corporate Director Resources

3. Content of Report

- 3.1 Please see Annex 1 for the complete pay policy statement.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 On 1 April the five separate Councils in Buckinghamshire will join to become Buckinghamshire Council. In preparation for this, the recruitment of the senior leadership team, Tiers 1-3 has been completed. Tiers 1-3 are the posts of Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and Service Directors. The new senior leadership team structure has delivered paybill savings of £1.75m for the new authority.
- 4.2 There are no additional direct financial implications associated with the pay policy.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The adoption of an annual Pay Policy Statement is required of all relevant authorities pursuant to the Localism Act 2011. The Statement must reflect the requirements of the Act and have regard to any guidance issued or approved by the Secretary of State.

6. Other Key Risks

6.1 Not Applicable

7. Dependencies

7.1 Not Applicable

8. Consultation

8.1 Not Applicable.

9. Communications Plan

9.1 This will be a publicly available document published on the internet from 1 April 2020.

10. Equalities Implications

10.1 Not required. A neutral impact is expected.

11. Data Implications

11.1 Not Applicable

12. Next Steps

12.1 Once the pay policy statement has been approved it will be published on the Councils website.

Background Papers	None.
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Annex 1

Buckinghamshire Council Pay Policy Statement 1st April 2020

1. Purpose

This Pay Policy Statement is provided in accordance with Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and will be updated annually. This pay policy statement sets out Buckinghamshire Council's policies relating to the pay of its corporate service workforce (excludes Schools employees) for the year 2020-21; in particular:

- a) The remuneration of its Chief Officers
- b) The remuneration of its "lowest paid employees";
- c) and the relationship between:
 - (i) The remuneration of its chief officers; and
 - (ii) The remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.

2. Scope of Pay Policy Statement

2.1 The Pay Policy statement covers the following roles at Buckinghamshire Council:

- I. Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service);
- II. Corporate Directors;
- III. Service Directors;
- IV. Corporate Service Employees.

2.2 The Pay Policy Statement covers all employees including those who have been Tupe-d on their current Terms and Conditions into Buckinghamshire Council from the District and County Councils on 1 April 2020.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this pay policy statement the following definitions will apply:

3.1 "Pay" in addition to salary includes charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, increases in or enhancements to pension entitlements and termination payments.

3.2 "Chief Officer" refers to the following roles within Buckinghamshire Council:

Table 1- Chief Officers

Definition under the Localism Act 2011	Post Held at Buckinghamshire Council
The Head of Paid Service	Chief Executive Officer
The Monitoring Officer	Deputy Chief Executive
Section 151 Officer	Service Director Corporate Finance
Statutory Chief Officers	Corporate Director Children’s Service Corporate Director Adults Health and Housing Director of Public Health
Non-Statutory Officers	Corporate Director Planning Growth and Sustainability Corporate Director Communities Corporate Director Resources

3.3 The definition of “Lowest paid employees” refers to those staff employed within Range 1A from the population of Tupe’d employees on the lowest pay point of their pay scale.

4. Remuneration levels

4.1 The Shadow Authority has delegated responsibility to the Senior Pay and Appointments and Committee (SPAC), with the exception of the Chief Executive Officer, for the approval of remuneration packages in excess of £100,000 (to include salary, bonus, fees allowances and benefits in kind) offered in respect of a new appointment; and for severance payments in excess of £100,000.

4.2 The general approach is that remuneration at all levels needs to be adequate to secure and retain high-quality employees dedicated to fulfilling the council’s business objectives and delivering services to the public. This has to be balanced by ensuring remuneration is not, nor is seen to be, unnecessarily excessive. Councils have a responsibility for balancing these factors and every Council faces its own unique challenges and opportunities in doing so and will need to retain flexibility to cope with various circumstances that may arise to necessitate the use of market supplements or other such mechanisms for individual categories of posts where appropriate.

4.3 It is essential for good governance that decisions on pay and reward packages for Chief Executives and Chief Officers are made in an open and accountable way and that there is a verified and accountable process for recommending the levels of top salaries. Pay for the “lowest paid employees” and “all other employees’ including Chief Officers” is determined by SPAC. SPAC comprises elected Councillors from the main political parties and has responsibility for managing locally determined pay for employees.

4.4 The lowest paid full-time equivalent employee in the period 2020/21 will be paid at £16,823 per annum full time equivalent (FTE). The definition of lowest paid employee is a

fully competent employee undertaking a defined role and excludes apprentices who are undertaking approved training. The highest paid employee is the Chief Executive who will be paid in the period a salary of £210,000.

4.5 The pay multiple between the highest paid employee, the Chief Executive at £210,000 and the median salary of the rest of the workforce at £31,034 is 6.77:1.

5. Pay

5.1 The council's corporate service pay is determined locally. Grades are determined by recognising what people do – their jobs and responsibilities – and paying them accordingly using HAY job evaluation. Job evaluation is a consistent process used for determining the relative worth of jobs. Whilst the process is not a science, it is based on the systematic analysis of the different factors found within all jobs.

5.2 The Senior Leadership Team comprising of, Chief Officer, Corporate Directors and Service Directors are paid on a Leadership Pay Broad Band and are appointed on a personal contract on a spot salary with the opportunity for a discretionary additional annual non-consolidated performance payment to those who have 'exceeded' expectations for their role. Each role has pay set individually based on the following components:

- The size of the job as determined by Job Evaluation
- The benchmark data for the market and sector rate for the post
- The assessed quality of the applicant including skills and experience balanced against candidate expectations
- Scarcity of the required skills

5.3 Senior Leadership pay will be reviewed annually by SPAC and there is no guarantee of a pay uplift or performance payment.

5.4 Pay awards for all corporate service staff will be considered annually after consultation with the Trades Unions and employees. Any pay award is determined by SPAC who consider inflation and any significant considerations from elsewhere in the public sector; SPAC will undertake a pay review each year.

5.5 The Council's main pay scale comprises Grade 1 to Grade 14 (table 2). Each pay grade has three pay points with progression through a grade subject to individual employees achieving satisfactory performance. Employees may also receive annual additional payments based on exceeding or outstanding performance awarded as a percentage of the individual's salary as a Non-Consolidated Payment.

Table 2: Main Pay Grades

Grade	Pay points		
	1	2	3
1	£20,247	£20,766	£21,285
2	£21,894	£22,455	£23,017
3	£24,081	£24,698	£25,316
4	£27,024	£27,717	£28,410
5	£29,121	£29,642	£30,384
6	£32,394	£33,224	£34,056
7	£36,984	£37,932	£38,881
8	£41,860	£42,933	£44,007
9	£48,894	£50,148	£51,402
10	£55,457	£56,879	£58,301
11	£61,818	£63,403	£64,989
12	£68,486	£70,242	£71,999
13	£77,414	£79,398	£81,383
14	£86,103	£88,310	£90,518

6. Charges, fees or allowances

6.1 No specific fees or allowances are made to Chief Officers or others in the Leadership team. The Council offers childcare vouchers, annual leave purchase and bicycle purchase through salary sacrifice schemes to all employees. The Council has negotiated various discounts with local suppliers, including gym memberships and local restaurants, which are available to all employees through the schools website and intranet. The Council reimburses mileage and travel expenses.

6.2 Market Premiums, Recruitment and/or Retention allowances may be paid to certain 'Hard to Fill' posts, e.g. Children's Social Workers, in accordance with the Council schemes.

6.3 The Council does not award additional fees to Chief Officers for any local election duties they may undertake.

7. Severance Payments

7.1 In the event that an employee ceases to hold office and is eligible for a severance or redundancy payment, such payment is determined in accordance with the Council's redundancy policy and procedure that applies to all employees or any protection rights accrued from a predecessor Council in Buckinghamshire. In exceptional circumstances and in the best interest of the Council a termination payment may be made to an employee. Any such payment requires signed approval by the Chief Executive or Corporate Director as appropriate, the Section 151 Officer, and the Monitoring Officer. Where the payment exceeds £100,000 it must go to the SPAC for approval. Severance Payments will be subject to "Public Sector Exit Payment Regulations" when they come into effect.

7.2 If the Council employs a Chief Officer already in receipt of a Local Government Pension Scheme pension, the Council will apply the normal pension abatement rules that apply to all employees.

7.3 If the Council re-employs any employee, including Chief Officers, in receipt of a severance or redundancy payment from the Council within five weeks of termination of prior employment, re-employment is subject to repayment of the severance or redundancy payment. Anyone returning to the Council or any other public sector body within 12 months will be subject to the 'Public Sector Exit Payment Regulations' when they come into effect

8. Transparency

8.1 In accordance with Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council will prepare a Pay Policy Statement each year in accordance with the Localism Act and related guidance under section 40 provided by the Secretary of State. The annual Pay Policy Statement may be amended from time to time. The Pay Policy Statements and amendments will be approved by Full Council of Buckinghamshire Council.

8.2 The Council's annual Pay Policy Statement and any amendments will be published on its website along with details of remuneration of the Council's Chief Officers:

8.3 Publication of the Pay Policy Statement, any amendments and details of remuneration will be in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

Report for:	Shadow Executive
Meeting Date:	18 February 2020

Title of Report:	Scheme of Members' Allowances
Shadow Portfolio Holder	Councillor Martin Tett
Responsible Officer	Sarah Ashmead, Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer
Report Author Officer Contact:	Mathew Bloxham, 01494 732143, Mathew.bloxham@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk
Recommendations:	That having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) the Shadow Executive agree to recommend to the Shadow Authority meeting on 27 February 2020 to adopt the Scheme of Members' Allowances for the Interim Period and for the period from 11 May 2020 to 31 March 2021 as attached as Appendix 2.
Corporate Implications:	<p>Legal: The Council has a legal obligation to make a scheme of allowances having regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.</p> <p>Financial: It is recognised that this scheme will not deliver the full savings identified in the unitary business case at this stage. In approving the creation of Buckinghamshire council, the Minister increased the size of the council from the 98 councillors proposed in the business case to 147 councillors. As a result, the cost of allowances is higher than originally anticipated.</p> <p>However, there is still a saving of £156k when compared to the total costs for the existing councils' schemes of allowances. It should also be noted that a Local Government boundary review will be conducted during the council's first term where the size of the council (number of councillors) will be reviewed.</p>
Options:	The Shadow Executive could support the scheme proposed by the IRP in full; alternatively, the Shadow Executive could recommend an alternative scheme to the Shadow Authority.
Reason:	There is a requirement under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) for Buckinghamshire Council to make a scheme for the payment of a basic allowance (BA) to each member of that authority which shall be the same for all members. The scheme may also provide for the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for members with roles that have special responsibility for example leader, cabinet members, or chairmen of committees. The scheme may also set out the payments in relation to travelling and subsistence allowance and co-optees' allowance.

	<p>The scheme needs to ensure that Members receive appropriate remuneration for their role, and it is important that it does not discourage individuals from putting themselves forward as candidates.</p> <p>It is recognised that this scheme will not deliver the full savings identified in the unitary business case at this stage, but there is still a saving when compared to the total costs for the existing councils' schemes of allowances. It should also be noted that a Local Government boundary review will be conducted during the council's first term where the size of the council (number of councillors) will be reviewed.</p>
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1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Following the parliamentary approval of the Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) Order 2019, Buckinghamshire Council will come into effect on 1 April 2020 and the current Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council will cease to exist. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) require a relevant authority to make a scheme having regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.

2. Content of Report

- 2.1 The Panel's recommendations relate to a scheme of members' allowances to come into effect from 1 April 2020 when the predecessor county and district councils are abolished and the Buckinghamshire Council takes on responsibility for service delivery. Elections for the 147 seats on Buckinghamshire Council will be held on 7 May 2020.
- 2.2 The statutory mechanism with which Councils consider allowances is by way of appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel. This Panel considers and recommends the level of Member Allowances to be operated by a Council.
- 2.3 Appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel were agreed by the Shadow Executive on 10 September 2019. The Panel was appointed for the purposes of establishing and recommending a Scheme of Allowances for Buckinghamshire Council.
- 2.4 As the current Councils will no longer exist, their respective schemes of members' allowances will cease, and allowances will no longer be payable, pursuant to the Regulations.
- 2.5 The 202 councillors of the predecessor councils will continue in office on 1 April 2020 until 11 May 2020 (the fourth day after the election when the existing councillors' terms of office come to an end) but as Buckinghamshire Council Councillors. Therefore, the scheme of allowances will be in two parts and the Panel makes recommendations on:
- (a) Allowances for the interim period for the 202 councillors in office from 1 April until 11 May 2020; and
 - (b) The main scheme of members' allowances for the 147 Buckinghamshire Councillors in place from 11 May 2020.
- 2.6 The Panel's full recommendations are detailed in the attached report at Appendix 1.

Review of IRP Recommendations

- 2.7 The IRP held 2 meetings to consider the allowances scheme. All 202 members of the five predecessor councils were invited to submit representations via a questionnaire sent out on 1 November 2019. 46 responses were received. The IRP also had the opportunity to review benchmarking data.
- 2.8 It is important to note that, unlike the case with an established council, the IRP did not have the benefit of detailed insight about how roles within Buckinghamshire Council will operate in practice. At the time of meeting and proposing a scheme, the Independent Remuneration Panel was therefore reliant on the emerging governance structure of the Council as set out in the draft constitution, which has continued to evolve over recent weeks. Recommendations were made on all relevant information available to the Panel as at January 2020. However, it was recognised that the new Council would need to be able to keep its scheme under review as the governance arrangements are put into practice.
- 2.9 In developing the scheme, it is important to ensure that Members receive appropriate remuneration for their role. Many of the roles in the new council are likely to be more challenging and complex than in the predecessor authorities, and this will be particularly apparent to experienced, returning councillors. In this context, whilst we are preparing for a new council, it is relevant to contrast the new scheme with those of the predecessor councils in order to ensure that it does not discourage individuals from putting themselves forward to fulfil key roles and responsibilities in the new council.

Interim Period (1 April to 11 May 2020):

- 2.10 The IRP recommended a basic allowance of £360 be paid to members of Buckinghamshire Council during the interim period, together with an SRA of £600 to Shadow Executive Members. These sums are in line with other councils who have had a similar transition period in moving to a unitary council.
- 2.11 The IRP did not recommend an SRA for Substitute Members of the Shadow Executive. However, there remains a considerable volume of work to be undertaken by the Shadow Executive during this interim period and Substitute Members of the Shadow Executive will continue to play an active role in supporting Portfolio Holders and substituting for them at both informal and formal meetings. In recognition of this, it is proposed that an SRA of £300 be paid to Substitute Members of the Shadow Executive during this period.

Basic Allowance

- 2.12 The Panel has recommended that the rate of basic allowance to be paid to members of Buckinghamshire Council be set at £13,000 per annum. This sum is in line with the allowance paid to councillors in similar authorities in the South East and is considered appropriate for the new authority. Similarly, the rates proposed by the IRP for travel, subsistence and dependant carers allowances are in line with those at similar councils.

Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) from 11 May 2020

- 2.13 The IRP have proposed a series of SRAs for positions identified in the draft constitution. The Panel adopted a methodology of calculating allowances as multiples of the proposed basic allowance.
- 2.14 In some cases, the IRP proposals are broadly in line with the SRAs in existing schemes for equivalent roles. In others, the IRP proposal is significantly different to the corresponding allowance in existing schemes, and does not appear to reflect the level of responsibility we expect to be associated with the role in the new council. For example, the role of a Cabinet Member in Buckinghamshire Unitary Council can be expected to carry a greater level of responsibility than a Cabinet Member in the existing County Council, but under the IRP proposals would carry a lower SRA. By contrast, the SRA recommended for the Vice Chairman of the Council is considerably higher than that currently paid in any of the existing five councils.
- 2.15 In order to reflect the latest thinking on the governance arrangements for the new council, to take into consideration the SRAs of predecessor councils, and to ensure that SRAs are proportionate to the level of responsibilities involved, it is proposed that the Executive consider an alternative structure for SRAs as follows:

	IRP Proposals	Alternative Proposals
Leader	£ 45,500	£ 45,000
Deputy Leader no portfolio	£ 13,000	n/a
Deputy Leader with portfolio	£ 26,000	£ 30,000
Cabinet Member	£ 19,500	£ 23,000
Deputy Cabinet Members	£ 6,500	£ 8,000
Chairman of the Council	£ 13,000	£ 14,000
Vice-Chairman of the Council	£ 6,500	£ 4,000
Chairman of Strategic Sites Committee	£ 9,750	£ 8,000
Chairman of Areas Planning Committees	£ 9,750	£ 6,000
Chairman of Licensing Committee	£ 3,900	£ 4,000
Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	£ 7,800	£ 8,000
Chairman of Audit and Governance	£ 7,800	£ 8,000
Chairman of Standards and General Purposes Committee	£ 7,800	£ 8,000
Chairman of Community Boards	£ 1,000	£ 1,000
Chairman of High Wycombe Town Committee	£ 3,420	£ 3,420
Group Leaders (divided proportionally)	£ 17,000	£ 17,000

A scheme based on the alternative proposals above is attached as Appendix 2.

Performance, accountability and transparency:

- 2.16 The Panel recommends that the Council puts in place the following measures to enhance performance, accountability and transparency:
- (i) The publication of attendance records for Members at Full Council, Committee meetings and Scrutiny committees
 - (ii) Provision to Members of the opportunity to publish a periodic statement of activities
 - (iii) Adoption of role profiles for each Member in order to make clear both to the Members and electors what is expected of them
 - (iv) Introduction of an allowance claw-back scheme.
- 2.17 It is good practice to promote accountability and transparency in the Allowances scheme and it is therefore recommended that the Shadow Authority be invited to adopt the IRPs proposals above as part of the scheme. The one exception to this is the allowance claw-back scheme, which is not legally enforceable by the new council. It is proposed that this is discussed further with political groups after the election.

Town and Parish Allowances

- 2.18 The IRP has responsibility for reporting on allowances for Town and Parish councillors. There is no requirement for Town or Parish Councils to draw up a scheme and pay allowances however, if a Council wishes to pay any such allowances it must approve a scheme having regard to the recommendations of the Panel. The Panel has therefore made recommendations, which are separate from the Buckinghamshire Council scheme and these will be shared with each of the Town and Parish Councils. These recommendations can be seen at point 13 in the Panel's report (Appendix 1).

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The existing combined allowances budget is £2.565m. The scheme recommended by the IRP totals £2.371m. The scheme recommended at Appendix 2 totals £2.409m which provides a saving of £156k when compared to the current total of allowances paid by all existing councils.
- 3.2 The proposed Members' expenses and Carers Allowances are in line with existing schemes, and therefore manageable within the existing budget.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2003 govern the establishment of the Scheme necessary to determine the operation of Members allowances.
- 4.2 The process undertaken, and the proposed scheme accords with the requirements of the legislation.

5. Other Key Risks

- 5.1 The Council must have a scheme in place from 1 April 2020 to conform to the Regulations. When setting allowances, the Shadow Authority must have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and should consider budget implications.

6. Communications Plan

- 6.1 The agreed scheme of allowances will be published in accordance with the statutory requirements. These state that the agreed scheme must be published in a newspaper in circulation in the local authority area, alongside the proposed panel recommendations. Following the formal Shadow Executive meeting, a communication will be sent to all Members to advise them of the recommended basic allowance during the period from 1 April to 11 May.

7. Equalities Implications

- 7.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 A Scheme of Members Allowances as recommended by the Shadow Executive, will be considered at the Shadow Authority meeting on 27 February 2020 for approval. The agreed Scheme of Allowances for Buckinghamshire Council will come in to effect on 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. The agreed scheme will be included in the Council's Constitution.

Background Papers	None, other than those referred to in this report.
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Buckinghamshire Council
Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel
9 January 2020

1. Background

1.1 Buckinghamshire Council established an Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel), in order to advise the Council on a scheme of allowances for councillors reflecting the governance arrangements and responsibilities introduced by the Local Government Act 2000.

1.2 This report has been prepared by the Panel for Buckinghamshire Council comprising of:

Hazel Bentall
Nigel Palmer
Dr Bill Reid
Mark Tosh

1.3 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) apply to local authorities including unitary, district and county councils.

1.4 The Regulations require a relevant authority to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance (BA) to each member of that authority. The BA must be the same for each member of the authority.

1.5 A relevant authority's scheme of allowances may also provide for the payment of special responsibility allowances (SRAs) to such members of the authority as have special or additional responsibilities. The specified categories of special or additional responsibilities which may be included in a scheme of allowances include:

- i) Acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group within the authority;
- ii) Acting as a member of an executive where the authority is operating executive arrangements within the meaning of part 2 of the Local Government Act 2000;
- iii) Presiding at meetings of a committee or sub-committee of the authority;
- iv) Representing the authority at meetings of or arranged by any other body;
- v) Acting as a member of a committee or sub-committee of the authority which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods;
- vi) Acting as the spokesman of a political group on a committee or sub-committee of the authority; and
- vii) Carrying out such other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require of the member an amount of time and

effort equal to or greater than would be required of him or her by any of the above mentioned activities.

- 1.6 SRAs need not be the same and may reflect the different expectations, time and effort involved in particular roles.
- 1.7 Member allowance schemes may also provide for the payment of a dependent carers' allowance and also for members' travelling and subsistence whilst acting in connection with their duties as a member of the authority.
- 1.8 Before a relevant authority may make or amend a scheme of allowances it must have regard to recommendations made in relation to the scheme by an independent remuneration panel.

2. Buckinghamshire Council

- 2.1 Following the parliamentary approval of the Buckinghamshire (Structural Changes) Order 2019, Buckinghamshire Council will come into effect on 1 April 2020 and the current district councils of Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe and Buckinghamshire County Council will cease to exist.
- 2.2 Elections for the 147 seats on Buckinghamshire Council will be held on 7 May 2020.
- 2.3 For the period 1 April to 11 May 2020 (11 May 2020 being the date on which the 147 newly elected councillors take office) "the Interim Period", the 202 current members of the five sovereign councils mentioned above will continue as members of Buckinghamshire Council. As the current councils will no longer exist, their respective schemes of members' allowances will cease and allowances will no longer be payable, pursuant to the Regulations.
- 2.4 Therefore, in addition to making recommendations on a scheme of allowances for the new cohort of councillors to be elected in May, the Panel has also been asked to consider what approach should be taken to the provision of allowances during the Interim Period.
- 2.5 A scheme for the payment of a BA must be adopted by the Shadow Council for Buckinghamshire Council. It may also adopt a scheme for the payment of SRAs and other allowances. Members must have regard to the recommendations of the Panel in relation to a scheme of allowances before adopting any scheme. Therefore, councillors themselves acting as a relevant authority make the final decision about what allowances are to be available.
- 2.6 Regulation 20 (2) requires that an independent remuneration panel shall consist of at least three members none of whom:

- (a) Is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority; or
- (b) Is disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.

2.7 The four members of the Panel are individuals, none of whom are disqualified from being or becoming a member of a relevant authority.

2.8 The Panel has been asked to formulate recommendations for a scheme of members' allowances for Buckinghamshire Council for the Interim Period.

2.9 The Panel met on 12 November 2019 and 9 January 2020, and corresponded regularly throughout the process through electronic methods.

2.10 The Panel was provided with the following evidence:

- (i) relevant guidance and legislation (Allowances Regulations);
- (ii) benchmarking data of similar sized unitary authorities and current Buckinghamshire Councils' current allowances;
- (iii) information relating to the composition of Buckinghamshire Council;
- (iv) emerging governance structure for Buckinghamshire Council and anticipated roles of members, including the proposed structure and role of scrutiny within the new Council; and
- (v) a summary of the proposed committees included within the governance structure.

2.11 A questionnaire was sent to all of the Shadow Buckinghamshire Councillors seeking views on the average amount of time spent on council business, what level of BA may be appropriate for members of Buckinghamshire Council and other aspects relating to members' allowances. 46 responses were received, although not all respondents provided a response to all of the questions.

2.12 Members of the Shadow Executive provided a proposed scheme for the Panel to consider.

2.13 The Panel was supported by:

Sarah Ashmead, Deputy Chief Executive of Buckinghamshire Council
Cath Whitehead, Head of Legal at Wycombe District Council and Deputy Monitoring Officer for the Shadow Buckinghamshire Council
Mathew Bloxham, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager for Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils (C&SB)
Leslie Ashton, Senior Democratic and Electoral Services Officer for C&SB
Jack Pearce, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer for C&SB

2.14 The Panel recognises and acknowledges that the evidence provided is based upon emerging work in relation to the development of the Constitution and governance structure for Buckinghamshire Council and the best predictions of workloads and roles.

2.15 The Panel had regard to the extent to which the initial 202 members of Buckinghamshire Council may be engaged in the normal business of a relevant authority in the Interim Period and whether proposals for the scheme of allowances should differ in the Interim Period.

2.16 The Panel notes that the reorganisation of the five councils provides a unique opportunity to update the allowances.

3. Recommendations for Interim Period – 1 April to 11 May 2020

3.1 The Panel was advised that there were not any full council meetings scheduled to take place during the interim period. A small number of committees may meet during the interim period in order to deal with any urgent matters, and the Shadow Executive Committee will continue to meet informally and make urgent decisions where required. It is also noted that the pre-election period will have begun prior to 1 April, which may also have an impact upon and limit decision-making activity of the new authority during the Interim Period.

3.2 The Panel noted that there will be an ongoing community representation role for all councillors during the Interim Period. It is further noted that councillors seeking election to the new council will likely be involved in election campaign activities during this period.

3.3 The Panel considers that continuing the payment of a BA in the Interim Period would be in recognition that all councillors will continue to perform their community representation role, whether or not they seek election to the new council.

3.4 The Panel noted that the Shadow Executive would continue to meet informally during the interim period and would very much still be playing a key role in the operation of the new Council, with Shadow Executive Members being responsible for their own specific portfolios.

3.5 Taking account of the anticipated responsibility of the Shadow Executive Committee during this interim period, the Panel considered an SRA should be payable to each member of the Executive, although agreed that the SRA should take into account that key decisions required by the Executive during this period should be minimal.

- 3.6 The Panel received representations from Members that substitute members of the Shadow Executive would also have a role in deputising and being involved in the transition activities being undertaken by the Shadow Executive. However, on the understanding that there will not be a significant number of meetings and members of the Executive would usually attend all meetings, it is felt that a separate SRA is not warranted.
- 3.7 The Panel noted that it would not be lawful to continue the existing Councils' allowances schemes as this would lead to different levels of BA being payable which was not permitted in the regulations.
- 3.8 The Panel recommends to pay a BA to all members of the Shadow Council for the Interim Period based on the representational role only and reflects that all 202 councillors would continue to serve residents taking into account the pre-election period regardless of whether councillors were seeking re-election.
- 3.9 The Panel would further recommend that in the event of meetings being called in the Interim Period, then councillors should be reimbursed for their travelling expenses and a carer's allowance, if required, which should be payable based on its recommendations for the post-Interim Period at paragraphs 6.4 and 8.3.

3.10 The Panel recommends that during the Interim Period:

- (a) The rate of the basic allowance to be paid to members of Buckinghamshire Council shall be set at £360;**
- (b) An SRA of £600 be paid to Shadow Executive Members;**
- (c) Travel subsistence to be paid to members in line with the HMRC Mileage Allowance Payments for undertaking official business during the Interim Period;**
- (d) A dependant carers' allowance be paid to members as set out in paragraph 8.3**

4. Recommendations for Buckinghamshire Council BA to come into effect on 11 May 2020

- 4.1 The Panel carefully considered the benchmarking data provided, the representations put forward by members of the Shadow Executive and responses to the all member questionnaire.
- 4.2 Views of respondents to the questionnaire suggested a varied level of BA, ranging from remaining at the existing County Council rate to being brought in line with other unitary authorities. Many respondents felt that the BA should be performance based, something the Panel agrees with, however legislation dictates

that the BA must be the same for each such member of an authority and as such we are bound to recommending one BA. Respondents reported a wide ranging number of average hours spent per week on Council business. The working hours ranged from 6 to over 26 hours per week, with the majority reporting spending 16 to 20 hours per week on Council business, this could be explained in part by the wide range of roles performed by those councillors who returned the questionnaire. The majority expected that there would be an increase in the number of hours spent on council business in the new council. The reasons cited included that there would be an increased number of services which the new Council would provide. Other reasons cited included more time spent travelling, and fewer members. Several respondents commented that the expected time and workload would very much depend on the number of committees a Councillor was appointed to, and whether they held any positions with additional responsibility.

- 4.3 The Panel accepted that unitary council services would add significantly to councillors' workload. For example, District Councillors would not be experienced with complex services such as Adult and Children's services, whilst County Councillors may not be experienced with Local Planning and Licensing matters. The complexity of these services will add significantly to the workload of those councillors not used to dealing with strategic cross district services.
- 4.4 It was acknowledged that the BA should be set at a level that would attract people from a broad demographic to stand for election and make the role itself more attractive. This will be of further importance if the Council elects to hold meetings during daytime hours as candidates will want to know that they will be appropriately compensated for their loss of paid working time.
- 4.5 The Panel is aware that the BA is an allowance and not a salary and is offered in recognition of members' time and certain expenses incurred on Council business.
- 4.6 Within the sample of similar sized unitary authorities in the benchmarking data, the BA ranges from £10,500 to £14,472.
- 4.7 The Panel was advised that the electoral ratio figures for the new council state that the average electorate per councillor will be 1:3637 whereas currently it is 1:3102, 1:2302, 1:2402, 1:2958 and 1:10913 for Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks, Wycombe and Buckinghamshire County Council respectively. With the significant changes it would now seem that their existing allowances were not in keeping with unitary authorities.
- 4.8 The Panel is aware that the scheme can be set for a maximum period of four years and that the scheme may be linked to an index. The creation of the new Council makes the task of setting allowances a complex one. The Panel recognised that the Council was about to go through a period of significant change and therefore suggested that allowances be reviewed earlier than four years. It was suggested that Councillors determine when the early review of allowances takes place, but

this was likely to be around one to two years' time. After which a review of allowances could then be undertaken every four years to coincide with the election of new members. The Panel is aware that any proposed changes to an agreed scheme of allowances would be subject to the Council having regard to the recommendations of the Panel. If a review of allowances was not carried out after one year the Panel, having considered representations and data comparisons, recommended the annual indexation of allowances to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or the locally agreed officers' pay award, whichever is lower.

4.9 The Panel recommends that the rate of the basic allowance paid to members:

(a) Be set at £13,000 per annum

(b) That a review of allowances be undertaken by the Panel at a suitable time determined by councillors to check that the scheme continues to be suitable following a period of significant change for the Council. If a review is not undertaken within one year then the basic allowance is to be adjusted by an amount equivalent to the increase in the officers' annual pay award or by CPI, whichever is lower. As the maximum period a scheme may be linked to an index is four years the Panel must meet to review allowances no later than 2024.

5. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

5.1 The Panel agreed that in principle a clear justified methodology for calculating SRAs was required. It was recommended that SRAs be based on a proportion of the BA. For example, a multiplier of the BA could be used according to the duties and responsibilities associated with each role. The multipliers for each SRA are shown in paragraph 5.16.

5.2 From the questionnaire responses and Shadow Executive representations, the Leader of the new Council would be expected to establish the priorities, behaviours and values for the Buckinghamshire Council for the forthcoming five years. There are currently five sovereign councils with different cultures and bringing them together into a new organisation will be a significant task. There is a significant responsibility to start the Council in the most positive way. Cabinet Members would need to share significant workloads in order to achieve the objectives of the new council. The Cabinet Members would be responsible for individual decision making within their portfolio. The roles of the Leader and Cabinet Member would likely increase in the foreseeable period, particularly in relation to those equivalent roles in the existing sovereign councils. It was noted that the SRA for the Leader proposed by the Shadow Executive had been based on the complexity of the role and took into account the methodology used by the County Council and Wycombe District Council's which was 3.5 x basic allowance. An SRA for the Leader is therefore recommended at the level shown in paragraph 5.16.

- 5.3 The Panel acknowledges that the role of the Cabinet Member was significantly more than committee chairman and the emerging governance structure indicates that they would be making individual key decisions. An SRA for Cabinet Members is therefore recommended at the level shown in paragraph 5.16.
- 5.4 The Panel understands that the Deputy Leader's workload would be different to that of a Cabinet Member since they would be required to deputise for the Leader. A Deputy Leader may also have responsibility for their own portfolio and individual decision making as well as also deputising for the Leader. Up to two Deputy Leaders may be appointed. The Leader would determine how cabinet roles would be allocated. The Panel therefore agreed to recommend that the SRA for Deputy Leader would depend according to the number of Deputy Leaders appointed and whether or not they had a portfolio. An SRA for Deputy Leader is therefore recommended at the level shown in paragraph 5.16.
- 5.5 The Panel noted that there could be up to 9 Deputy Cabinet Members and they had specific responsibilities set out in the draft Constitution. This included supporting and assisting Cabinet Members for example by deputising for Cabinet Members. This would involve frequently being in the office, attending meetings and briefings. They may for example be required to attend scrutiny committees to answer questions on policy and decisions made. In practice they would also likely take on a proportion of a Cabinet member's workload and would be involved in stakeholder engagement. Decisions delegated to a Corporate Director would also be made in consultation with a Deputy Cabinet Member, in the absence of a Cabinet Member. The Panel agreed that an SRA for Deputy Cabinet Members was appropriate to reflect the associated duties and responsibility. The Panel recommended the SRA as shown in paragraph 5.16.
- 5.6 The Panel understands that the civic role of Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Council would be significant and will have important links to other partner organisations. The Chairman will have an important role in managing and presiding over regular Council meetings to ensure that Councillors who are not Cabinet Members or Committee Chairman are able to hold office holders to account. Whilst the Panel are not in favour of paying SRAs to vice chairmen in general, the Vice-Chairman of Council is an exception, as, in addition to deputising for the Chairman at meetings of the Council, they will also fulfil a civic role. It is further recognised that each sovereign Council's Chairmen currently attend a large number of events and the amalgamation of all 5 councils would likely lead to a significantly increased workload. The SRAs recommended for the Council Chairman and Council Vice-Chairman is therefore recommended at the level shown in paragraph 5.16.
- 5.7 The Panel used the emerging governance structure and Constitution to inform its considerations of other SRAs and understands that the roles would evolve. The Panel understands that scrutiny is a valuable resource which requires investment and is vital in holding the executive to account. There would be six scrutiny committees each with their own range of service areas. Each one would have

similar workloads and responsibilities. It was felt that the workload and responsibility of Scrutiny Committee Chairman would be similar to other Committee Chairman and therefore the respective SRAs should be similar as shown in paragraph 5.16.

5.8 The Panel felt that the Chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee and the five Area Planning Committee Chairmen would have particular responsibilities, require additional time commitment and were publicly high profile Committees. For example, Committee decisions could be significant, high profile, publicly sensitive and often contentious. The SRA recommended is shown in paragraph 5.16.

5.9 The Panel noted that there would be one Licensing Committee with two standing sub committees and in noting the roles and responsibilities therefore agreed to recommend an SRA as shown in paragraph 5.16

5.10 It was noted that although the Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee had specific responsibilities this role would be filled by a Cabinet Member who would receive their own SRA. Similarly, the Chairman of the Pay and Senior Appointments Committee would also be filled by a Cabinet Member who would receive their own SRA. The Panel therefore agreed that there be no SRA for the Chairman of the Pension Fund Committee and the Chairman of the Pay and Senior Appointments Committee.

5.11 After considering the Committee structure, the Committees' associated roles and responsibilities, as detailed in the draft Constitution, the Panel recommended that the Chairman of each of the following Committees each have the same SRA as shown in paragraph 5.16.

- Audit and Governance Committee
- Standards and General Purposes Committee

5.12 Most respondents to the questionnaire advocated that members should only be entitled to claim one SRA regardless of how many SRAs they are entitled to. This is a rule that is common amongst local authority member allowances schemes.

5.13 It was noted that there would be 16 Community Boards and there would be a review of the operation of them early in the new Council's life. It was recommended that an SRA for Chairman of each Community Boards was justified. The recommended level is shown in paragraph 5.16.

5.14 An update on the Community Governance Review was noted, and the SRA for the High Wycombe Town Committee Chairman would therefore remain as shown in paragraph 5.16

5.15 The Panel heard that the role of minority group leaders would be important for the management of the new council. For the purposes of the Regulations a

group is more than one member, but there is no requirement for an SRA to be paid to any Group Leader. The Panel considered what number ought to constitute a group for the purposes of the awarding of an SRA and took into account the large size of council membership. The Panel considers that were an allowance to be split proportionally, any registered group's Leader should be entitled to a share to reflect their additional workload.

5.16 The Panel recommends that the following special responsibility allowances be paid in recognition of the additional workload, levels of responsibility and accountability placed upon the following roles:

- **Leader £45,500 (3.5 x BA)**
- **Deputy Leader £26,000 (2 x BA) if they hold a portfolio**
- **Deputy Leader £13,000 (1 x BA) if they do not hold a portfolio**
- **Cabinet Members £19,500 (1.5 x BA)**
- **Deputy Cabinet Members £6,500 (0.5 x BA)**
- **Chairman of the Council £13,000 (1 x BA)**
- **Vice-Chairman of the Council £6,500 (0.5 x BA)**
- **Chairman of Strategic Planning Committee £9,750 (0.75 x BA)**
- **Chairmen of Area Planning Committees £9,750 (0.75 x BA)**
- **Chairman of Licensing Committee £3,900 (0.3 x BA)**
- **Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee £7,800 (0.6 x BA)**
- **Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees £7,800 (0.6 x BA)**
- **Chairman of Pension Fund Committee £ nil**
- **Chairman of Pay and Senior Appointments Committee £ nil**
- **Standards and General Purposes Committee £7,800 (0.6 x BA)**
- **Chairman of Community Boards £1,000**
- **Chairman of High Wycombe Town Committee £3,420 (if required)**
- **Group Leaders SRA £17,000 split proportionally dependent upon group size (e.g. Group Leader SRA = £17,000 divide by 147 x number of group members)**

5.17 The Panel further recommends that:

- a) **No SRAs be paid to Vice-Chairmen of Committees with the exception of the Vice-Chairman of Council**
- b) **Members may not receive more than one SRA**
- c) **That a review of allowances be undertaken by the Panel at a suitable time determined by councillors to check that the scheme is suitable following a period of significant change for the Council. If a review is not undertaken within one year then SRAs be adjusted by an amount equivalent to the increase in the officers' annual pay award or by CPI, whichever is lower. As the maximum period a scheme may be linked to an index is four years the Panel must meet to review allowances no later than 2024.**

6. Travel Allowances

6.1 The Panel notes that each of the relevant councils currently pays approved amounts under HMRC mileage allowance payments (MAPs). Anything payable above MAP approved amounts result in a taxable benefit to the claimant. The Panel further notes that to introduce taxable benefits into the travel allowances scheme would be a disproportionate bureaucratic burden on the authority.

6.2 The MAP approved amounts are currently:

- (a) Car – 45p per mile up to 10,000 and 25p per mile thereafter (including electrically powered);
- (b) Passenger payments – up to 5p per mile per passenger (up to a maximum of four) to be claimed only for passengers who would otherwise be eligible for travelling allowance;
- (c) Motorcycle – 24p per mile (including electrically powered);
- (d) Bicycle – 20p per mile (including electrically assisted e.g. ebike);
- (e) In relation to public transport (including rail and bus) – standard fare; and
- (f) Parking fees – actual cost

6.3 The Panel note and agree with Shadow Executive representations that sustainable methods of transport should be encouraged where possible, including use of electric/hybrid transportation.

6.4 The Panel recommends the travel allowances be paid to members:

(a) In line with MAP for undertaking official business; and

(b) Travelling to the Buckinghamshire Council offices for meetings and official business.

7. Subsistence allowances

7.1 Subsistence allowances includes the costs of:

- (a) Accommodation (if a member is required to stay overnight); and
- (b) Meals and other 'subsistence' while travelling

7.2 The Panel wishes to emphasise that subsistence should be only claimable for undertaking official business outside of the new unitary council area.

7.3 The Panel recommends the following subsistence allowances be paid to members in the case of an overnight stay away from the usual place of residence:

- (i) Breakfast £6.50 (more than 4 hours away before 11am)**
- (ii) Lunch £9 (business journeys entailing working away from normal place of work between 12 and 2pm)**

- (iii) **Dinner £11.50 (can be claimed when required to work outside of usual rostered requirements and away from normal place of work after 8.30pm)**

8. Carers' allowance

8.1 The Panel reviewed the carers' allowance currently included in the sovereign councils' allowances schemes and acknowledges the importance of setting this at such a level so as to avoid deterring anyone seeking to become a councillor.

8.2 The Panel considered setting a ceiling, however understood that members would claim only where necessary and the monitoring officer could monitor this.

8.3 The Panel recommends that a dependant carers' allowance (not payable to a member of the claimant's own household) be recompensed at:

(a) An hourly rate equivalent to 100% of the national living wage to be linked to changes at national level (£8.21 as at December 2019) for childcare

(b) An hourly rate of actual cost for adult/elderly/disabled dependent care, to be paid at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer

9. Co-opted Members

9.1 The Panel understands that Buckinghamshire Council will have co-opted members who are members of committees such as the Thames Valley Police and Crime Panel. The Panel recognises these are important roles, but as members shall be receiving a basic allowance, the Panel felt that a separate SRA is not warranted.

10. Foregoing and donating allowances

10.1 The Panel recommends that members may, if they wish, forego all or any part of their entitlement to BA or any SRA by giving notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer of Buckinghamshire Council.

10.2 The Panel also supports any members who wish to donate any of their allowances through a 'Give as you earn' scheme.

10.3 **The Panel recommends that where a member ceases to be a member of Buckinghamshire Council, or ceases to occupy a role attracting an SRA, that the member only receives pro-rata payment for the period that they are entitled to receive an allowance. The authority may require that such part of any allowance as relates to any such period be repaid to the authority where an overpayment is made.**

11. Emerging Governance Structure

- 11.1 The Panel received evidence that the governance structure would continue to evolve over time and that these would be matters for the Buckinghamshire Council and not the shadow council. Specifically, this would include how the culture of the new council would evolve.
- 11.2 The Panel has made its recommendations on the information made available to it as of January 2020 and recognises change will occur as the new Council evolves.
- 11.3 Given that change was likely during the formative years of the Council, the Panel recommends an early review of allowances is undertaken at a time considered appropriate by members. For example, after one or two years following the current review. If the early review takes place after one year then the Council could index link allowances to CPI or the officer's annual pay award, whichever is the lower. Following the early review, a scheme of allowances could then be index linked for up to four years to tie in with the election cycle for the new Council. It is further recognised that following a Boundary Commission review during the first 5 years of the Council, it is likely the number of members would reduce for the elections in 2025, at that point a further review would be necessary to establish how responsibilities would change.

12. Member Performance, Accountability and Transparency

- 12.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel is mindful that a key objective behind the formation of the new unitary Buckinghamshire Council is to realise cost savings and reduce the overall financial burden on the residents of the County. The original unitary business case set a budget of £1,927,000 to cover Members' Allowances, however the Secretary of State's decision to set the number of members at 147 has substantially eroded the targeted savings of £635,000.
- 12.2 The scheme put forward by Members totalled £2,409,420. This provides a saving when compared to the current total of allowances paid by all existing councils. The Scheme recommended by the Panel totals £2,371,220. The actual amount will depend on how roles are actually filled.
- 12.3 The flat rate Basic Allowance scheme in operation allows Members to receive not inconsiderable remuneration by automatic right as they are permitted to receive allowances by simply being a Member. The only legal requirement is that a Member must attend a formal meeting of the Council not less than once every six months.
- 12.4 The Panel is keen to establish the principle of enhanced transparency and accountability for the payment and receipts of allowances by all Members of the Buckinghamshire Council. It is recognised that it is difficult to develop meaningful

performance measures and even more difficult to enforce any such measures but there should be a means to hold Members to account if they are not undertaking the duties that are reasonably expected of them. It may well be a reiterative process that takes time to become effective. The Panel proposes that its recommendations on the scope and levels of allowances should only be accepted as part of a wider package that includes taking up the accompanying recommendations on Member performance. The Panel does not accept that the Council can take up one without the other. It will also be a further means by which the Panel in the future can assess the effectiveness of Members.

- 12.5 The Panel considers that electors would expect that a Member should only be entitled to claim the full basic allowance, or where relevant special allowance, should that Member attend a minimum of, for example, between 50% and 60% of Full Council meetings, Committee meetings or Scrutiny meetings that they are appointed to over each financial year. The Panel recognises that such a measure could only be put into effect through a voluntary claw-back scheme.

Enhancing Performance, Accountability and Transparency

- 12.6 The Panel is convinced of the need to ensure that its recommendations relating to levels of allowances are intrinsically linked to the Council adopting mechanisms to enhance Member performance, accountability and transparency. The mechanisms are presented below in a hierarchical fashion, increasing in severity as one goes down the list.

Publishing Attendance Records

- 12.7 As part of the general statement of performance the Panel believes that remuneration should involve a degree of sharpened accountability by the publication in appropriate forums such as Council web pages, local libraries, and parish halls, etc, of Members' attendance records. The Panel understands that the Buckinghamshire Council does intend to publish attendance records on the website. The Panel recommends that the publication of attendances by Members should include provision for valid absences, such as attending constituent duties, illness and/or representing the Council externally.

Member Statement of Activities

- 12.8 The Panel also recommends that Members have the opportunity to fill in a pro forma on a periodic basis to allow them to give an account of their activities outside the Council, including an analysis of case work that they undertake in their wards, as well as attendance at formal meetings. All Members are likely to have access to a laptop and the Council intranet, with their own webpage, accompanied by appropriate training. It is relatively simple for each Member to write and publish their activity statements on their web page. These activity statements could then be used by electors and other interested parties to evaluate the performance of

Members in areas of activity that cannot be captured by the publication of attendance records.

Member Role Profiles – a Compact with the Electorate

12.9 The Panel recommends that the Council adopt Member Role Profiles. These Role Profiles should form the basis of a role and accountability statement, an increasingly common practice in many authorities. They should be utilised to make explicit the respective roles, duties, responsibilities and competencies expected from Members and post holders. They should contain minimum performance measures that Members are expected to reach such as: the scope and type of committees etc, that a Member is expected to be on, such as a Scrutiny Panel.

- The minimum number of meetings a Member is expected to attend, e.g. at least 50% or 60%?
- That they should be expected to attend an approved duty at least every 3 rather than 6 months so they cannot meet their attendance requirements by frontloading within an intensive period.
- That Members are expected to take part in an individual Training and Development programme with the aim of increasing their own personal skills and capacity. Through the extensive publicity of Members duties and expected inputs, other elected Members and the public can be informed on what is to be expected from being elected.

12.10 To give further effect to the role profiles, a Compact with the Electorate' could be developed which Members are asked to sign. Such compacts are ultimately difficult to enforce but it makes an explicit link between allowances received and a specific set of tasks and duties a Member is expected to undertake. Members cannot claim they did not know what they are expected to do and moreover it provides moral leverage for the rest of the Council to utilise.

Allowance Claw-back Scheme

12.11 Some authorities have a claw back scheme. For legal reasons it has to be adhered to on a 'voluntary' basis. Essentially this mechanism 'fines' a Member if they do not meet a target of attending a set percentage of meetings (often 50-60% or more). It is pointed out that in the few authorities where claw back has been adopted it is rarely invoked and appears to have limited value. Nonetheless, the Panel received evidence that the Council would appreciate having such a mechanism as part of the allowances' scheme even if it has to be voluntary arrangement. Thus, the Panel recommends the Council adopt a claw back

mechanism. As a voluntary process the claw back is probably best implemented through the group system. The Panel also recommends that the minimum standards the Council adopts for claw back to be activated should not be seen as a substitute for non-performance. Members should not be paying the claw back fine as way of circumventing their duties.

12.12 The Panel recommends that the Council puts in place the following measures to enhance performance, accountability and transparency:

- a) The publication of attendance records for Members at Full Council, Committee meetings and Scrutiny committees**
- b) Provision to Members of the opportunity to publish a periodic statement of activities**
- c) Adoption of role profiles for each Member in order to make clear both to the Members and electors what is expected of them**
- d) Introduction of an allowance claw-back scheme.**

13. Town and Parish Council allowances

- 13.1 In addition to considering a scheme for Buckinghamshire Council, the Panel also considered recommendations to Town and Parish Councils across Buckinghamshire.
- 13.2 All Towns and Parishes were contacted by email in September 2019 and invited to submit representations and details of their respective schemes. 24 responses were received.
- 13.3 From the responses received it is evident that many Parish Councils pay no allowances and that the role of a Town or Parish Councillor is very much community based and time spent performing Parish Councillor duties was often viewed as voluntary. There is a wide range of towns and parishes across Buckinghamshire, with large town council's including Aylesbury, Buckingham and Chesham, amongst others through to small, rural, parishes who serve a relatively small electorate.
- 13.4 None of the responses indicate a need for any significant change to any respective scheme, although two respondents did make the panel aware that parishes would likely face increased pressures from services being devolved from Buckinghamshire Council.
- 13.5 The Panel believes that a sensible way to set a scheme would be to base recommended allowances around percentages of the unitary basic allowance which increases on the size of the electorate. This has been an approach used previously.
- 13.6 Towns and Parishes may choose to adopt recommendations for all members, or for the Chairman only. Where all members of a Parish receive a BA, the Chairman could receive a higher amount, up to twice that of the recommended basic allowance.
- 13.7 The Panel wishes to make clear that it is not recommending all towns and parishes pay an allowance to its members but recommends that those who do have regard to the panel's recommendations.
- 13.8 Further, the Panel recommends that Town and Parish Councils pay travel and subsistence allowances at the same rates as Buckinghamshire Council.

13.9 (i) The Panel recommends that where Towns and Parishes choose to implement a scheme of allowances they have regard to the below table. Towns and Parishes may choose to adopt recommendations for all members, or for the Chairman only. Where all members of a Parish receive a BA, the Chairman could receiver an amount up to twice that of the recommended allowance.

Electorate	% of Unitary Basic (£13,000)	Amount per Councillor £ (up to)
0-2500	1.5	£195
2501 - 5000	2.5	£325
5001 - 10000	3.5	£455
10001 - 15000	4.5	£585
15001 - 20000	5.5	£715
20001 - 25000	6.5	£845
25001 and above	9	£1,170

(ii) The Panel recommends that Towns and Parishes follow the Buckinghamshire Council scheme when setting travel and subsistence allowances.

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL
SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES**

1. The 'Interim' Period – 1 April 2020 to 11 May 2020

	Amount (£)
Basic Allowance	£360
Special Responsibility Allowances	
Shadow Executive Members	£600
Substitute Shadow Executive Members	£300

- (a) Travel and subsistence be paid to members in line with the HMRC Mileage Allowance Payments for undertaking official business during the Interim Period in line with the scheme for the period 11 May 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- (b) A dependant carers' allowance be paid to members in line with the scheme for the period 11 May 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2. Recommended allowances for the period 11 May 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2.1

Post holder	Amount (£)
Basic Allowance (all Members)	13,000
Leader	45,000
Deputy Leader(s)	30,000
Cabinet Members	23,000
Deputy Cabinet Members	8,000
Chairman of the Council	14,000
Vice-Chairman of the Council	4,000
Chairman of Strategic Planning Committee	8,000
Chairman of Area Planning Committees	6,000
Chairman of Licensing Committee	4,000
Chairman of Scrutiny Committees	8,000
Chairman of Audit & Governance Committee	8,000
Chairman of Standards and General Purposes Committee	8,000

Chairman of Pension Fund Committee*	nil
Chairman of Pay and Senior Appointments Committee*	nil
Chairman of High Wycombe Town Committee (if required)	3,420
Chairman of a Community Board (16)	1,000
Party Group Leader	17,000 to be split proportionally dependent upon group size (Group Leader SRA = £17,000 divide by 147 x number of group members)

*these roles will be Cabinet Member responsibilities

Limitations on Payment of Special Responsibility Allowances:

- 2.2 Members may not receive more than one SRA, and where a Member occupies multiple roles with an SRA the Member shall be entitled to receive the higher SRA from the roles they hold.
- 2.3 Allowances shall be adjusted annually by an amount equivalent to the officers' annual pay award. Adjustment to the Scheme of allowances by indexation is limited to a maximum period of four years, however members may request the Independent Remuneration Panel to review allowances at an earlier time.

3. Other Allowances

Members may make claims for the following expenditure when undertaking official Council business. The approved duties are the categories contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 shown in part 5.

3.1. Travelling

Sustainable modes of transport are encouraged where possible. The use of a Member's car, motorcycle or bicycle for approved duties (see part 5 for list of approved duties) will be paid at the same rate as the officers, i.e. the rate published from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs: www.hmrc.gov.uk/rates/travel.htm. The agreed rates as of January 2020 are as follows, including electric and hybrid models:

Cars and vans*	45p per mile
Motor cycles*	24p per mile
Bicycles (includes ebikes)	20p per mile

* includes electrically powered vehicles

3.2. Public Transport

- Train fares for approved duties to be paid at standard fare on production of a receipt/ticket.
- Bus fares for approved duties to be paid on production of a receipt/ticket.
- Approved taxi fares to be paid on production of a receipt.

3.3. Subsistence

Subsistence allowances	Breakfast (more than 4 hours away before 11am)	£6.50
	Lunch (business journeys entailing working away from normal place of work between 12 and 2pm)	£9
	Dinner (can be claimed when required to work outside of usual rostered requirements and away from usual place of work after 8.30pm)	£11.50
Overnight expenses	Per night when staying away from usual place of residence	Reasonable overnight rate.

3.4. Dependent Carers' Allowance

The maximum rates at which dependent care may be claimed is:

£8.21*per hour for child care

*National Living Wage to be linked to changes at national level (£8.21 as of 1 April 2019 for an over 25)

Actual cost per hour for adult/elderly/disabled dependent care, to be paid at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer.

3.5. Co-opted and Independent Members' allowance

An allowance is not to be payable to co-opted and independent members.

4. Forgoing / Donating Allowances

Where a member ceases to be a member of Buckinghamshire Council, or ceases to occupy a role attracting an SRA, that the member only receives pro-rata payment for the period that they are entitled to receive an allowance. The authority may require that such part of any allowance as relates to any such period be repaid to the authority where an overpayment is made.

5. Approved Duties

Members may make claims for travel, subsistence and dependant carers' allowance when undertaking official Council business in line with the approved duties categories contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out below:

- (a) the attendance at a meeting of the authority or of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or of any other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations, or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body;
- (b) the attendance at any other meeting, the holding of which is authorised by the authority, or a committee or sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more local authority within the meaning of section 270(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee provided that:
 - (i) where the authority is divided into two or more political groups it is a meeting to which members of at least two such groups have been invited, or
 - (ii) if the authority is not so divided, it is a meeting to which at least two members of the authority have been invited;
- (c) the attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the authority is a member;
- (d) the attendance at a meeting of the executive or a meeting of any of its committees, where the authority is operating executive arrangements;
- (e) the performance of any duty in pursuance of any standing order made under section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
- (f) the performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;
- (g) the performance of any duty in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at any school approved for the purposes of section 342 (approval of non-maintained special schools) of the Education Act 1996, and
- (h) the carrying out of any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of a class so approved, for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of any of its committees or sub-committees.

The law prevents payment for:

- Members' surgeries
- Political activities
- School Governor meetings (Section 58 of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986)

6. Performance, accountability and transparency

Attendance records for Members at Full Council, Committee meetings and Scrutiny committees will be published on the website.

Members will have the opportunity to publish a periodic statement of activities on their individual councillor web page.

Role profiles to make it clear both to the Members and electors what is expected will be included within the Constitution.

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Report for:	Shadow Executive
Meeting Date:	18 February 2020

Title of Report:	A404/A4155 Westhorpe Junction Improvements
Shadow Portfolio Holder	Mark Shaw
Responsible Officer	Ian McGowan / Richard Barker
Report Author Officer Contact:	Lee Stevens, 01296 387344, lstevens@buckscc.gov.uk
Recommendations:	<p>1) That the Shadow Executive approves the commission of the preliminary design phase of the project including ground investigation works (value £375,000 – using secured and released s106/CIL funding)</p> <p>2) That the Shadow Executive notes the risks associated with the scheme.</p>
Corporate Implications:	<p>The recently completed Westhorpe Interchange Improvements Feasibility Report has highlighted that the range of current forecast costs for the scheme is between £3.225M and £3.574M, £518k and £867k over the currently approved budget of £2.7M.</p> <p>Whilst some work has already been undertaken on the project (providing 20% cost certainty), to provide increased scheme cost and programme certainty, further design and investigation work (pre-construction) is required on the scheme. Opportunities to mitigate risks (potential utility diversions) and value engineering (retaining wall scope and design) will be explored to seek to avoid the current forecast overspend.</p> <p>A bid for £250k of CIL funding has recently been submitted to Wycombe District Council, to partially mitigate the current 'best' case £518k budget shortfall.</p>
Options: (If any)	<p>Options are set out in more detail within the main body of this report. They are:</p> <p>1) Commission the preliminary design phase and ground investigation work to provide greater certainty around project risks (ground conditions and utilities) and construction costs. This option would allow a full decision on progression of the scheme to be taken by the Buckinghamshire Council in late summer 2020.</p> <p>2) To pause the project now and bid for more funding. This will however increase the risk of losing £970,000 funding</p>

	<p>from Local Transport Board (LTB) and/or £1.187M Highways England (HE) already awarded to the scheme. Delaying project implementation would also increase the cost of the scheme due to construction inflation.</p> <p>Ahead of the pre-construction commission being approved by the Shadow Executive, a relatively minor piece of vegetation clearance is proposed to be carried out using already released funding during February 2020 to enable the project to meet its current programme and funding obligations (to spend LTB funding by March 2021). This work comprises hedge cutting and scrub clearance on BCC land alongside the A404 slip lane which will facilitate access later in 2020 for ground investigation work. The vegetation clearance work needs to be carried out in February to avoid bird nesting times. Should this not proceed, there would be a potential 6-8 month delay to programme and vital ground information would remain unknown.</p>
Reason:	<p>The primary reasons for the current scheme cost uncertainty are the relatively limited design work, lack of ground investigation work and lack of detailed utility information. Assumptions and allowances have been included in the scheme forecast to allow for utility diversions and the structural work required to the retaining wall, however these assumptions are based on limited information</p> <p>By undertaking the proposed pre-construction work and design development the scheme forecast outturn will be more certain. Any decision to agree to progress the advanced works needs to be taken in the knowledge that a funding gap may still remain when this work is completed and reported later this summer.</p> <p>The recommended option is to progress with the preliminary design and ground investigation work to provide approximately 80% cost and programme certainty in late Summer 2020.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out the background to the Westhorpe Junction Improvements/Access to Globe Park project and the reasons why it is recommended to approve the project to progress the preliminary design and ground investigation works.

2. Content of Report

Background

2.1 Globe Park is a business park on the eastern side of Marlow (see figure 1), one of the largest in southern Buckinghamshire. The main access into Globe Park is from the A404 and A4155. Historic problems with access delays arising from congestion have resulted in approximately one third of the business park's commercial sites being vacant.

2.2 Motorists travelling along the A404 near Marlow at peak hours currently experience long northbound queues on the slip road, especially in the AM peak.

2.3 The A404 forms part of the Strategic Highway Network and is the responsibility of Highways England (HE) (highlighted green in figure 2 below). The Westthorpe roundabout is the responsibility of Buckinghamshire County Council as Highways Authority (highlighted blue in figure 2 below).

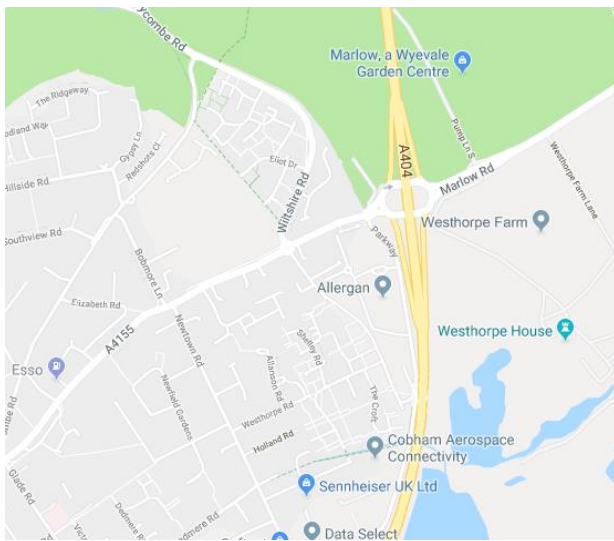


Figure 1 Location plan



Figure 2 Westthorpe Interchange

2.4 A joint application was made in March 2016 to HE's Growth and Housing Fund (GHF) for "an integrated package of measures to improve the junction capacity on the Westthorpe Interchange". The bid was successful and a long period of optioneering and stakeholder engagement followed. In autumn 2018 three options were shortlisted and taken to consultation. Following a well-attended public consultation in January 2019, it emerged that the new slip road had the strongest support, followed by (part-time) signalisation of the Westthorpe Junction. The third measure a new access road into Marlow International (MI) received the least support. Post consultation it has emerged that this option is now no longer deliverable as MI (as landowner) has withdrawn its support for this measure. BCC has received written confirmation from HE with their approval to delete this option from the funding agreement without any loss of funding.

2.5 Work undertaken since the public consultation in January 2019 concentrated on determining the benefits of the preferred options and testing their effectiveness in a transport model. Of the options tested the slip road in combination with signalisation offers the best performance, and was shown to have the best economic benefit for the local area.

2.6 The congestion on the northbound slip road and difficult access from the westbound section of the roundabout into Globe Business Park are the main causes of the low occupation rate on the business park. Globe Park has modelled vacancy rates against potential Gross Value Added that could be achieved if the business park was 100% occupied. The current loss of employment opportunity by virtue of the vacant office space is 1182 employees, equivalent to £47,280,000 GVA based on 2015 figures. ONS reported that in 2015 the Berks, Bucks and Oxon sub region was the 4th fastest growing sub region by GVA per head at 3.3%.

2.7 Given that annual GVA growth for the period 1997-2015 was approximately 3.2% in Bucks and 4% nationally, there is the real prospect that GVA growth will continue at similar

rates from 2015 and for the future. Applying a growth rate of 4% for Globe Business Park the GVA figure for 2019 is in the order of £55,300,000 of economic benefit being lost.

2.8 Attracting and crucially retaining business tenants to Globe Park is therefore of great significance. The case for the new slip lane and signalisation is supported by both traffic modelling in terms of journey times, as well as economic benefit to the local area based on ONS modelling.

Scape framework

2.9 This project has been procured through the Scape framework. Scape is a built environment specialist providing a full suite of national procurement frameworks and design solutions to the public sector. Working with an expert contractor, Scape offers efficient and cost effective services via a tried and tested collaborative process. Available to any public body in the UK, Scape Procure frameworks offers a fast route to market - saving on cost and having a track record of delivering high quality projects. Balfour Beatty were awarded the sole supplier for the Scape Civil Engineering framework. Buckinghamshire County Council were part of the evaluation panel for the Scape framework.

2.10 The Council has developed a good relationship with Balfour Beatty, working since 2016 on the detailed design and build of the A355 Beaconsfield Relief Road. Despite challenging issues and time scales, Balfour Beatty helped navigate the project through to construction/ completion. Although slightly behind schedule the project is set to be delivered under budget. A thorough analysis of procurement options has been conducted and a Project Board Decision was taken to proceed with Scape/Balfour Beatty. Balfour Beatty produced the early costings and Feasibility study for the project.

Under the framework, Balfour Beatty are bound by strict Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), especially on cost certainty which provides cost certainty to the Council as client.

Programme

2.11 There are a number of challenging timescales on the Westhorpe Improvement project. In the original bid it was proposed that the project would be completed by March 2019; this has been superseded by an extension by Highways England to March 2022. However, the second largest funding contribution (LTB funding c£970k) has a spending deadline of March 2021, which is challenging but should be achieved if the preliminary design starts in February 2020.

Budget and Funding Sources

2.12 This project is funded by a number of funding streams. Currently secured and potential funding comprises:

Funding Source	Amount	Funding deadline	Comments
Highways England	£1,187,000	Mar 2022	BCC received in full
s106 (BCC)	£250,000	N/A (historic funds)	Confirmed
CIL (WDC)	£250,000	N/A	Confirmed
Local Transport Board LTB	£969,498	March 2021	Confirmed
WDC	£50,000	N/A	Confirmed
TOTAL	£2,706,498		Confirmed Budget
CIL (WDC)	£250,000	N/A	Bid submitted in July 2019
TOTAL	£2,956,498		Potential budget

Current Scheme Forecast Cost

2.13 The current forecast cost of the scheme is £3,224,598 (best case scenario) or £3,574,248 (worst case scenario). These figures are subject to change and may increase with increased information obtained from the preliminary design work.

2.14 The forecast includes costs associated with the project including

- Feasibility costs
- Preliminary design and ground investigation
- Land acquisition costs
- Construction costs
- Risk

2.15 Based on the best available information to date, the agreed budget is not sufficient to deliver the project. However, pending confirmation of additional CIL funding that was applied for in July 2019 the funding shortfall will be reduced to £268,100 (best case scenario); the project will have a clearer cost picture after the preliminary design and ground investigation. The project team are nevertheless exploring other available funding opportunities to meet the current predicted shortfall; including but not limited to CIL/s106, LGF, HE, BidCo and the new authority.

2.16 A report will be brought back to Buckinghamshire Council in late summer to take a decision on the project.

Reasons for Increase in cost

2.17 Previous project estimates were based on extremely limited information. Since then, the feasibility study which was completed in October 2019 provided better information on costs based on market rates and an outline design. Nevertheless, the current cost picture still has significant uncertainty attached to it, as ground investigations have not yet been carried out

and therefore assumptions have been made about ground conditions, utilities and the underground structure of the existing retaining wall and what changes will be required.

Risks and Opportunities to reduce cost

2.18 There are a number of risks and also opportunities to reduce costs within the project that officers are currently looking into. These include the following:

- **Ground conditions and retaining wall:** Because the project has not carried out ground investigations yet, assumptions have had to be made about the ground conditions and the need for a replacement or reinforcement of the existing retaining wall.
- **Utilities:** Because the project has not carried out ground penetration radar (GPR) yet assumptions have had to be made about the location and need for diversion of utilities. C3 searches are either completed or underway but GPR will establish what work is needed.
- **Highways England:** the slip road is Highways England's responsibility and the project needs to comply with HE requirements, processes and approvals on matters such as hours of working, traffic management and design standards. We also need to agree the reduced scope of works with HE. HE has recently written to BCC confirming that the proposed access at Marlow International can be removed from the scope of works with no loss of funding.

3. Options

3.1 Financially the scheme has two different options:

Option 1

3.2 Commission the preliminary design and ground investigation work to establish greater certainty on current risks and seek cost efficiencies to deliver within the project budget. This option would allow a decision on progression of the scheme to be taken by the new authority in late summer 2020.

Option 2

3.3 Pause the project now and bid for more funding for the overall cost of the project. This would increase the risk of losing existing funding (especially Local Transport Board funding that needs to be spent by March 2021) and inflation costs will be incurred as a result, increasing overall project cost.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the proposal to undertake preliminary design and investigation works, assuming the associated funding is derived and applied in accordance with adopted s106 / CIL policy and procedures, or alternatively any relevant grant funding conditions.

4.2 Full legal implications will need to be included in any subsequent report for overall scheme approval, including any matters relating to the acquisition of land if necessary.

5. Dependencies

5.1 As set out previously, this scheme is being funded by a number of sources and has to be delivered according to their grant conditions and funding deadlines. The LTB funding deadline is March 21 and the project needs to progress to stay on the current programme to meet this deadline. The HE's funding deadline is March 22 which is anticipated to be met with the current programme for scheme completion in Summer 21.

5.2 In addition to funding dependencies, the scheme will require both HE and BCC highways approval. Early engagement, governance and frequent communication between stakeholders and partners will be key to the successful delivery of the project.

5.3 The careful management of traffic during the construction phase will be important to minimise traffic congestion, delays and disruption. A communications strategy aligned with similar complex highways projects delivered recently will be developed and agreed by the Project Board to ensure that all stakeholders are kept well informed of upcoming works and potential delays.

5.4 As the new slip road is to be constructed adjacent to Marlow Fire station the project team will make sure that they are consulted on all upcoming works and involved in the scheme development to mitigate any impacts on their operations. A small area of land has to be acquired from the Fire Service to deliver this scheme. Liaison with Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Service is ongoing.

6. Consultation

6.1 A public consultation on the scheme took place in January 2019. The new slip road had the strongest support followed by (part-time) signalisation of the Westhorpe Junction. The third measure proposed and consulted on, having the weakest support locally, is a new access road into Marlow International. This is currently not possible to deliver as the landowner MI has withdrawn its support for this measure. BCC has recently received written confirmation from HE with their approval to delete this option from the funding agreement without any loss of funding.

6.2 Local Members and Members of BCC's Cabinet have been regularly updated on progress of the scheme.

7. Equalities Implications

7.1 N/A

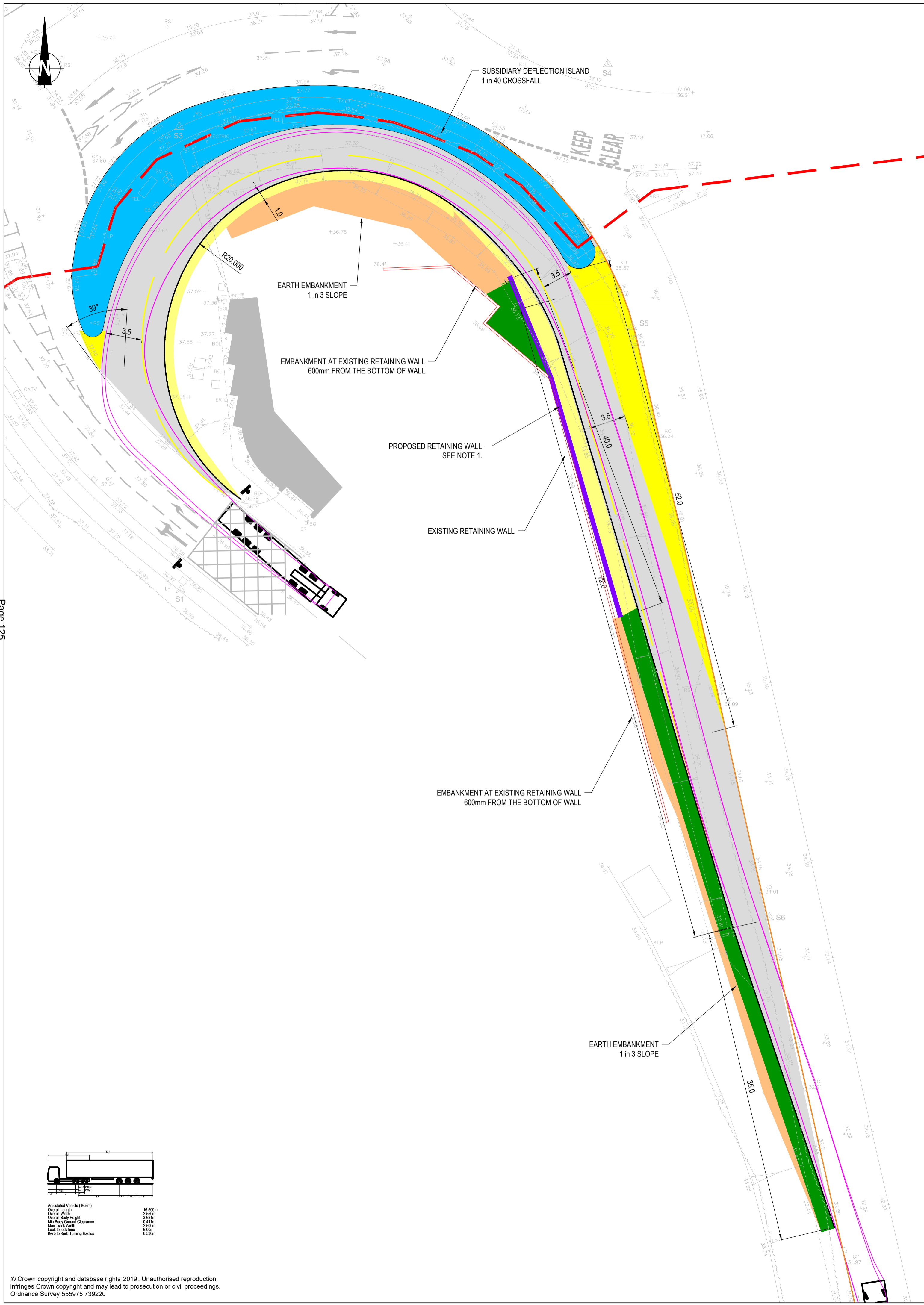
8. Next Steps

8.1 The next steps in the scheme, subject to approval of this report, will be to progress with the preliminary design and ground investigation work, and for a further decision to be taken by Buckinghamshire Council in late summer 2020 about progressing the project.

APPENDICES

















Appendix A: General Arrangement plan showing slip road outline design.

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- NOTES:
1. THE PROPOSED RETAINING WALL WILL HAVE AN AVERAGE HEIGHT OF APPROXIMATELY 1.2m. THE LENGTH IS BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME SO WILL BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
 2. FIRE STATION BOUNDARY BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, LAND REGISTRY TITLE NO. BM287059.
 3. SIGNS ON THE A404 APPROACH WILL NEED TO BE MODIFIED/REPLACED TO SHOW LEFT TURN LANE.
 4. SAFETY FENCE/PARAPET WILL BE REQUIRED BUT EXTENTS ARE UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME.

KEY

	PROPOSED SEGREGATED LEFT TURN CARRIAGEWAY		PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ROUTE
	SUBSIDIARY DEFLECTION ISLAND (FOR PEDESTRIAN USE)		TITLE BOUNDARY
	SERVICE STRIP MINIMUM 1m WIDE		EXISTING A404 CARRIAGEWAY
	EARTHWORKS		PROPOSED KERB LINE
	VERGE 1.5m		PROPOSED ROAD MARKINGS (EXTENTS)
	PROPOSED TAPER HATCH		PROPOSED RETAINING WALL
	FORWARD VISIBILITY - 35m FOR RADIUS 20m (CD116)		VEHICLE TRACKING
	FORWARD VISIBILITY - 70m FOR RADIUS 30m (CD116)		FIRE STATION WARNING LIGHTS

Mark	Revision	Date	Drawn	Chkd	Appd

SCALING NOTE: Do not scale from this drawing. If in doubt, ask.
 UTILITIES NOTE: The position of any existing public or private sewers, utility services, plant or apparatus shown on this drawing is believed to be correct, but no warranty to this is expressed or implied. Other such plant or apparatus may also be present but not shown. The Contractor is therefore advised to undertake their own investigation where the presence of any existing sewers, services, plant or apparatus may affect their operations.

Drawing Issue Status
FOR INFORMATION

WESTHORPE INTERCHANGE, MARLOW
SEGREGATED LEFT TURN LANE (SLTL)
DESIGN PROPOSAL 2

Client
Balfour Beatty

Date of 1st Issue: 13.09.2019
 A1 Scale: 1:500

Designed: VL
 Checked: TG

Drawn: VL
 Approved: -

Drawing Number: **46433/SK006**
 Revision: -

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 Tel: 01189 500 761

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Report for:	Shadow Executive
Meeting Date:	18 February 2020

Title of Report:	USE OF SECTION 106 ACCRUED FUNDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Responsible Officer	Brian Daly, Housing Services Manager, Wycombe District Council.
Officer Contact / report author:	Brian Daly (Brian.Daly@wycombe.gov.uk 01494 421601
Recommendation:	That the Shadow Executive endorse the November 2019 decision of Wycombe District Council's Cabinet to award funding of £800,000 to Paradigm Housing Association on the terms set out in paragraph 7 below.
Corporate Implications:	The accrued s106 funding must be spent on additional affordable housing within 10 years of receipt. If the funding is not utilised for the agreed purpose within the time limit, the developer may seek repayment with any accrued interest.
Options: (If any)	Shadow Executive may either agree or disagree with the recommendation.
Reason:	<p>The Spending Protocol requires approval from the Shadow Authority to award the grant of £800,000 to Paradigm Housing.</p> <p>If approved, the grant will secure nomination rights on 35 new build affordable rented units at the former 'Needham Bowl' site in High Wycombe.</p> <p>The Buckinghamshire Council will benefit from these nomination rights in perpetuity. The new units will assist in meeting affordable housing need in Buckinghamshire and relieve pressure on temporary accommodation budgets and capacity.</p>

Purpose of Report

1. In November 2019 (see attached report) Wycombe District Council's Cabinet approved a request to grant fund Paradigm Housing (A Registered Provider of Housing- RP) £800,000 to develop 35 additional affordable rented homes at the former 'Needham Bowl' site in High Wycombe.

2. These units will be in addition to the planning policy requirement of 24 units, and secured using a Section 106 planning agreement. In total there will be a total of 59 affordable homes on the site.
3. These additional units will be subject to formal nomination rights in perpetuity on behalf of the Council and may be offered to eligible residents on the Bucks Home Choice waiting list.
4. This report seeks approval from the Chief Officers Implementation Group (CIG) prior to onward passage to the Shadow Executive for approval, as per the Spend Protocol.

Content of Report

Background to S106 Affordable Housing Funds

5. Wycombe District Council has been provided with various financial contributions in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision for a number of sites in the Wycombe District. These funds can only be used for 'additional' affordable housing delivery in the district and should be spent within ten years of collection.
6. If the funds are not spent in accordance with their respective timescales and for the purpose of affordable housing, the contributing developer may seek a return of their contribution and any accrued interest.
7. Legal services at Wycombe have provided clear advice that these funds can only be used for additional affordable housing and cannot be used for any other purpose.

Options and Proposals

Proposals

8. Paradigm Housing are requesting grant funding totalling £800,000 in return for nomination rights in perpetuity for 26 two bedroom units and 9 one bedroom units (total of 35) which they will develop at the former Needham Bowl site in High Wycombe. These units will be offered to applicants on the Bucks Home Choice housing register at an affordable rent, capped at local housing allowance levels.
9. The units may also be used for direct allocations to homeless households, so relieving pressure on temporary accommodation and reducing revenue expenditure on temporary units, and bed and breakfast accommodation.
10. The grant award equates to £22,000 per unit which compares favourably with £131,000 per unit agreed previously for Bucks Housing Association (for a social rented property) and approximately £63,000 per unit for Hightown Housing Association (for affordable rented property).

11. Reasons for the differences in grant level sought
12. **Hightown** will charge an affordable rent for their units up to 80% of market rents. However, to ensure the rent level is affordable in practical terms, these will be capped at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels as a grant condition. (Hightown are able to utilise their own recycled capital grant fund (RCGF) obtained from previous schemes funded by the Housing Corporation/ Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England) to fund the remainder of the costs.)
13. **Bucks Housing Association** sought a higher contribution per unit as they do not have any recycled housing grant available to use and will be charging *social* rent which is significantly less than both social and market rent. (Social rent levels are determined by a formula defined by Homes England)
14. **Paradigm** are able to seek a lower grant level as they have additional funding from a number of sources including their own RCGF and funding from 'Homes England'. They have advised that they are seeking £55,000 grant per unit from Homes England; £10,000 per unit RCGF as well as £22,000 per unit from Wycombe District Council for the additional units.

Legal Implications/ Monitoring Officer

14. Affordable housing contributions are collected under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 in connection with developments where affordable housing is not being provided on site. The Council is required to expend these funds on provision of affordable housing in the District. [as per WDC Cabinet Report, November 2019]

Other Key Risks

15. If the contributions remain unspent 10 years post receipt, the developer may seek repayment along with any accrued interest.

Equalities Implications

16. The recommendation does not result in any equality impacts.

Next Steps

17. Subject to Shadow Executive approval, work will commence upon formal legal funding and nomination agreements with Paradigm housing.

Background Papers	Wycombe District Council's Cabinet Report November 2019
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