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## **SHADOW OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date:** Monday, 8 July 2019

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Location:** Council Chamber, Wycombe District Council, Queen Victoria Road, HP11 1BB - High Wycombe

**Membership:** Councillors: P Birchley, L Clarke OBE, A Cole, A Collingwood, P Cooper, C Ford, B Gibbs, J Gladwin, G Hall, G Hollis, P Jones, P Kelly, S Lambert, R Newcombe, S Renshell, R Stuchbury, J Teesdale, P Turner, J Waters and C Whitehead

### **9.30am Pre-Meeting Discussion**

This session is for members of the Committee only. It is to allow the members' time to discuss lines of questioning, areas for discussion and what needs to be achieved during the meeting.

#### **Fire Alarm**

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

## **AGENDA**

### **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

To elect a Chairman of the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **3. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members to declare any interests.

### **5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SHADOW OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Pages 1 - 8)**

To note the Responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **6. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME (Pages 9 - 22)**

To note the Implementation Programme.

**7. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY (Pages 23 - 48)**

To note the Communications and Engagement Strategy.

**8. WORK PROGRAMME**

To discuss the future Work Programme.

**9. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE 2019/20**

To note the dates of the Committee as agreed at the Shadow Authority meeting on 3 June 2019.

Monday 21 October 2019 at 7pm (venue to be agreed).

Monday 6 January 2020 (time and venue to be agreed).

## **C. Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

### **1 Work Programme**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consult with other parts of the Shadow Authority as appropriate, including the Shadow Executive, on the preparation of its work programme.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will take into account any views expressed following consultation under Rule 1.1 above in drawing-up and agreeing any work programme. It should also take into account the resources, both officer and financial, available to support its proposals.
- 1.3 Once any programme has been approved, a copy will be sent to all Members of the Shadow Authority and all relevant officers.
- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall respond, as soon as it may consider it is possible to do so, to requests from the Shadow Authority and the Shadow Executive, to review particular areas of Shadow Authority activities. Where it does so, it will report its findings and any recommendations back to the Shadow Executive and/or Shadow Authority in accordance with Rule 4 below.

### **2 Agenda for meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 2.1 Matters to be considered will be set out in an Agenda, together with appropriate and relevant supporting papers.
- 2.2 Any member of the Committee shall be entitled to require, in writing, that an item be included on the agenda, and such item shall appear on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee in question. The Committee will decide how the item should be considered and whether or not it can be included in its work programme.
- 2.3 Similarly, the Leader or a Portfolio Holder may give notice in writing requiring an item to appear on an agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, relating to their area of responsibilities. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will decide how the item should be considered and whether or not it can be included in its work programme.
- 2.4 Subject to Shadow Authority Procedure Rule D of the Shadow Authority Procedure Rules, any other Shadow Member may give notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer, requesting an item to appear on an agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The item shall be included after consulting the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.5 Any Shadow Member raising an item under Rules 2.2, 2.3 or 2.4 above shall be precluded from raising the matter again for a period of 12 months from the date it is considered by the Committee.

### **3 Policy Review and Development**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a key role in policy and budget development in the approach to the creation of the Buckinghamshire Council.

### **4 Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.1 Once recommendations have been formed, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will submit a formal report for consideration by the Shadow Executive or where the Leader has delegated decision-making to a Portfolio Holder, the Portfolio Holder (if the proposals relate to an executive function and are consistent with the existing budgetary and policy framework), or to the Shadow Authority as appropriate (if the recommendation would require a departure from or a change to the agreed budget and policy framework).
- 4.2 The Shadow Authority or the Shadow Executive shall consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within two months (or next available meeting in the case of the Shadow Authority) of it being submitted.
- 4.3 Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee submit a report for consideration by a Portfolio Holder, the Portfolio Holder must consider the report and respond in writing to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee within two months of receiving it. The Portfolio Holder will also attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present their response.

### **5 Access to the Forward Plan**

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have access to the Shadow Executive's Forward Plan and timetable for decisions and intentions for consultation.

### **6 Rights of Overview and Scrutiny Committee members to documents**

- 6.1 In addition to their rights as Shadow Members, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the additional right of access to documents, and to notice of meetings as set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.

### **7 Shadow Members and Officers giving account**

- 7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Shadow Authority function. As well as reviewing the documentation, in fulfilling its scrutiny role, it may require the Leader or any Portfolio Holder, to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:

- (a) any particular decision or series of decisions;
- (b) the extent to which the actions taken implement Shadow Authority policy; and/or
- (c) their performance,

and it is the duty of those persons to attend if so required.

- 7.2 Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requires an officer to attend to answer questions or discuss issues, this will be agreed with the lead officer of the Implementation Team.
- 7.3 Where it is agreed that an officer should appear to answer questions, their evidence should, as far as possible, be confined to questions of fact and explanation relating to policies and decisions. Officers may explain:
- (a) what the policies are;
  - (b) the justification and objectives of those policies as the Shadow Executive sees them;
  - (c) the extent to which those objectives have been met; and
  - (d) how administrative factors may have affected both the choice of policy measures and the manner of their implementation.
- 7.4 Officers may be asked to explain and justify advice they have given to the Shadow Executive prior to decisions being taken. They may also be asked to explain and justify decisions they have taken under delegation powers from the Shadow Executive.
- 7.5 Officers should not be expected and should avoid being drawn into discussions of politically contentious matters and any officer input should be consistent with the requirements for political impartiality.
- 7.6 The requirements of any protocols on Member/Officer relationships and the Code of Conduct must be adhered to where an officer is attending the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.7 Where any Shadow Member or Officer is required to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee under this provision, the Chairman of that Committee will inform the Monitoring Officer, who will inform the Shadow Member or Officer in writing giving at least ten clear working days' notice of the meeting. The notice will state the nature of the item on which he/she is required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee. Where the account to be given to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will require the production of a report, then the Shadow Member or Officer concerned will be given reasonable and sufficient notice to allow for its preparation.

- 7.8 Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Shadow Member or Officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Committee shall, in consultation with the Shadow Member or Officer, arrange an alternative date for attendance.

## **8 Attendance by others**

- 8.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may invite individuals other than those referred to in Rules 7.1 and 7.2 to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. In relation to the Conduct Sub-Committee an Independent Person under the definition of the Localism Act 2011 will attend to sit on the Conduct Sub-Committee as a non-voting member.

## **9 Call-in**

- 9.1 This Rule shall apply to a decision of the Shadow Executive, the Leader, Portfolio Holder or an officer that is a Key Decision and there are:
- a) reasonable grounds to suggest that a decision has not been made in accordance with the law and/or
  - b) where the decision was not made in accordance with the principles of Article 12 of the Constitution and/or
  - c) where the decision was not published in accordance with the requirements for the Shadow Executive Forward Plan, nor subject to the 'general exception' or 'special urgency procedures' set out in this Constitution.
- 9.2 When a decision is made by the Shadow Executive, or a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Shadow Executive, or a Key Decision is made by an officer with delegated authority from the Shadow Executive, the decision shall be published, by electronic means, and shall be available at the main offices of the Shadow Authority normally within 2 clear working days of being made. All members of the Shadow Authority will be sent an electronic record of all such decisions within the same timescale.
- 9.3 Subject to Rules 9.4, 9.5 and any urgency provisions a decision taken, and to which Rule 9.1 above refers will not come into force, and may not be implemented, until the expiry of 5 clear working days after the decision was made and recorded.
- 9.4 Where a decision referred to in Rule 9.1 has been made, any 20 or more Shadow Members, who are not members of the Shadow Executive, provided those Shadow Members include members from more than one political party may submit a call-in notice, in writing, within the period specified in Rule 9.3 above, to the Monitoring Officer. Where the notice is valid, the decision cannot be implemented until the procedures in this section have been followed. Where a valid notice is received the decision shall stand referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for advice.
- 9.5 Where as a result of a corporate electronic system failure or planned shutdown, which prevents the issuing of or access to Shadow Executive decisions or the submission of a call-in notice by electronic means in accordance with the Shadow Authority's call-in provisions, the periods for notification or submission shall be extended by the period of delay, provided that period is in excess of four hours.

- 9.6 When, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer, the period of delay is likely to extend beyond two clear working days, he/she shall agree with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, alternative arrangements to avoid any delay in implementing Shadow Executive decisions not subject to “call-in”.
- 9.7 The decision will be referred to the first available meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, subject to the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 9.8 The Committee, having considered the matter, may decide to offer no advice and in which case the decision may be implemented immediately. Where advice is offered, the Shadow Executive will reconsider the decision as set out in Rule 9.10.
- 9.9 Once the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has decided to offer advice or not to offer advice, no further call-in notices may be served in respect of that matter subject to the decision in question. This does not prevent the matter being scrutinised further by the Committee after the decision has been implemented in accordance with these rules.
- 9.10 Where a matter is considered and advice is offered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, its advice will be submitted to the Shadow Executive for a decision to be made on the matter. The Shadow Executive shall consider the advice but shall not be bound to accept it in whole or in part. It shall have sole discretion to decide on any further action to be taken in relation to the decisions in question, including confirming with or without amendment, of the original decision or deferment pending further consideration, or making a different decision. There are no further rights to enable a Shadow Member to submit a call-in notice. The decision may then be implemented.
- 9.2 A submitted call-in notice can only be withdrawn with the written consent of all of its signatories.
- 9.3 The “call-in” facility does not apply to the determination of a Motion under Meeting Procedure Rule D (11).

## **10 Call-in and Urgency**

- 10.1 The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Shadow Executive the Leader, Portfolio Holder or an officer is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay, caused by the call-in process, would be likely to seriously prejudice the Shadow Authority’s or the public’s interests. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or, in his/her absence, the Chairman of the Shadow Authority must agree that the decision should be treated as urgent, and that the call-in procedure should not apply. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman’s consent shall be required. In the absence of both, the Head of Paid Service or his/her nominee’s consent shall be required.

## **11 Councillor Call for Action**

- 11.1 Any member of the Shadow Authority may submit a Councillor Call for Action using the appropriate form. The Councillor Call for Action is intended to be a process of last resort and therefore a member must demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to resolve the matter including a response from the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Head of Paid Service or his/her nominee. The Councillor Call for Action will be placed on the agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to determine how it wishes to respond to the Councillor Call for Action and in the case of refusal to undertake a review then reasons must be provided.

## **12 The Party Whip**

- 12.1 The use of the Party Whip is incompatible with the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and shall not be used.

## **13 Procedure at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings**

- 13.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall consider the following business:

- (a) record of the last meeting;
- (b) consideration of any matter referred to the Committee by the Shadow Authority or by the Shadow Executive;
- (c) consideration of any matter referred to the Committee for advice in relation to call-in or a decision;
- (d) responses of the Shadow Executive on reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- (e) the business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.

- 13.2 Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee conducts investigations (e.g. with a view to policy development), the Committee may also ask people to attend to give evidence at its meetings, which are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) the investigation be conducted fairly and all members of the Committee be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak;
- (b) those assisting the Committee by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy; and
- (c) the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis.

- 13.3 Where the Committee sits as a Conduct Sub-Committee of three the principles of a fair hearing will be followed allowing all parties to be heard whether in person or on paper through representations.
- 13.4 When the Committee sits as a Conduct Sub-Committee a decision notice will be prepared and served on all parties.
- 13.5 Following any investigation (except for a Conduct Sub-Committee) or review, the Committee shall prepare a report for submission to the Shadow Executive and/or Shadow Authority as appropriate and shall, unless there are exceptional reasons, make its report and findings public.

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Report For:	<b>BUCKINGHAMSHIRE SHADOW EXECUTIVE</b>
Meeting Date:	<b>11 June 2019</b>

## SUMMARY

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME</b>
Responsible Officer:	Rachael Shimmin
Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Rachael Shimmin 01296 382201 <a href="mailto:rshimmin@buckscc.gov.uk">rshimmin@buckscc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>The Shadow Executive is asked to note that the Implementation Team for the creation of the new unitary council for Buckinghamshire has been established.</b>
Legal & Finance:	The resourcing requirements to support the programme are outlined in this report.
Reason: (Executive only)	To inform the Shadow Executive of the arrangements for the Implementation Team.

### Purpose of report

To inform the Shadow Executive of the arrangements for the Implementation Team for the creation of the new unitary council for Buckinghamshire.

### Introduction

1. This paper sets out the officer governance arrangements for the implementation programme to create the new unitary council for Buckinghamshire for 1 April 2020. It also sets out the framework for the Implementation Plan which will be presented in more detail to the Shadow Executive at its next meeting.

### Background

2. The objective of these arrangements is to ensure we create a new single unitary council that is fit for purpose from 1 April 2020 recognising that significant transformational work will take place following this date.
3. For completeness the work that is currently being undertaken in relation to adult social care and childrens services within Buckinghamshire County Council is incorporated within the governance arrangements established. Colleagues in these services will clearly be impacted in relation to the wider changes associated with the creation of a new organisation however the change and improvement activity already underway in these services areas will continue throughout the transition year.
4. These arrangements have been in place informally since March 2019.

## **Governance Arrangements**

5. The governance is headed up by a CEO Implementation Group, under which sit five programme boards. The programme boards will manage a series of discrete workstreams. Supporting the whole programme will be a small full time Programme Management Office.
6. Key features of the governance arrangements are set out below, and are illustrated at Appendix 1.

### **The CEO Implementation Group (CIG)**

7. The details of the CEO Implementation Group are as follows:
  - Membership: County and District CEOs, the co-chairs for each programme board, the interim Monitoring Officer, the interim Section 151 officer and the joint Programme Managers.
  - Chair: the chair will be the Interim Head of Paid Service and Implementation Lead (or by the Deputy Implementation Lead in their absence).
  - Frequency: fortnightly.
  - Location: to revolve around the county.
  - A terms of reference has been agreed for this group. (Attached at Appendix 2)

### **Programme Boards**

8. The programme boards will manage a series of discrete workstreams focussed on developing the outcomes required during the transition period to create the new council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. They will consider whether there are any gaps in the work programme and make recommendations to the CIG in relation to new workstreams/boards.
9. The boards will oversee the workstream activity including work commissioned by the corporate workstreams (see below), managing the dependencies, co-ordinating activity and avoiding duplication.
10. Reports which need to go onto to CIG for consideration will be agreed at the boards first, who will also determine any additional resourcing requirements, as part of this process.
11. A summary of the programme boards is noted below:
  - Membership: lead officers for each supporting workstream.
  - Chair: co-chairs from County Council and a District Council (excluding the Childrens and Adults Boards)
  - Frequency: fortnightly initially. Ongoing frequency to be agreed by programme board chairs in conjunction with programme managers.
  - Location: to revolve around the county.
  - A terms of reference for each board has been agreed. (Attached at Appendix 3)

## **Programme Workstreams**

12. There are currently 28 workstreams across the five programme boards. These are split into two groups; Corporate/cross cutting workstreams and service workstreams. The list of workstreams are detailed at Appendix 4. Underneath these workstreams are a number of sub workstreams and task and finish groups.
13. The corporate/cross cutting workstreams are grouped under the Resources Programme Board. They will undertake the work required to ensure corporate services are established on day one. In addition to the governance of the work of the relevant workstreams this board will:
  - Deliver the cross cutting activity critical to ensure a smooth transition to the new council on day one.
  - Determine the principles and working arrangements which will apply to customer services on day one.
14. The service workstreams are split across the four other boards and focus on front line service delivery. The activity will include:
  - Delivering activity agreed by the CIG and commissioned through the Programme Management Office.
  - Review of policies as required.
  - Establishment Service continuity plans and priorities.
  - Governance tasks as appropriate to the relevant workstream – e.g. Scheme of delegation, privacy notices, develop KPIs, and file storage protocols.
  - Finance tasks – e.g. harmonisation of fees and charges, budget structures, service procurement issues.
  - Staff tasks – review TUPE lists, tailor communications plans.
  - Where appropriate specific discovery work will be undertaken as agreed by the boards/individual workstreams.

## **Programme Management Office (PMO)**

15. The PMO is headed up by joint programme managers, one from the County Council and one from the District Councils.
16. The PMO is responsible for the overall coordination of the programme and for commissioning workstreams on behalf of the CIG as well as supporting the Shadow Executive. It will also oversee the budget for the programme.
17. Regular programme progress reports will be provided to the CIG and Shadow Executive and the PMO will develop and manage the forward plans for both groups.
18. The PMO also contains communications resource who will provide regular updates for all staff, members, employee representatives and trade unions in relation to the transition work as well as providing specific communications support for workstream activity.
19. The structure for the PMO is attached at Appendix 5.

## **Workstream Development**

20. Workstreams have been carrying out an initial discovery phase where appropriate to develop a collective understanding of the different ways of working which will result in a greater understanding in both the transition and transformation stages and to ensure opportunities are not lost to scale up exemplar ways of working for the new Council.
21. Project scope documents (PIDs) are being developed for each workstream, with clearly defined deliverables for the transition period and proposals for additional activities post vesting day.
22. This work is currently being developed into the overall Implementation Plan which will be brought back to the Shadow Executive at its meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

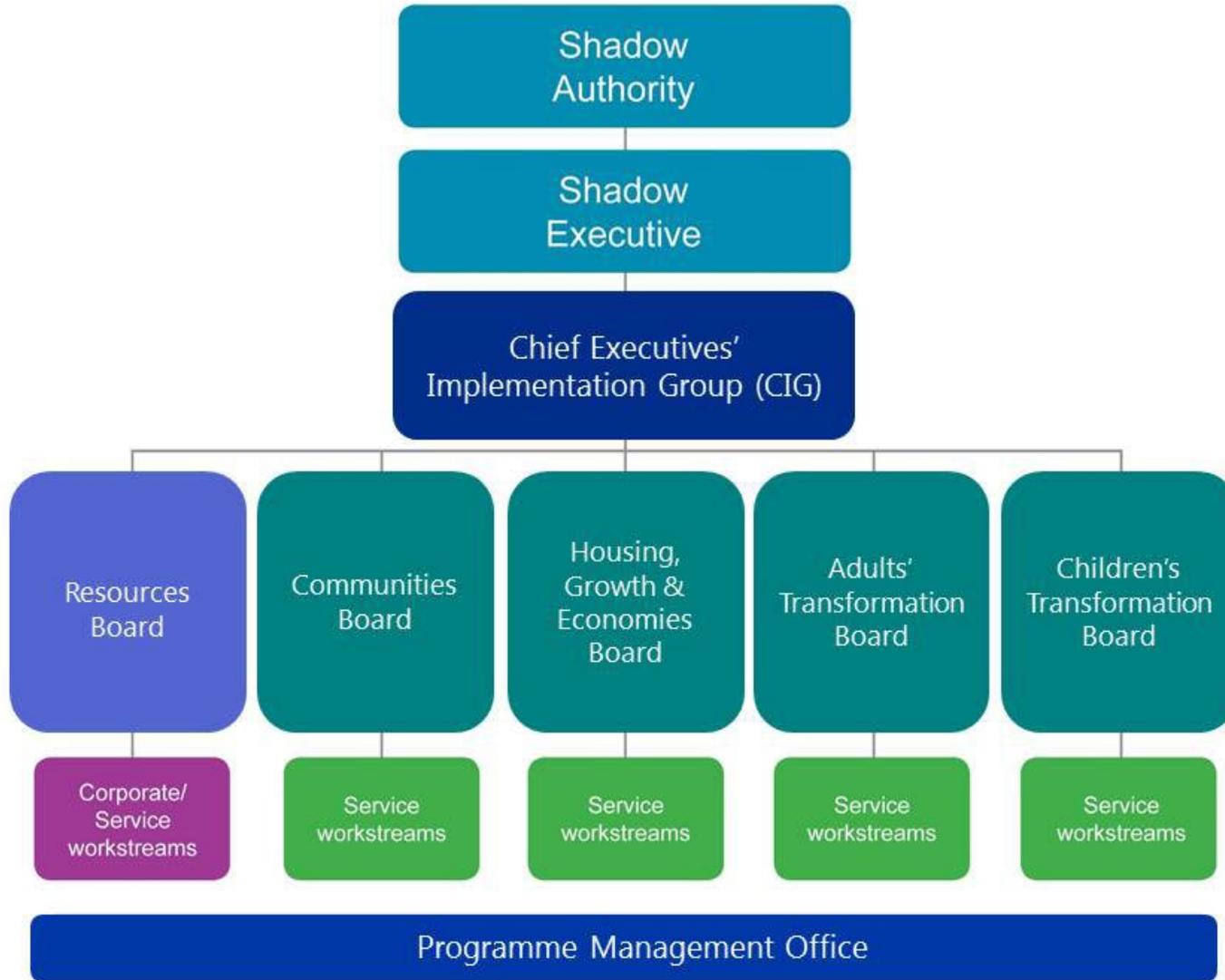
## **Resource Implications**

23. The resourcing requirements to support the programme are being identified as part of the workstream planning work outlined above. This will be incorporated into the Implementation Plan which will be presented to the Shadow Executive on 25th June 2019.
24. As a principle however programme board leads and workstream members will not automatically be backfilled. Individual organisations have agreed to make any decisions required in relation to reprioritisation of work and backfilling if required. Where backfilling is required this will come from the transition budget which will be overseen by the programme managers.
25. Each workstream will identify additional capacity/expertise needed to deliver agreed plans, which will be funded from the transition budget. The programme managers will ensure that a clear record is maintained of programme expenditure.

## **Summary/Conclusions**

26. The Implementation Programme Governance structure is working well and has created a strong environment of joint endeavour and collaboration. The developing work is taking into account all perspectives and identifying the opportunities to ensure the programme builds on the best of the five councils.
27. There is a tremendous amount of enthusiasm amongst the workstreams and a real desire to develop a council we can all be proud of in the future.

Appendix 1 – Overall Programme Governance



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## Appendix 2

## Chief Executive Implementation Group (CIG) - Terms of Reference

Title:	Terms of Reference
<b>Purpose:</b>	<p>Responsible for establishing, implementing and monitoring the overall delivery of the unitary transition programme to establish the new Council by April 2020.</p> <p>Key actions will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the programme boards and oversee the delivery of agreed portfolio of work for each board needed for the successful delivery of the unitary transition programme and ensure these are resourced as required.</li> <li>• Consider and advise on all draft reports to be presented to the Shadow Executive and Shadow Authority.</li> <li>• Consider and advise on officer reports presented by the programme boards related to the delivery of the new council.</li> <li>• Make decisions based on robust officer reports and/or business cases presented by the programme boards and/or relevant workstreams to enable the delivery of the new council for which they have delegated authority.</li> <li>• To agree and oversee the overall budget for the programme to deliver the new council, receiving regular budget monitoring reports.</li> <li>• Receive regular highlight reports from programme boards on the implementation of their agreed portfolio of work for which they are accountable for and commissioning further work as required.</li> <li>• Consider and advise on any key escalated programme risks and/or issues where these cannot be resolved by programme boards.</li> </ul>
<b>Status:</b>	<p>Decision Making</p> <p>Non public</p> <p>Notes and actions to be captured</p> <p>Confidentiality to be highlighted where relevant for specific items</p>
<b>Chair:</b>	<p>The chair will rotate between CEOs until the SCO is made, at which time the Group will be chaired by the Implementation Lead CEO (or by the Deputy Implementation Lead in her absence).</p>
<b>Membership:</b>	<p>County Council &amp; District Council CEOs</p> <p>Programme Board Co-Chairs</p> <p>Programme Managers</p> <p>Interim Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Interim Chief Financial Officer</p>
<b>Deputisation:</b>	<p>Where a member is unable to attend, a named deputy can stand in on their behalf.</p>

<b>Frequency:</b>	Bi weekly (with additional meetings as required)
<b>Service Standards:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda items will be confirmed a minimum of 7 working days in advance of meeting date unless with the agreement of the Chair.</li> <li>• Agenda will be approved by Chair in advance of circulation.</li> <li>• Any other businesses will be reserved for urgent un-foreseen items.</li> <li>• Agenda and papers will be circulated by email, minimum 3 working days in advance of meeting date, unless agreed by Chair as exception.</li> <li>• Notes and actions will be agreed by the Chair, and then circulated to all board members within 2 working days of meetings.</li> <li>• Notes and actions are considered as 'draft' until approved at next meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Standing Agenda Items:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of previous minutes and actions – every meeting.</li> <li>• Confidential CEO item at the end of each agenda.</li> <li>• AOB</li> </ul>
<b>Date of last review:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2019</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3

## MLG Programme Boards - Proposed Terms of Reference

Title:	Terms of Reference
<b>Purpose:</b>	<p>Responsible for establishing, managing and monitoring the delivery of workstream activity within an agreed portfolio, creating a collaborative and solution focused approach to the overall unitary transition programme to establish the new Council by April 2020.</p> <p>Key actions will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Propose and establish workstreams both standing and task and finish, needed for the successful delivery of the agreed board portfolio of work that supports the overall programme delivery and ensure these are resourced as required.</li> <li>• Ensure workstream outcomes are developed to meet internal and external customer needs.</li> <li>• Consider, advise and sign off all reports produced by the portfolio of workstreams before being presented to the Chief Executives Implementation Group (CIG) and Shadow Executive.</li> <li>• Make decisions based on robust officer reports and/or business cases to enable the delivery of the agreed board portfolio of work for which they have delegated authority.</li> <li>• To manage and identify resourcing requirements to deliver the portfolio of work and agree these within the boards delegated authority or refer to the CIG for agreement.</li> <li>• Receive regular highlight reports on the activity and progress of the workstreams within the board portfolio including the management of dependencies, co-ordination of activity to avoid duplication.</li> <li>• Consider and monitor workstream risks and/or issues and escalate these as appropriate to CIG.</li> <li>• Liaise regularly with the other programme board co-chairs and programme management office to effectively monitor portfolio cross cutting issues and dependencies, escalating where required to the CIG.</li> </ul>
<b>Status:</b>	<p>Decision Making</p> <p>Non public</p> <p>Notes and actions to be captured</p> <p>Confidentiality to be highlighted where relevant for specific items</p>
<b>Chair:</b>	<p>The boards will be jointly chaired by an officer from the County Council and an officer from a District Council.</p>
<b>Membership:</b>	<p>Programme Board Co-Chairs</p> <p>Programme Manager/PMO Rep</p> <p>Workstream Leads</p> <p>Interim Monitoring Officer</p>

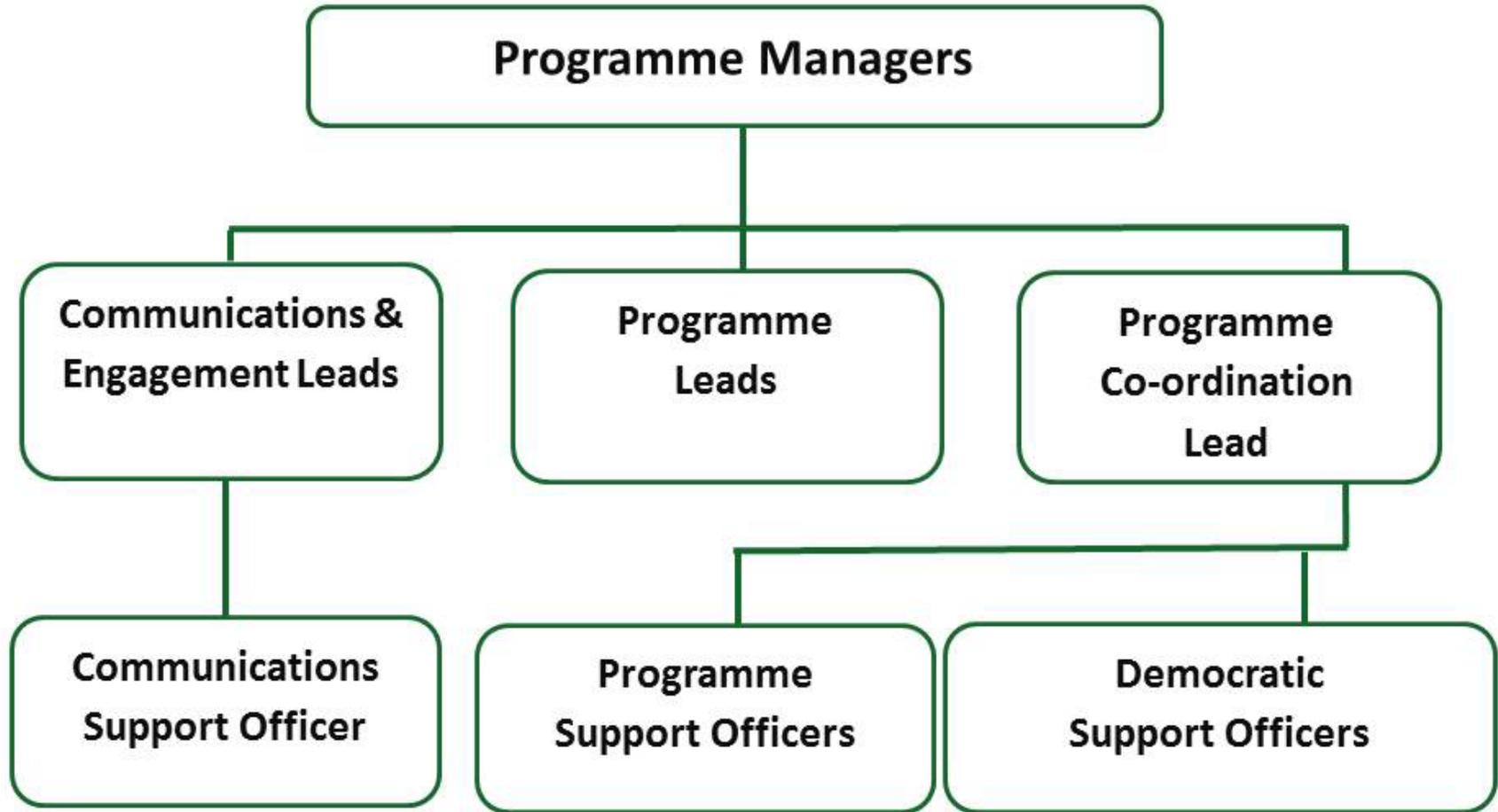
<b>Deputisation:</b>	Where a member is unable to attend, a named deputy can stand in on their behalf.
<b>Frequency:</b>	Bi weekly (with additional meetings as required)
<b>Service Standards:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda items will be confirmed a minimum of 5 working days in advance of meeting date unless with the agreement of one of the Chairs.</li> <li>• Agenda will be approved by the Chairs in advance of circulation.</li> <li>• Any other businesses will be reserved for urgent un-foreseen items.</li> <li>• Agenda and papers will be circulated by email, minimum 3 working days in advance of meeting date, unless agreed by the Chairs as exception.</li> <li>• Notes and actions will be agreed by the Chair, and then circulated to all board members within 2 working days of meetings.</li> <li>• Notes and actions are considered as 'draft' until approved at next meeting.</li> <li>• Board chairs will meet weekly with the Leader of the CIG for an informal 'touch down' meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Standing Agenda Items:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval of previous minutes and actions – every meeting.</li> <li>• Workstreams updates.</li> <li>• Review of workstream risks.</li> <li>• AOB</li> </ul>
<b>Date of last review:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• March 2019</li> </ul>

**Appendix 4 - Workstreams**



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**Appendix 5 - Programme Management Office Structure**



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Report For:	<b>BUCKINGHAMSHIRE SHADOW EXECUTIVE</b>
Meeting Date:	<b>11 June 2019</b>

## SUMMARY

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY</b>
Responsible Officer:	Kate Walker, Programme Communications and Engagement Lead
Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Kate Walker 01296 387002 <a href="mailto:kswalker@buckscc.gov.uk">kswalker@buckscc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>That members note and comment on the Communications and Engagement Strategy for the transition to the new council</b>
Legal & Finance:	As the detailed work to deliver these plans is implemented the legal and financial implications will be considered.
Options:	It is important to have in place a coordinated approach to communications with all key audiences, throughout the transition period to ensure consistent messages across the five councils and with key audiences, increasing awareness and understanding of the move to a new council by April 2020.
Reason: (Executive only)	N/A

### **Purpose of this report**

This report summarises the Communications and Engagement Strategy for the transition period to the new Buckinghamshire Council.

The Strategy recommends a coordinated approach to communications with all key audiences, led by the Programme Office, on behalf of the Shadow Authority throughout the transition period to ensure consistent messages across the five councils and with key audiences, increasing awareness and understanding of the move to a new council by April 2020.

### **Content of the report:**

#### Introduction

1. Good communication and engagement is fundamental to ensuring a smooth transition from the existing five district and county councils in Buckinghamshire, to one new council for all of Buckinghamshire that will start on 1 April 2020.

2. It is important that residents, staff, members, parish and town councils, strategic partners including the health sector other public bodies and emergency services, businesses and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are kept informed of progress and regularly reassured that public service outcomes will not be negatively impacted by the creation of the new authority.
3. The overarching strategy (*Appendix 1*) outlines the overall approach to communications and engagement over the coming year and identifies the key stakeholders. Further detailed stakeholder plans have been identified and developed for the following audiences – staff, members, town and parish councils, residents, strategic partners and businesses. These plans will continue to be developed as the work of the programme boards

### Background

4. This strategy was initially developed by the Communications Workstream. On appointment of the Programme Office Communications and Engagement Leads this strategy will now be delivered and developed by the PMO Communications team, working closely with the Communications Workstream and the other workstreams across the programme.

### Summary

5. The overarching communications strategy identifies three phases of supporting communications and engagement plans:
  - Phase 1 – the period up to the making of the Structural Change Orders
  - Phase 2 (a) – from the calling of the first Shadow Authority meeting to end March 2020, including transition arrangements
  - Phase 2 (b) – promote the lead-in to the new council creation and then first 100 days in  
*(Detailed plans for phase 2 (b) will be developed further on into the programme to launch in January 2020)*
6. Detailed stakeholder plans have been identified for five main stakeholder groups; Internal Staff, Elected Members, Town and Parish Councils, Residents and Strategic Partners and Businesses.
7. The residents and strategic partner and businesses stakeholder plans are still in development to be able to reflect the information and requirements from the Communities Board and the Housing, Growth and Economy Board. These plans will include regular updates through a variety of existing channels for residents such as printed and e-magazines, keeping MPs, strategic members and businesses informed and developing face to face engagement opportunities for these audiences over the coming year; whilst making use of existing meetings and sessions for these audiences alongside dedicated and more specific events. They will also seek to identify areas of

consultation and engagement to support the development of the programme toward the new council. These plans will be developed over the next month.

8. The internal communications and engagement plan focuses on developing a series of joint roadshows, newsletters and a shared online area for staff across all five councils to ensure consistent messages and information to be shared across the five councils. This plan will be influenced by the work of the HR and OD workstream, and the Programme Communications and Engagement Leads will work closely with this group to ensure a coordinated approach to staff communications and engagement, enabling opportunities for staff to ask questions throughout the coming year.
9. There will be an internal communications survey carried out with staff at the end of July to gather feedback on initial communications and inform planning for the future.
10. The members communications and engagement plan focuses on developing a comprehensive member briefing programme, which will be carried out with the Legal and Governance workstream, alongside regular communication through newsletters, dedicated online information for members and equipping members with information and key messages to act as advocates with residents and other stakeholders. There will be a member reference group to support the development of engagement and member support as part of the Communications and Legal and Governance areas of work, which will be used to help inform ongoing member communication and engagement activity.
11. The town and parish council engagement plan will be closely aligned to support the development and work of the Localism workstream. This plan therefore outlines opportunities for engagement events, as well as more regular communications through a monthly newsletter and dedicated online area information and updates as the programme develops over the coming year.
12. The stakeholder plans will be live working documents, as our communications and engagement work must be able to respond where necessary to emerging requirements from the Programme Boards and issues affecting the progress of the programme to set up the new Buckinghamshire Council and feedback from stakeholders, staff, members and residents.
13. The Strategy also details the Communications and Media protocol previously shared with the members of the Shadow Executive which will be reviewed in the next few weeks.

### **Resourcing requirements**

14. The delivery of this programme will be resourced by the Programme Communications Team, working closely with the Communications Workstream and teams across the five councils, and the relevant workstreams across the programme.
15. There will be a budget required to support the delivery of this work; estimated costings to follow.

### **Corporate Implications**

16. The communications and engagement strategy has been produced to support the work of the programme to deliver the new Buckinghamshire Council. The nature of our communications will mean we need to be able to deliver planned communications and

also react quickly to immediate communication priorities, the strategy and plans therefore need to be flexible enough to allow for changes and urgent requests.

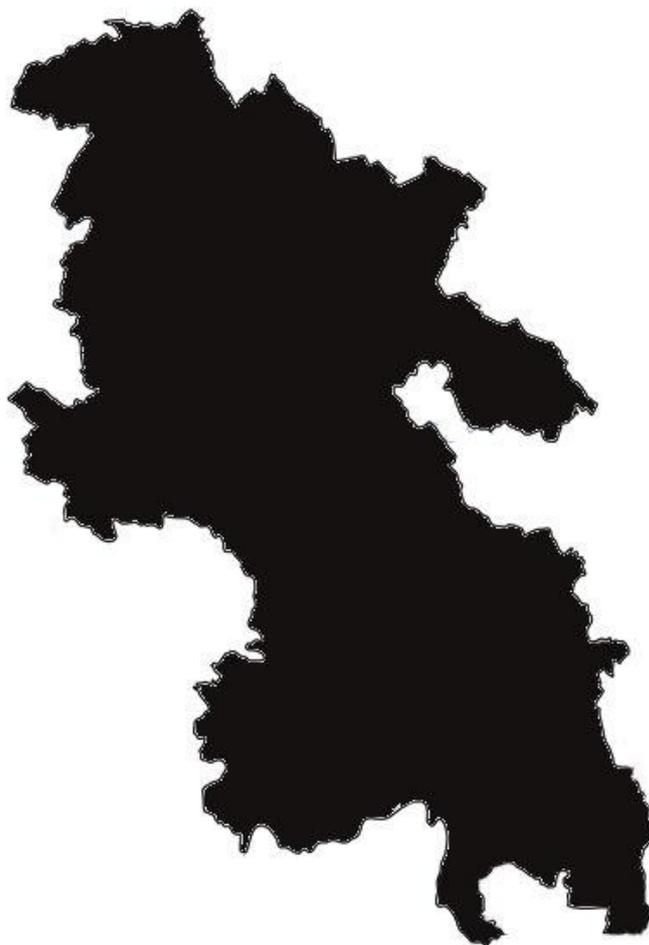
### **Next Steps**

17. The implementation of this strategy is in motion with the Programme Communications Team working with the relevant workstreams, following the approval of the Structural Changes Order, and will continue to be developed over the coming weeks and months as the programme to delivering the new Buckinghamshire Council progresses.

# Delivering the new Buckinghamshire Council: our transition to a new unitary council

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Communications and engagement strategy



Good communication and engagement is fundamental to ensuring a smooth transition from the existing five district and county councils in Buckinghamshire, to one new council for all of Buckinghamshire that will start on 1 April 2020.

It is important that residents, staff, members, parish and town councils, strategic partners including the health sector other public bodies and emergency services, businesses and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) are kept informed of progress and regularly reassured that public service outcomes will not be negatively impacted by the creation of the new authority.

The overarching communications strategy will have three phases of supporting communications and engagement plans:

- Phase 1 – the period up to the making of the Structural Change Orders.
- Phase 2 (a) – from the calling of the first Shadow Authority meeting to end March 2020, including transition arrangements
- Phase 2 (b) – promote the lead-in to the new council creation and then first 100 days in *(Detailed plans for phase 2 (b) will be developed further on into the programme to launch in January 2020)*

## **2. Principles underpinning the strategy**

Buckinghamshire’s local authorities:

- Will speak with a united and co-ordinated voice wherever possible
- Will agree an approach that ensures that there is a shared and agreed set of messages while also allowing some agreed, specific localised messaging by each authority, where appropriate
- Will ensure that there is a regular and agreed flow of information to all our stakeholders
- Will counteract incorrectly reported information to ensure that our stakeholders have a clear understanding of process and decision making
- Will proactively manage their communications rather than reacting to external events

## **3. Context**

During autumn 2016, Buckinghamshire County Council submitted a proposal to government for a single unitary council covering the same geography as the existing county council.

In January 2017, the four district councils jointly submitted a proposal to government for two unitary councils, covering the same geography as the Aylesbury Vale in the north of the county and of Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks in the south of the county.

In March 2018, the then Secretary of State Sajid Javid announced his “minded to” decision for one unitary council and invited representations to be submitted by the end of May 2018.

On 1 November 2018, a Written Ministerial Statement issued by current Secretary of State James Brokenshire confirmed the decision for one new unitary council for Bucks.

While the district councils initially expressed disappointment at the decision for one unitary council, all four have now committed to working closely with the county council to create a new unitary council by 1 April 2020.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will lay before Parliament the Structural Changes Order that will detail how this change will be implemented, following which shadow arrangements to implement the new council across the five councils will be established.

The enormity of the task to ensure that new council, which will dissolve the five existing councils, is up and running by 1 April 2020 should not be underestimated.

This strategy should be a live document, as our communications and engagement work must be able to respond where necessary to emerging requirements from the different unitary workstreams, issues affecting the progress of the programme to set up the new Buckinghamshire Council and feedback from stakeholders, staff, members and residents.

#### **4. Objectives**

1. To improve understanding and awareness of the process by which the new council will be created, including the creation of the Shadow Authority and the Shadow Executive
2. To provide reassurance to residents, partners and key stakeholders on the plans for the new Buckinghamshire Council and how it is being set up, and that they have a role in that process.
3. To provide reassurance for staff with a regular flow of information and engagement opportunities, to support the aim of minimising the loss of key staff as far as possible
4. To bring the five authorities together to speak with a united voice
5. To engage with relevant stakeholders in a timely, appropriate and meaningful way on matters which may affect them, or on which they could have an effect, in relation to the proposal for a single unitary council for Buckinghamshire
6. To support the aims and objectives of the Buckinghamshire Council programme

#### **5. Resources**

The Programme Communications and Engagement Lead Officers and Communications Support Officer, communication leads from each of the five councils, who make up the Communications Working Group (CWG), with any additional support within each council's communications teams as required.

#### **6. Target audiences**

There are a large number of stakeholders in this process. The potential impact of this change is so wide-reaching that it would be difficult to identify a group or individual locally who didn't have an interest.

While media are identified here, that is only insofar as they are a set of stakeholders who will fill any information void with potentially unhelpful material. For the most part they should be considered an element of the communications channel mix.

The following list is by no means exhaustive and additional audiences will be identified as the situation progresses, particularly in terms of segmentation within the larger stakeholder groups:

Internal	Partners	External
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC and WDC staff</li> <li>• BCC-employed school based staff</li> <li>• AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC and WDC members</li> <li>• AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC and WDC volunteers</li> <li>• Trade unions</li> <li>• Employee reps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Parish and town councils</li> <li>• Health               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group</li> <li>○ Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust</li> <li>○ Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust</li> <li>○ GPs – Medicas, FedBucks</li> <li>○ Healthwatch Bucks</li> <li>○ South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust</li> <li>○ NHS England</li> <li>○ Public Health England</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Thames Valley Police and PCC</li> <li>• Voluntary and community sector</li> <li>• Businesses, BTVLEP, SEMLEP, local chambers of commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, BIDs, Oxford/ Cambridge corridor organisations, Bucks Business First</li> <li>• Bucks Fire and Rescue Service</li> <li>• Other strategic partners – TVLRF, Suppliers to all councils</li> <li>• Commercial tenants</li> <li>• MHCLG ministers and civil servants</li> <li>• Five Buckinghamshire MPs</li> <li>• Housing associations</li> <li>• Educational establishments:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Nurseries and pre-schools</li> <li>○ Schools – Primary and secondary (academies, maintained, independent)</li> <li>○ PRUs</li> <li>○ UTC</li> <li>○ Buckinghamshire College Group</li> <li>○ Bucks New University</li> <li>○ University of Buckingham</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residents</li> <li>• Customers/clients of current services</li> <li>• Media – trade and local</li> <li>• Vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Harder –to-reach groups (young people, religious groups, BME communities)</li> </ul>

## **7. Key messages and risks**

### **7.1 Overarching key messages**

While the move to creating a new unitary council for Buckinghamshire is exciting and presents a number of opportunities, it will be important to manage stakeholder expectations in relation to the pace of change.

Key messages should pave the way for the Shadow Authority and Executive, and promote optimism for the new council in the lead up to 1 April 2020.

Further key messages will be developed for individual stakeholder groups and will develop as the transition is implemented.

- The new council is a brand new council
- Our priority is to ensure a smooth transition to the new council by 1 April 2020
- All five councils are united in their commitment to ensuring we deliver the best result for our residents and businesses
- Our staff are one of our biggest assets and we hope to retain as many as we can in the new council and seek to minimise redundancies wherever possible
- Our councils have extensive experience of transformation and this expertise will be at the heart of creating the new council
- There are many potential future benefits and opportunities for the new council and we will be transparent about the challenges
- The Shadow Authority and Shadow Executive will oversee the transition to the new council
- The creation of the new unitary council is not the answer to budget cuts – existing transformation and financial planning programmes will continue
- It is likely that you will access services in a very similar way to the way you do now and services you receive like bin collections will continue without the need for you to take any action
- A new council will make it easier for you to know where to go for services
- In time we will be able to join up services, where it makes sense to do so, and improve services for residents
- The ongoing work on improving children's services will not be affected

### **7.2 Risks**

Risks as they currently stand:

- Lack of regular communication produces a vacuum which will likely be filled with rumour and speculation
- Lack of joined up messaging across all the councils will result in misinformation and confusion amongst stakeholders and undermine sense of ownership across all five councils
- Significant and unexpected change in government or parliament impacts on the timeline to create the legislation needed to establish the new council
- Loss of key staff impacts on the current councils' ability to deliver 'business as usual' services and on the new Buckinghamshire Council's ability to deliver services from day one
- Partnership working fractures as a result of an inability to agree collaborative arrangements
- Current non-statutory services are impacted by the need to redirect more resources to meet statutory responsibilities within any new unitary arrangements, resulting in a reduction in the quality of services for residents and businesses

## **8. Communication and engagement channels and approach**

Our emphasis across each of the three phases will be to keep our stakeholders, especially staff and members, informed about the planning and progress of the transition to the new council, ensuring that key questions are answered.

We will adopt the 4 Ps of change communications<sup>1</sup>:

**Purpose** – explain why we are doing what we are doing

**Picture** – tell people what the change will look and feel like when we reach our goal

**Plan** – tell people how we will get from A to B

**Part** – explain what people need to do to help make the change a reality and a success

Two- way engagement is also crucial throughout all of the phases, to ensure that people feel listened to, their opinions valued and that they have been able to be involved in shaping the outcome of the changes.

All the five councils will collaborate on learning from current and past communications and engagement to use customer insight and analysis in directing the communications approach throughout each phase.

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<sup>1</sup> From the IC Space <https://communication.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ic-space/change-communications/>

# Phase 1:

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## 8.1 Phase 1 Approach:

This period will focus on maintaining communication and engagement with staff and members as the primary stakeholders.

It is important throughout this time not to lose contact with other key stakeholders such as town and parish councils, residents and strategic partners and we will regularly update these groups through existing channels.

We will make the most of existing channels, sharing key messages and providing regular updates on the progress to establishing the first meeting of the Shadow Authority.

We will create opportunities for these stakeholder groups to ask questions and stay informed about the process.

Throughout this period we will also work together to identify or develop as needed key channels of communication for phase 2 as detailed in the stakeholder plans, including introducing joint newsletters for staff and members, a shared area for staff communications and information, developing the Shadow Authority website and promoting the Shadow Authority to the public.

Phase 1 communications will be developed and agreed by the Communications and Engagement Workstream and adhere to the Joint Communications and Media Protocol (see Appendix xxxx)

## 9.2 Channels and approach

### Internal channels for staff and members

Each organisation will have its own internal communications methods for staff, which might include channels such as staff newsletters, intranet, all-staff emails and briefings amongst others. We will use all of these tried and tested channels to ensure staff are kept up to date on what is happening and maximise opportunities to communicate and engage with them.

We will also continue to use existing arrangements for working with senior staff, leadership teams, employee reps and trade union reps to cascade key messages, improve understanding of the process and encourage engagement at all levels within our organisations.

In addition, each organisation will have its own ways of communicating with its members, which may include newsletters, briefings, seminars and emails. We will make use of these channels to communicate information about the programme and engage with members throughout the existing councils. The timing of members' own communication on political issues will be considered, although this is not part of the communications generated by the unitary programme and detailed in this strategy.

The unitary programme communications resource will share joint messages and key FAQs with the five existing councils, with consistent messaging across the organisations achieved through coordination with the Communications Working Group (CWG).

### **Media**

Local media play a key role in helping us to share progress towards the new council with local residents, particularly when online articles are shared on social media forums.

It is critical that the local media understand the process and the decisions that are being made and speak to the council(s) as the most credible source of information about this. Press conferences could be used sparingly, but more regular direct press briefings and releases will be essential.

It is inevitable that the individual five councils will be approached by local media in their areas about issues relating to the new council, and there is a high likelihood that individual Leaders will receive requests for separate interviews.

It is important that key messages are understood and adhered to, alongside a comprehensive list of frequently-asked questions and potential answers. The CWG and Programme communications teams will coordinate to ensure all organisations are aware of media enquiries and interviews. A central record of media enquiries and responses will be created by the programme communications leads for reference by all organisations.

### **Social media**

Social media enables two-way dialogue with stakeholders and is a cost effective and immediate way of communicating decisions and discussions about the transition to the new council. It is also a platform to correct misinformation in a timely way, and should be monitored and arrangements put in place to allow prompt responses to inaccuracies before they are able to spread rapidly further online.

Each of the five councils will use their existing social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, to publish and share agreed content about the transition process to the new council.

A Twitter account will be set up for Shadow Authority and we will use existing social media accounts across the five councils on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Nextdoor. Arrangements for the new council will be part of the Communications and Engagement strategy development for the new council.

The Future Bucks and Modernising Bucks social media channels, which were used to explain the two unitary proposals by the county and district councils, have been closed down.

### **Websites**

Each organisation has its own website which should be used to convey updates via news channels. Some have already set up a section dedicated to discussions around local government arrangements – which can be regularly updated with information and be used to signpost to other websites.

A Shadow Authority website will be set up and ready from the point at which the Shadow Authority exists.

Future Bucks and Modernising Bucks websites should cease to exist once that Shadow Authority website is created (Modernising Bucks has already been archived).

#### **Direct mail, publications and advertising**

During phase 1 electronic direct mail to new and existing stakeholder networks should be maximised, ensuring where possible that duplication of information is minimised and joint messaging is consistent.

This includes the use of printed residents' magazines in Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe district and ezines from AVDC and Bucks CC.

Other publications for stakeholder groups, such as newsletters to town and parish councils, schools and GPs, should also be utilised.

#### **Regular meetings**

Each council holds regular meetings with stakeholders, such as parish and town council clerks, voluntary groups, local community groups, police, LAFs and so on and these meetings provide an opportunity for a regular agenda item to keep these organisations and groups informed. They are also an opportunity to answer any questions.

Schedules for these meetings should be exchanged and a co-ordinated approach in keeping messages current and attending meetings agreed.

#### **Ambassadors**

Members of each authority should be provided with as much information as possible, in order that they can speak with authority on the subject when asked by residents. During Phase 1 there are clear political complications within this and these should be anticipated and allowed for.

Well-informed and engaged staff can provide an effective front-line ambassadorial role when dealing with residents. In particular, customer service staff should, through the appropriate channels, be provided with regular updates and access to FAQs so they are able to formulate responses built around key messages.

The county's five MPs have the potential to provide a supportive voice behind the local authorities' collective activity. This should be encouraged through regular update meetings with Chief Executives and Leaders as well as briefing notes to ensure they remain aware of progress as it is made.

#### **Voluntary and community organisations**

Each authority engages with local volunteers, and this needs to be maintained through existing channels throughout business as usual and the work of the Shadow Authority, with consistent shared messages. As valuable parts of our local communities they could play a role as we move through the phases of the work in the distribution of the Shadow Authority's communications to important groups throughout the new council's catchment areas. They could also help us to access groups of people for engagement purposes in organised ways and provide direct regular updates via the most appropriate channels. . These could include volunteer organisations such as Action for Youth, Community Impact Bucks, Age Concern, and Buckinghamshire MIND.

### **9.3 Key Milestones and high level activity:**

Communications activity during phase 1 will be focused around the following key dates:

Month	January	February	March	April	May	June
Milestone	Letter from MHCLG Special Cabinet Meetings Regulations Order laid	Regulations Order Made		Structural Changes Order laid	Structural Changes order Made	First Meeting of the Shadow Authority First Meeting of the Shadow Executive
Milestone related activity				All staff email All member email	Joint all staff update, and member update Updates to strategic partners, businesses and town and parish councils Press release to local media Shadow Authority website launch Shadow Authority twitter launch Promotion of Shadow Website as place for first meeting papers	Press briefing (pre the meeting)
<b>Ongoing communications activity</b>						
Internal staff and members		Staff updates  Member updates	Staff roadshows	Staff Roadshows	Joint Staff newsletter  Joint member newsletter Informal member event	
Residents		Resident updates in Aylesbury Vale Times, Wycombe District Times, MyBucks,	MyBucks	MyBucks Article for members to use in local newsletters and	MyBucks Shadow website and social media	

		MyAccount newsletters		community publications	
Town and Parish Councils	LAF meeting updates	LAF meeting updates	LAF meeting updates		Invite to Localism events
	Local Newsletter update on Unitary Plans	Budget and Unitary Local E- Newsletter (BCC)	BMKALC events		Launch Town and Parish Council newsletter  Develop specific area for town and parish council on Shadow website  LAF meeting report  Localism Events  TfB Stakeholder Event

## Phase 2

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### **9.5 Approach:**

Develop new joint communications channels to promote the work of the programme, whilst continuing to maximise the use of existing communications channels across the five councils, existing meetings and relationships to support this.

Develop a suite of materials including pull up banners, posters, leaflets and content for use across a number of channels that can be used at events, meetings and other opportunities by the PMO Communications team as well as the wider programme and communications teams to promote the new council.

Develop and deliver joint engagement events and activities to support the programme to create the new unitary council, keeping stakeholders informed of plans and progress towards delivering the new Buckinghamshire Council.

Support emerging engagement and consultation needs identified through the Programme Boards and Workstreams, making use of the new joint communication channels, and existing mechanisms to target the right audiences. The channels and approach for individual stakeholder groups are detailed in the stakeholder plans which are attached as appendices to the Communications Strategy. These plans have been developed as working documents and will evolve and be added to as the work of the Programme Boards and the PIDs for each workstream is developed.

The focus of Phase 2 is on the transition to the new council, promoting the work of the Shadow Authority, Shadow Executive and Implementation Executive and the work of programme to create the new council.

During this phase we will also develop further detailed plans to promote the new council from January – April 2020.

### **9.6 Shadow Authority specific communications**

Promoting the Shadow Authority and Shadow Executive is essential to increase understanding of the shadow arrangements and their role in the creation and transition to the new council.

It is proposed that communication about the Shadow Authority **will** incorporate the new branding, the dedicated website URL and links to the relevant new social media. Communication will be through the existing and new channels created for each stakeholder group (detailed in the each of the stakeholder group plans developed alongside this document and attached as appendices). These plans will detail opportunities for engagement with specific stakeholder groups.

It is recommended that following each of the Shadow Authority, Shadow Executive and Chief Executives' Implementation Group meetings there are agreed communications about important decisions that can be shared via key channels and to interested stakeholders. This process will be developed by the Programme Office.

## 9.7 Channels

### Internal channels – staff and members

It is proposed that the following be created for the transition period to achieve the best possible internal communication:

- a shared digital space that can be accessed by staff and members across all five councils
- new channels such as a specific newsletter for these groups
- a shared collaborative space for the work streams.

The detail of these new channels are outlined in the Internal Communications Stakeholder Plan.

Any internal messaging, including responses to questions which may be relevant to staff or members across all councils, must follow the clearance protocol in appendix A. It must be timely and for the most part, staff must hear the news first – or at least at the same time – rather than prioritising the media.

To ensure a coordinated approach to change communications and engagement it is essential that the HR/OD and Communications work streams are aligned and work closely together throughout the transition phase.

### Media

Local media play a key role in helping us to share progress towards the new council with local residents, particularly when online articles are shared in social media forums.

It is critical that the local media understand the process and the decisions that are being made and speak to the council(s) as the most credible source of information about this. By sharing information about media enquiries and coverage, the Communications Working Group and the Programme communications team will work together to ensure all organisations speak with one voice create and respond consistently to emerging issues, enabling the media to have a clear understanding of the process and related decisions in setting up the new Buckinghamshire Council.

Informal and formal press briefings around key milestones such as the first Shadow Authority meeting will be useful in supporting the media to understand the transition and shadow arrangements and facilitate good reporting.

See appendix B for shared media relations protocol. See appendix C for a list of media contacts.

### Social media

Social media enables two-way dialogue with stakeholders and is a cost effective and immediate way of communicating decisions and discussions about the transition to the new council. It is also a platform to correct misinformation, and a way to promptly address inaccuracies before rumours take hold if responded to quickly.

There will be a twitter account set up for the Shadow Authority @Shadow\_Bucks – this will be used to promote meetings and key decisions as well as informing residents and followers about progress to the new council.

Each of the five councils will use their existing social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube, to retweet these posts and share agreed content about the transition process to the new council.

#### **Websites**

A Shadow Authority website will be developed to promote its work: the agendas, minutes and papers for its meetings will be published on the site and it will be a source of wider information for the public about the move to the new council.

#### **Engagement events**

Two way and face-to-face engagement will be required throughout the transition to ensure key groups are involved and have the opportunity to help shape the future.

This will include engagement activities for:

- Staff
- Members
- Town and parish councils
- The public

There are a number of existing approaches across the five existing councils that will be used to engage with these audiences (including for example Local Area Forums, Residents Panels, Youth Forums).

Engagement planned with individual stakeholder groups will be detailed in the stakeholder plans and will include face-to-face briefings, events, workshops, online opportunities, interactive content, surveys and other consultations.

There may also be a requirement to consult with stakeholders on specific areas, such as Council Tax Harmonisation. These will require specific communication and engagement plans.

#### **Direct mail, publications and advertising**

It is important that throughout the transition period to the new council we make use of existing publications and magazine such as MyBucks (BCC), Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe District Times to keep residents informed.

Other publications for stakeholder groups, such as newsletters to town and parish councils, schools and GPs, should also be utilised.

In the lead up to the new council there will be a need to use posters in car parks, community noticeboards, council tax letters and other existing channels to promote the new council.

Making use of other public channels such as advertising to promote the new council will form part of the plan for Phase 3.

**Regular Meetings**

Continue to use existing meetings with stakeholders such as parish and town council clerks, voluntary groups, local community groups, police, LAFs and so on and these meetings provide an opportunity for a regular agenda item to keep these organisations and groups informed and to provide an opportunity to answer any questions.

Schedules for these meetings should be exchanged and a co-ordinated approach in keeping messages current and attending meetings agreed.

**Ambassadors**

Members of each authority should be provided with as much information as possible, in order that they can speak with authority on the subject when asked by residents.

Well-informed and engaged staff can provide an effective ambassadorial role front-line when dealing with residents. In particular, customer service staff should, through the appropriate channels, be provided with regular updates and access to FAQs so they are able to formulate responses built around key messages.

The county’s five MPs have the potential to provide a supportive voice behind the local authorities’ collective activity. This should be encouraged through regular update meetings with Chief Executives and Leaders as well as briefing notes to ensure they remain aware of progress as it is made.

**Example High Level Plan – to be developed further**

Month	July	August	September	October	November	December
Milestone						
Milestone related activity						
Ongoing communications activity						
Internal staff	Staff newsletter Staff roadshows	Staff newsletter	Staff newsletter	Staff newsletter Staff Roadshows	Staff newsletter	Staff newsletter

Members	Member newsletter Member briefings	Member newsletter	Member newsletter Member briefings	Member newsletter	Member newsletter	Member newsletter Member Briefing
Residents	MyBucks	MyBucks Resident updates in Aylesbury Vale Times, Wycombe District Times,  County Show	MyBucks Consultation on Localism options	MyBucks Article for members to use in local newsletters and community publications	MyBucks Shadow website and social media	MyBucks
Town and Parish Councils	LAF meeting updates			LAF meeting updates		
	Town and Parish Council newsletter					
Strategic Partners Businesses	Regular updates					

## 9. Evaluation

Staff surveys are a good yardstick of internal communications success, as are staff briefings and individual one-to-ones.

Where staff surveys are not currently in place, we will consider introducing them and aligning with other councils' questions to form base data on satisfaction, understanding, impact, happiness and dealing with change.

To understand and improve staff communications a cross council communications survey is recommended in the summer/ at the end of phase 1 to support the ongoing development of the internal communications planning for phase 2.

Success of public relations activity can be measured through a variety of channels including:

- Community group engagement
- Feedback from stakeholder partners
- Google analytics regarding messaging
- Web page views
- Social media metrics

All evaluation will feed back into the communications process to improve future communications delivery.

## **Appendices**

### **A. Governance**

The communications strategy is delivered through the Programme Communications and Engagement Lead Officers working closely with the Communications and Engagement workstream (CEW) to co-ordinate communications to staff, councillors, customers and other stakeholders relating to the formation of Buckinghamshire Council and the interim Shadow Authority.

#### **Clearance of messaging**

The PMO Communications Leads will ensure all communications are signed-off at an appropriate level to ensure the content is technically correct and that the message is cleared politically where appropriate – working closely with the CEW and Communications Leads across all the five councils to co-ordinate approvals. Messages must be approved according to the Joint Communications and Media Protocol at appendix B.

#### **Joint communications from all councils**

Press releases will be prepared by the PMO Communication Leads and cleared for publication as detailed in the Joint Communications and Media Protocol. They will then be issued centrally by the PMO on behalf of all councils.

Joint reports to committees such as Local Area Forums (LAFs) or parish councils will be coordinated by the PMO, messages cleared and issued by the nominated communication lead on behalf of all councils.

Where communications are to be delivered separately by each council, e.g. internal comms, the CWG will ensure the same message is sent to all recipients and, as far as practicable, at the same time.

## **B. Communications protocol for the five Bucks Councils – this relates to and is focused on the Shadow Authority and work towards the new Council**

### **1. Context**

It is essential that a collaborative approach is utilised across all workstreams in the preparation for a single new unitary council for Buckinghamshire. The communications teams are pivotal in ensuring the development of positive, clear and timely information for all our staff, partners and the public. We will work together to ensure that we effectively promote the work of the Shadow Authority / Executive and the move to the new Council.

### **2. Purpose**

This protocol is designed to:

- Ensure a single point of contact with the Unitary Programme Team (Kate Walker/Jill Hemmings), county council (Kim Parfitt/Emma Denley) and single points of contact for the district councils (Catherine Spalton, Jez Vibert and Rachel Prance).
- Ensure a good working relationship between all parties, with particular emphasis on the respective communications leads across the council and unitary programme team.

### **3. Principles and overall approach**

It is important to recognise that from December 2018 to May 2019 (phase 1 – the interim period) and from May 2019 to 31 March 2020 (phase 2 - the period when the Shadow Authority is in existence) the five Bucks Councils – AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC and WDC – will still be carrying out their respective duties and subsequently there will be a need for ongoing business as usual (BAU) communications work.

The communications leads from each of the authorities will be the 'go-to' people in the first instance for any Shadow Authority communications i.e.

- Jez Vibert – Head of Communications and Marketing (AVDC)
- Kim Parfitt and Emma Denley – Heads of Communication (BCC)
- Rachel Prance – Communications, Performance & Policy Manager (CDC)
- Rachel Prance – Communications, Performance & Policy Manager (SBDC)
- Catherine Spalton – Communications and Improvement Manager (WDC)

The programme office has appointed two communication and engagement leads (Kate Walker and Jill Hemmings) who will be a single coordination point for unitary-related communications and engagement across all five existing councils.

Communications activities for the existing Councils (AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC, WDC) will still be handled by their respective communications teams but they must work openly together and maintain regular contact where appropriate to facilitate a professional and joined-up approach to all communication activities.

A similar approach will be taken for social media activity. Each authority is encouraged to re-tweet posts where applicable, whilst also maintaining a close watch on social media activity for inaccurate or negative messaging.

All five councils' communications teams to monitor local media (TV, radio and print) for potential issues.

#### **4. Scope**

This protocol is intended to cover both proactive and reactive communications activity.

All varieties of communications from traditional printed and broadcast vehicles, including interviews and opinion pieces; to social and new media, can have an impact in terms of reputation. This protocol defines communications as:

- Internal communications i.e. with staff and members
- Press releases and written statements given to the print and broadcast media
- Interviews and opinion pieces given to the print and broadcast media
- Briefings, interviews, verbal statements and press conferences
- Publicity material, including posters, brochures, leaflets, newsletters (including email newsletters, magazines etc.) and reports
- Media information, blogs and commentary released across each organisation's social media channels
- Broadcast interviews, documentaries and public interest programmes
- Presentations and briefings for stakeholders and partners
- Information published on any of the organisation's websites

#### **5. Operation**

A number of operational commitments are necessary to enable effective implementation of the communications activity discussed in this protocol.

- All content on behalf of the unitary transition should be agreed across the five councils, and will be led by the communications leads. This should include all communications materials as outlined above. The exception to this will be any internal communications which is directly related to delivery from the programme workstreams (e.g. programme updates and newsletters). This communication will be produced and co-ordinated by the programme communications and engagement leads. Communications leads in each organisation and the programme office shall undertake to inform each other at the earliest opportunity of likely or actual relevant communications activity, as defined in this protocol.
- Communications leads in each organisation and the programme office shall manage the activity in the most appropriate way, mindful of issues of confidentiality. This shall include 1) sharing key messages or deciding on a joint statement, briefing or press conference; 2) an agreement that one organisation is the lead partner on a certain issue; 3) separate activity, reflecting that one organisation may disagree with the other's position or proposed course of action.

- Material issued by any of the organisations, which relates to the work or activity of one of the other parties, will be shared, in advance, with the relevant communications team.
- Material issued by any of the organisations will be placed on their respective websites, and shared electronically with a named individual in the respective communications teams.
- A record of press enquiries/materials issued will be kept and shared in a timely fashion.
- Communications leads in each organisation shall meet regularly to discuss strategies to achieve the long-term aim of reassuring the public, staff and members, to develop joint key messages and to discuss challenges facing the parties, therefore ensuring early consideration of any important issues.
- In cases of sensitive, or conflicting, positions the communications leads representing each organisation undertake to keep each other informed on a 'no surprises' basis. Any confidentiality or embargo relating to this information will naturally be upheld.
- Communications leads in all organisations agree to respond to requests for information or other support in a timely fashion, with the minimum response being an acknowledgement of any request within one working day.
- Contact details will be provided for requirements outside of normal working hours.

## **6. Internal communications**

- This relates to communications with staff and members.
- It is essential that staff and members are informed of important news items before they are shared with the public/media.
- The communications leads across all organisations and the programme office will work collaboratively to agree messages at key times and ensure these messages are shared at the same time where possible.
- Approval for messages to staff to be cleared as shown in the procedures below; messages for members to be cleared as shown in the procedures below.

## **7. Procedures for signing off/clearance of communications materials before issuing**

### **External communications**

- Quotes for media statements and press releases on behalf of the Shadow Authority will be in the name of the Leader of the Shadow Executive. This comes into force once the Shadow Authority exists. Press releases issued on behalf of the Shadow Authority must be signed off by the Leader of the Shadow Executive and/or the interim Chief Executive (the media statement and press releases will be shared with the other Leaders/CEXs as a matter of courtesy and given a time limit in which to reply if there is an issue).
- Quotes for media statements and press releases on behalf of the respective existing authorities (AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC and WDC) will be in the name of the appropriate Cabinet Members or Leaders of that authority as per their media protocols.

### **Staff**

- Communications to staff regarding issues within the existing authorities (AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC, WDC) will be in the name of and with the approval of the relevant Chief Executive.

- Communications to staff regarding issues relating to the Shadow Authority and direct programme delivery will be in the name of and with the approval of the interim Chief Executive.

#### **Members**

- Communications to Members regarding issues within the existing authorities (AVDC, BCC, CDC, SBDC, WDC) will be in the name of and with the approval of the relevant Leader.
- Communications to Members regarding issues relating to the Shadow Authority and direct programme delivery will be in the name of and with the approval of the Leader of the Shadow Executive.

#### **8. Review**

This protocol will be reviewed in July/August 2019.