



Cabinet decision notice

The following decision(s) were taken by Cabinet at its meeting held on **12 July 2022**. Decisions will (unless called-in) become effective at 5pm on 19 July 2022.

Agenda item no. 7

Children and Education Select Committee review of recruitment and retention of social workers

(a) Decisions

A rapid review group was set up in November 2021 by the Children's & Education Select Committee to investigate the issues relating to the difficulties of recruiting and retaining both trainee and qualified social workers. It was noted that this was both a local and national issue and related to the demand for social worker exceeding the available supply. In order to explore the issues relating to this thoroughly, the rapid review group undertook research and interviewed senior officers, social workers and their managers to explore areas that might be addressed to ameliorate the situation at Buckinghamshire.

Cabinet was asked to consider the recommendations of the Children and Education Select Committee review of recruitment and retention of social workers.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Select Committee and Review Group, as well as the supporting officers, be thanked for their work and subsequent recommendations.

(2) That Cabinet's responses to the review, as set out and circulated to Members, be AGREED.

Note: a complete breakdown of the scrutiny recommendations and Cabinet's responses can be found [here](#).

(b) Reasons for decisions

For Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the Children and Education Select Committee review of recruitment and retention of social workers, with a view to improving the success of the recruitment and retention practices relating to social workers.

(c) Alternative options considered

None. Cabinet was asked to consider these recommendations and provided a response

which can be found [here](#)

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 8

Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan

(a) Decisions

In December 2021, Ofsted conducted their Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) reinspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. This inspection found that Buckinghamshire was no longer 'Inadequate', and the overall judgement of Children's Services was 'requires improvement to be good'. The Ofsted's report highlighted examples of strong practice across the service and also where improvements were required. A number of recommendations were made as set out in the Cabinet report.

As a result of the continued improvement of services, the revised Statutory Direction issued to Buckinghamshire in July 2018 had been lifted and Buckinghamshire had now entered a period of 'support and supervision', in line with all authorities who exit formal intervention. The service would continue to use its existing Quality Assurance Framework and Check & Challenge process to review practice and monitor progress on a regular basis. Action Leads would also provide six weekly updates that would consider progress alongside Performance and Impact Reporting (including data trends, quality assurance and key performance indicators). Progress against the plan would also be a standing item on each Improvement Board Agenda.

RESOLVED –

That the content of the Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan submitted to Ofsted following the December 2021 inspection be NOTED.

(b) Reasons for decisions

To provide Cabinet with the final version of the Post Ofsted Inspection Action Plan submitted to Ofsted on 25 May 2022.

(c) Alternative options considered

None.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 9

Buckinghamshire Levelling Up Framework

(a) Decisions

While outcomes for people living in Buckinghamshire were some of the best in the country there were also parts of the county where residents experienced significant hardship. The Council, in discussion with partners, had been exploring the potential for a local approach to 'levelling up' within Buckinghamshire designed to address disparities of outcomes experienced by particular communities within the county and promote community wellbeing and increased productivity. The proposed framework attached at Appendix 1 to the Cabinet report was designed to set the context for this approach, establish a shared ambition and a programme of work to tackle the underlying issues. This framework would also form part of the negotiations with Government on a County Deal for Buckinghamshire.

At the full Council meeting in April 2022, Members had committed to producing a report on Levelling Up within 3 months which set out the initial plans for taking action to secure long term change.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the proposals for a Buckinghamshire Levelling Up Framework be AGREED.**
- (2) That the programme 'Opportunity Bucks – Succeeding for All' be SUPPORTED.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To ensure that a shared commitment and approach across Buckinghamshire is established to address disparities in outcomes within communities.

(c) Alternative options considered

None.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 10

Town & Parish Charter

(a) Decisions

Town and Parish Councils (T&PC's) were the grass roots of local government in Buckinghamshire. Following the establishment of the new Buckinghamshire Council

Members wanted to take the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between all tiers of local government. There had been an ongoing programme of work to create a document that outlined this commitment and articulated some key areas to help cement a strengthened relationship.

This work had involved extensive engagement with local councils, members and had been supported by an independent consultant. Following this work the recommendation was to produce a document which set out a framework for how Buckinghamshire Council would work with local councils going forward. The document entitled 'The Town and Parish Charter' was attached at appendix 1 to the Cabinet report. Underpinning the Charter was an Action Plan attached as Appendix 2 to the Cabinet report.

The Action Plan would establish mechanisms for accountability and how the charter would be embedded within the Council and in the ongoing relationship with local councils. It also addresses a number of areas for improvement. The Partnerships, Policy and Communications team within the Deputy Chief Executive's directorate would act as the lead service in implementing the Action Plan and building on the existing relationship to ensure effective partnership and joint working between the two tiers of local government. However, this would not replace existing relationships and arrangements for engagement and consultation with local councils on specific service issues.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the proposed Charter outlining the Buckinghamshire Council's commitment to working with Town and Parish Councils across the county be ADOPTED.**
- (2) That the Action Plan supporting the delivery of the commitments in the Charter be NOTED.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To demonstrate and embed the Council's commitment to effectively working with Town and Parish Councils across the Council area.

(c) Alternative options considered

None.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 11

Biodiversity Net Gain

(a) Decisions

Cabinet considered a report on the new requirement to provide biodiversity net gain as part of the planning system. The Environment Act 2021 had introduced a new mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain in the planning system, to ensure that all new developments increased biodiversity by a minimum of 10%, with this requirement coming into effect from late 2023.

The report highlighted that the proposal to run a Buckinghamshire Council biodiversity net gain scheme was currently paused pending publication of government guidance. Subject to the guidance this scheme would be brought back for consideration later in the year. A draft Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) explaining how biodiversity net gain could be achieved in Buckinghamshire was attached to the Cabinet report for consideration and adoption.

In addition, the Council has also been developing a Biodiversity Net Gain scheme that aimed to provide a one-stop shop for developers, enabling them to discharge their offsite biodiversity net gain obligations through financial contributions. Whilst work would continue to develop the proposed scheme, it would be brought back to Cabinet once the Government guidance had been published. The attached SPD could be adopted at this time without the above scheme being in place.

RESOLVED –

That the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be ADOPTED.

(b) Reasons for decisions

An adopted Supplementary Planning Document would provide guidance to planning applicants and aid the decision making of the Council on Biodiversity Net Gain.

(c) Alternative options considered

These are detailed at Section 3 of the Cabinet report.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 12

Corporate Performance Indicators 2022-2023

(a) Decisions

Cabinet received a report detailing the key performance indicators and targets being proposed for reporting to Cabinet in 2022/23. If agreed, reporting against these indicators would commence for Quarter 2. The proposed key performance indicators and the associated targets

had been agreed within each Directorate and with each portfolio holder. They would be reviewed on an annual basis.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Key Performance indicators for 2022/23 be AGREED.**
- (2) That the associated targets for 2022/23 be AGREED.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

Key performance indicators and targets had been developed collaboratively with each Directorate and agreed with the portfolio holder.

(c) Alternative options considered

None.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 13

Q1 Budget Monitoring Report 2022-23

(a) Decisions

The report set out the overview of the financial Revenue and Capital outturn position for Buckinghamshire Council for the financial year 2022/23 as at quarter 1.

This was the first budget monitoring report for the new financial year and came at a time when the Council was experiencing significant financial pressures due to the current economic situation and the high levels of inflation.

The forecast Revenue outturn position for 2022/23 was an adverse variance of £3.8m, 1% of Portfolio budgets. Appendix 1 provided detailed information on the revenue forecast outturn by Portfolio. £19.2m of savings were incorporated into the approved 2022-23 Revenue budgets.

At this early point in the year, Portfolios were forecasting that the Capital Programme would be managed to the agreed budget level (with no forecast variance). However, the current exceptional level of inflation and the risk that shortages of building materials could further drive up prices and cause delays and slippage in the programme would have a significant impact on what could be delivered within the approved budget for the year.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report, including the risks and opportunities contained within it, be NOTED.**

- (2) That the drawdown of £1.5m from the “Mitigating Future Financial Risks” Reserve be APPROVED, to fund the unconsolidated element of the 2022/23 pay award as approved by the Senior Appointments & Pay Committee (SAPC). (Note: This can be funded from reserves as it is a one-off element and will not be incorporated into the base budget going forwards.)**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To understand the financial position of the Council in respect of 2022-23 Budgets.

(c) Alternative options considered

None arising directly from this report.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 14

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

(a) Decisions

Cabinet considered a report on 7 June 2022 seeking approval to submit an Outline Planning Application for a proposed residential development at the site of the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club land. The minutes of that meeting are accessible [here](#). Cabinet had resolved:

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

Cabinet’s decision had been called in by Councillor Christensen and been supported by 23 Councillors. The call-in and pre-planning consultation document had been considered at a meeting of the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee on 5 July, which had referred the decision back for further consideration by Cabinet relating to the pre-planning consultation document before any decision was taken.

Cabinet considered a further report and during discussions the Leader asked all Cabinet Members individually to confirm that they had read and considered the pre-planning consultation document on the former Buckinghamshire County Council Community Sports and Social Club land that was included with the agenda papers. All Cabinet Members confirmed that they had done this.

Following re-consideration of the Cabinet report, the pre-planning consultation document and

feedback and the information in the confidential part of the agenda, it was –

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Service Director for Property and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources, be authorised to instruct the submission of an Outline Planning Application consisting of up to 100 residential units including 30% affordable Housing, a new road link between Booker Park School and Lower Road, an increase in size of the existing access road to Lower Road and the provision of a sports and leisure area for community and school use.**
- (2) That it be NOTED that this site is Council owned land and provides an opportunity to provide services to the benefit of Buckinghamshire residents, such as affordable and keyworker housing in excess of statutory requirements and homes for clients of adults and children's services that cannot be imposed on privately owned development sites.**
- (3) That, should an outline planning application be successful, the Service Director for Property and Assets, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources and relevant service Directors and Heads of Service, be authorised to develop a draft and bring forward a proposed detailed development scheme for further consideration by Cabinet.**

Note: The Leader requested that the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee be informed of Cabinet's decision and outcome of the meeting.

(b) Reasons for decisions

- The proposed Outline Planning Application would set out the proposed number of accommodation units, the proportion of affordable housing, the provision of a sports and leisure area for community and school use, an expanded access road and a new road link to Booker Park School. It was not proposed to consider the detail of accommodation. This would be dealt with as reserved matters.
- There was insufficient information available at this point to decide on the mix and proportion of different proposed uses. This would be the subject of a business case that would be drafted through consultation with relevant services and submitted for a future decision.
- Submitting an early outline planning application would enable the application to be considered ahead of or together with, the emerging Stoke Mandeville Local Area Neighbourhood Plan.

Please note: This decision was originally taken by Cabinet on 7 June 2022 and has already been subject to call-in. As such, this decision is not subject to call-in.

(c) Alternative options considered

These are detailed at Section 3 of the Cabinet report.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 15

Highways Term Maintenance Contract - Award

(a) Decisions

The procurement project team, with support from other disciplines from across the Council and externally, had made positive progress with the delivery of the new Highways operating model and the associated procurement activity and were on programme to deliver these key contracts for the Council.

One of these contracts was the appointment of a new Term Maintenance Contractor. The Cabinet report paper, and the confidential Appendix 1, reported on the outcome of the procurement exercise and recommended the award of contract to the preferred bidder with the most economically advantageous tender in accordance with the agreed assessment model for quality and price.

The Term Maintenance Contract was a key component of the new Highway service contracts and awarding it would enable the smooth transfer to the new operating model for the Highways Service and ensure business continuity. It would reflect value for money and was lower than current costs on a like for like basis.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That progress made to date on the procurement of the new Highways Services Contracts be NOTED.**
- (2) That the award of the Highways Term Maintenance contract to the preferred bidder be AGREED, as detailed within confidential Appendix 1.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

- (i) The contracts required for the future delivery of this key service were ranked as 'Platinum Plus', requiring a council Key Decision by Cabinet.
- (ii) There were three elements/contracts, with the procurement of each undertaken in a phased approach to manage workload.
- (iii) The Term Maintenance Contract (TMC) was the first of the three to be taken to Cabinet. The Cabinet report detailed the outcome of the procurement exercise, making recommendations for a decision to award the TMC in accordance with the previously agreed procurement process.

(c) Alternative options considered

None.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

For further information please contact: Ian Hunt - democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk on 01296 585043, email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

You can view upcoming decisions to be made and all decisions taken on the Council's website [here](#).