



Cabinet decision notice

The following decision(s) were taken by Cabinet at its meeting held on **16 February 2021**. Decisions will (unless called-in) become effective at 5pm on 23 February 2021.

Agenda item no. 8

Q3 Budget Monitoring Report 2020-21

(a) Decisions

The report sets out the Revenue and Capital outturn position for Buckinghamshire Council for the financial year 2020/21 as at quarter 3.

RESOLVED –

Cabinet noted the current forecast outturn for the financial year 2020/21 and the latest estimates of impacts and funding related to Covid-19.

(b) Reasons for decisions

To understand the current financial position of the Council.

(c) Alternative options considered

Not applicable.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 9

Q3 Performance Report 2020-21

(a) Decisions

The report detailed the performance of the key performance measures reported through the corporate performance framework for 2020/21. Latest performance outturns and targets for the quarter 3 period were reported alongside trend and benchmarking information, where available.



RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Council’s performance for the quarter 3 period be noted.**
- (2) That action to improve performance where required be taken**

(b) Reasons for decisions

The Corporate Performance Framework is reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet to ensure there is understanding, ownership and accountability for performance outturns, including actions to improve performance where appropriate.

(c) Alternative options considered

None arising directly from this report.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 10

Budget Scrutiny 2021 Report

(a) Decisions

Cabinet were asked to consider the recommendations of the Budget Scrutiny Inquiry Group which was formed to scrutinise the Draft Revenue Budget 2021/22 and Capital Programme 2021-2025 that Cabinet approved on 5 January 2021.

RESOLVED –

Cabinet agreed responses to the Budget Scrutiny 2021 Report and its recommendations, a complete breakdown of which can be found [here](#).

(b) Reasons for decisions

For Cabinet to consider the recommendations of the Budget Scrutiny Inquiry Group.

(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. 11

Final Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan

(a) Decisions

Cabinet received a report on the 2021/22 revenue budget and capital programme. Given the levels of uncertainty around government funding levels beyond 2021/22 and the difficulties with accurately forecasting the longer-term implications arising as a result of the pandemic the revenue budget proposed within the report is for 2021/22 only. This would ensure that the Council did not make decisions based on assumptions which were impossible to estimate at this stage given the international, national and local fiscal impact of the pandemic.

It was noted that in response to the Budget Scrutiny 2021 report (Recommendation no. 11) it had been agreed to increase capital investment in highways drainage assets by £2m (from £1.5m to £3.5m). This would allow structural repairs to be undertaken following identification of issues through cleansing in order to allow gullies to remain clear and operational.

It was further proposed that a further £2m be added to the revenue budget (from £2.2m to £4.2m) to allow all gullies to be properly cleansed once in 2021/22 with a second cleanse of critical gullies also in 2021/22, together with ensuring that any problems identified can be programmed in and rectified. This would be funded from the one-off use of General Fund (unallocated) reserves. The level of reserves were now forecast to be £45m which was still circa 10% of the net operational budget.

Overall, this meant that the total budget for drainage (revenue and capital) since the draft budget had been considered by Cabinet would increase from £3.7m to £7.7m.

RESOLVED

- 1) That a further £2m be incorporated into the revenue budget for gully clearing (increasing the budget from £2.2m to £4.2m) funded from General Fund Reserves, as discussed and agreed at the meeting, and that**

Full Council be recommended to:

- 2) approve the revenue budget and capital programme (Appendices 1-3).**
- 3) approve the 'Special Expenses' budgets, precepts and associated services for Aylesbury Town, High Wycombe Town and West Wycombe Church Yard (Appendices 5 and 6).**
- 4) support the proposal to delegate to Cabinet decisions to add up to £100m to the capital programme, to be funded by Prudential Borrowing (see section 9.5).**

- 5) approve the Council Tax Reduction Scheme Policy (Appendix 7).
- 6) approve the schedule of Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 8.

And that it be noted that a supplementary report, formal Council Tax Resolution, would accompany the final Budget to full Council.

(b) Reasons for decisions

To set a robust and legal revenue budget and capital programme for Buckinghamshire Council within the prescribed timeframe.

To ensure the Council is able to make appropriate additions to the capital programme in a timely manner.

(c) Alternative options considered

Not applicable.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 12

Improvement Plan Progress Update

(a) Decisions

Cabinet received a report which provided an update on the continued impact of COVID-19 on the Service and the current progress against the Ofsted Improvement Plan.

RESOLVED –

That the continued impact of COVID-19 on the Service and the current progress against the Ofsted Improvement Plan be noted.

(b) Reasons for decisions

To keep Cabinet informed of the continued impact of COVID-19 on the service and the current progress against the Ofsted Improvement Plan.

(c) Alternative options considered

Not applicable.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 13

Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy

(a) Decisions

The Cabinet received a report on the Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy. The Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy has been developed following the motion at Council on 15 July 2020 regarding climate change. The strategy sets the Council's proposed approach to addressing climate change and air quality across Buckinghamshire, including targets for emissions reduction from the Council's direct operations. The report recommended that further targeted engagement be undertaken regarding the delivery and implementation of the strategy.

RESOLVED –

- i) That the Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy be agreed for the purpose of further targeted engagement;**
- ii) That the further targeted engagement be agreed, with a view to considering the best way in which the strategy can be delivered and implemented; and**
- iii) That the strategy be reconsidered following the above targeted engagement to determine next steps.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To approve a Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy for the purpose of further targeted engagement following the motion at Council on 15 July 2020 regarding climate change. Addressing climate change is a key area for action in the Council's Corporate Plan, supporting the priority for improving our environment.

(c) Alternative options considered

A range of options have been considered for reducing emissions in arriving at the proposed actions. This has considered the source of the emission (e.g. street lighting or buildings) and the technologies and approaches available to reduce emissions from this source.

Other options considered for reducing our emissions include the use of carbon offsets credits and the purchasing of renewable (green) energy. Both these options would allow the Council to report lower net carbon emissions, however both are also associated with some uncertainty regarding their effectiveness in reducing carbon emissions.

The strategy proposes to review these options to determine the additional carbon benefits

which may be achieved through their use, so that a view on their future role in reaching our reduction targets can be taken.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 14

Princes Risborough Expansion Supplementary Planning Document

(a) Decisions

Cabinet received a report on the Princes Risborough Expansion Supplementary Planning Document (PRE SPD) which the Council had prepared following the Wycombe District Local Plan to guide development. This expands upon Development Plan policy to indicate the Council's preferred approach to where homes, school facilities and infrastructure should be provided; how and when they should be phased, and how the development should fund this.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Princes Risborough Expansion Supplementary Planning Document (PRE SPD), as set out at Appendices 1 to 9, be approved for adoption; and**
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Service Director, Planning and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Enforcement, to discuss healthcare provision and alternative sources of funding on the site with the Clinical Commissioning Group, to consult and obtain the views of Local Members, to consider alternative ways to bring forward traffic calming, and to approve any resulting minor changes, including formatting, accessibility compliance and typographical errors in the SPD and supporting documents, prior to publication.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To ensure that planning applications for Princes Risborough expansion can be assessed against detailed guidance in the capacity and delivery plan, in accordance with the adopted Wycombe District Local Plan.

(c) Alternative options considered

a) Not adopt the PRE SPD. This would undermine the Council's position in determining any planning applications or defending its position at appeal. This would result in planning applications being determined without detailed guidance in place, including crucially in terms of phasing and the approach to calculating equitable contributions.

b) Make further changes to the SPD before adoption. If significant changes are made it may be necessary to delay the adoption, possibly until at least June 2021 owing to Purdah

starting 22 March 2021. This could result in planning applications being determined without detailed guidance in place, including crucially in terms of phasing and the approach to calculating equitable contributions (based on net developable area) which may well be contested by developers.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 15

Large Scale Tree Planting on Buckinghamshire Council land holding

(a) Decisions

Cabinet received a report which outlined the steps that have been taken to date to scope out the options and feasibility of large scale tree and woodland planting of approximately 543,000 trees on land owned by the Council.

RESOLVED –

- i) That the progress made with respect to options to facilitate planting of over 500,000 trees on Buckinghamshire Council land holdings be noted;**
- ii) To progress the production of more detailed woodland creation and project plans for the first phase sites, notably with the aim that, subject to approval of detailed costing and procurement they are delivered within the next planting season; and**
- iii) That the overall ambition of the 10 year large scale tree planting programme be agreed noting the phasing of sites, i.e. Phase 1 (sites delivered next planting season), Phase 2 (sites delivered in 2-5 years) and Phase 3 (sites that would be delivered in 5-10 years) noting that sites are subject of change and refinement as the programme develops.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To deliver against one of the key priorities in the Corporate Plan notably 'Improving our Environment'.

(c) Alternative options considered

This report focussed on the feasibility of large scale tree planting on the Council's own landholding notably the agricultural estate. It should be noted that outside of the scope of this report further work was being undertaken with respect to trees notably:

- a) An officer task group was scoping out how Buckinghamshire Council can support and facilitate Community groups, Community Boards and school based tree planting

initiatives.

- b) Work was being undertaken to update and review Highway Development Tree Guidance as well as replacement and future planting of highway trees.
- c) Work was being undertaken with Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust for a possible COVID memorial wood.
- d) The emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy of which Buckinghamshire was one of five pilots would identify areas for creation and restoration for woodland and other habitats across the County i.e. not just our own landholdings.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 16

Lancaster Road, Cressex Industrial Estate

(a) Decisions

The Cabinet were asked to decide on the acquisition of the long-leasehold interest at Lancaster Road, Cressex Industrial Estate, High Wycombe to facilitate land assembly and future regeneration opportunities.

RESOLVED –

That the acquisition of the long-leasehold interest at Lancaster Road, Cressex Industrial Estate, High Wycombe to facilitate land assembly and future regeneration opportunities be approved.

(b) Reasons for decisions

The proposed acquisition provides a substantial increase in the revenue generated at this site. The acquisition also provides the Council with control of the site to pursue future regeneration and redevelopment opportunities upon expiry of the incumbent leases.

(c) Alternative options considered

The alternative option would be to do nothing. This would result in no increase in the revenue generated from this site and no control on the development or occupation of a prominent site at Cressex Industrial Estate.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

None.

Agenda item no. 17

Overview of Aylesbury Vale Estates and draft business plan 2021-2024

(a) Decisions

The Cabinet received a report which provided an overview of how the joint venture Aylesbury Vale Estates (AVE), which was 50% owned by the Council, operates. It also summarised how AVE was performing against the current business plan and presented the draft business plan for 2021-2024 and the strategy for delivery. The Cabinet was invited to provide comments on the future business plan for consideration by the AVE Board. It was noted that if the Board felt unable to make any changes required to the plan as a result of the feedback, this would be reported back to the Council.

RESOLVED –

- i) That the performance of Aylesbury Vale Estates against the Strategy and Action Plan for 2020-21 be noted; and**
- ii) That the Strategy and Action Plan in the draft Business Plan for 2021-24 be approved.**

(b) Reasons for decisions

To provide Cabinet with the opportunity to comment on the proposed Strategy and Action Plan as set out in the draft Business Plan for 2021-24.

(c) Alternative options considered

Not applicable.

(d) Conflicts of interest/ dispensations

Councillor K Wood, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources, declared a prejudicial interest as an Aylesbury Vale Estates LLP Board Member, and left the meeting when this item was discussed. Councillor Nick Naylor is also an AVE LLP Board Member but gave apologies for this meeting.

For further information please contact: Craig Saunders 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](#).