

**SHADOW EXECUTIVE**

**TUESDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 2019**

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

Councillors S Bowles, J Chilver, A Cranmer,  
I Darby, T Green, C Harriss, P Hogan,  
A Macpherson, D Martin, N Naylor, M Shaw,  
W Whyte, G Williams, F Wilson and D Dhillon

**Also in Attendance:**

Councillor Stuchbury

**Apologies:** B Chapple OBE

**1 Apologies**

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

The Leader clarified that D Dhillon was now a formal member of the Shadow Executive deputising for B Chapple. Mr Tett also advised that P Irwin was now an Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) deputy as B Everitt had stood down from the Executive due to being selected as a Parliamentary Candidate.

Apologies had been received from K Woods, with S Broadbent deputising as Vice Chairman.

**2 Declarations of interest**

There were none.

**3 Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October were **AGREED** as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

**4 Question Time**

The Leader advised that due to Purdah rules it would be inappropriate to respond publically to the two questions received by Councillor Robin Stuchbury. The advice given from the Monitoring Officer was to respond to the questions in written form only and it was agreed that these would be circulated to R Stuchbury and all members of the Shadow Executive by the end of the day.

**ACTION: Democratic Services**

It was noted that the same approach would be taken at the next meeting on 3 December as Purdah rules would still apply.

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

Members considered the 28 Day Notice of executive decisions due to be taken. The Leader advised that the forward plan was under regular review and urged residents and members to view the forward plan on the shadow website for the latest version.

It was asked that the forward plan be updated to include the relevant Portfolio Holder for each item.

**ACTION: Democratic Services**

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

## **6 Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

Members received a report that outlined the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the new council and consider it to be adopted as the new scheme for Buckinghamshire Council from 1 April 2020.

It was highlighted that the scheme would be a single harmonised scheme, the principles of which were highlighted paragraph 3.3 of the report and feedback from the public consultation were included in Appendix 1 of the report. If approved, the scheme would be adopted by the new council and submitted as part of the budget to the Shadow Authority for agreement.

It was highlighted that the scheme provided support to council tax payers on low income and provided protection for those deemed most vulnerable.

Members highlighted that the number of responses to the consultation seemed to be low at 136, however it was confirmed that this was typical of the type of consultation and there were also others ways of feedback, for example consultation with the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

It was agreed that although the report stated that a communications plan was not required it was highlighted that communications would be sent to those that receive a reduction and that information could be found on the website. It was also highlighted that customer service teams would also be made aware of the changes so that they could deal with incoming queries.

Officers were thanked for the considerable work carried out.

**RESOLVED: That the Council Tax Reduction scheme, as proposed at the Shadow Executive on 23 July 2019, be adopted as the new scheme for Buckinghamshire Council commencing 1 April 2020.**

## **7 Main Payscale, Reward, Terms and Conditions**

The item was discussed after item 10 in order for both items to be discussed as part of the confidential session.

Members were asked to consider a report that outlined the Pay Scale and Terms and Conditions (T&Cs) for the new Buckinghamshire Council. Detail in the report applied to tiers four and below and did not include the senior leadership team. It was confirmed that there were a number of dependencies requiring the new Pay, T&Cs to be in place – in particular so that the SAP build could commence and also due to the those roles advertised from January onwards would be advertised with Buckinghamshire Council pay and T&Cs where they were expected to have a 1 April start date. The new scheme over the medium term would be cost

neutral and would be compliant with TUPE, employment law and existing contractual terms would be honoured.

Due to the confidential nature of the report a detailed discussion took place in a confidential session.

Once this debate had taken place The Leader confirmed the following resolution had been made.

**RESOLVED: The Pay Scale and Terms and Conditions for Buckinghamshire Council were AGREED.**

Tribute was paid to all members of staff across all five councils.

## **8 Devolution Offer**

Members were asked to consider a report that set out the proposed devolution framework to enable local organisations, particularly town and parish councils, to take on greater local control over the running of Buckinghamshire Council's services and assets. A decision was required by the Shadow Executive to enable town and parish councils to have clarity on the likely timeline and scope of a devolution programme.

The framework had been developed through extensive engagement with town and parish councils which included workshops being held during the summer. A phased approach to implementation was recommended which would start with place based pilots developing a package of assets and devolution offers. Following these pilots an evaluation would take place and a wider package developed for roll out.

Members were supportive of the report and of the use of pilot areas in phase 1. Members highlighted those smaller parishes would need to understand resource requirements and that this was an offer from the Council and that services would not be pushed onto parish and town councils. It was confirmed that governance controls would be considered on a case by case basis and detailed work on the framework would underpin what success looked like; ensuring benefits for communities whilst also delivering value for money.

Members were happy with the inclusion of unincorporated organisations as they could have the ability to run a particular service successfully and the new council needed to be flexible in its approach.

It was highlighted that an initial list of assets would be published in March 2020 as a first step and as part of the place based pilots. Organisations would then be invited to take part in conversations around a wide range of assets in a particular locality. It was also highlighted that while there was a three year phasing plan it was an aspiration that the devolution offer would go beyond three years, but three year costs had been built into the budget initially to imbed the new team. Members highlighted the need to focus on the estimated costs and in particular those relating to legal costs as these were often much higher than initially thought.

Thanks were given to officers that had worked on the consultation and report; the engagement had been widely appreciated across local parishes.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1. To agree to set up a three year devolution programme with a phased roll out. In phase 1 will include:**
  - The existing legacy service devolution arrangements in place continuing for highways, and for green space in the Wycombe district area;**

- Support given to local organisations, including town and parish councils, to take on community assets such as community centres, toilets, memorials; and
  - Place-based pilots.
2. To agree the Service Devolution and Asset Transfer Policy for Buckinghamshire Council as set out in Appendix 1.
  3. To provide support to organisations to take up the devolution offer through:
    - An online toolkit and guidance.
    - Dedicated staff to help progress devolution requests.
    - Technical and specialist advice in areas such as:
      - Health and safety
      - Human resources
      - Insurance provisions
      - Contract management

To note the implementation next steps are set out in section 4 of this report, including development of a wider service devolution offer for phase 2 & 3 of the programme.

## 9 Wycombe Regeneration Strategy and Outline Business Case for Eastern Quarter

Members were asked to consider a report that set out the draft Regeneration Strategy for High Wycombe, Princes Risborough and Marlow for their approval and to be incorporated in a wider strategy by the new Buckinghamshire Council once it came into being. The strategy provided both principles and an outline programme as to how main settlements within the district could contribute to the stated growth aims for Buckinghamshire. The strategy had been developed by Inner Circle Consulting working with officers in the Wycombe District Council Regeneration and Investment Team.

It was highlighted that the strategy was still draft and did not commit any future spending of the new council.

Members were in support of the draft strategy as a framework and direction of travel; with the final strategy to be considered and agreed by the new council. It was suggested that similar schemes should be considered across the county in order to be ready for when any additional funding became available. It was also suggested that the strategy could be looked at in conjunction with the Aylesbury Garden Town to make use of best practice.

Wycombe District Council officers were commended for the work they had done on the Strategy.

**RESOLVED: That the Regeneration Strategy for High Wycombe, Princes Risborough and Marlow be approved as a draft to be considered and, in whole or part, be incorporated in a wider strategy by the new Buckinghamshire Council once it comes into being.**

## 10 Spending Protocol: Princes Risborough Relief Road

Members were asked to consider a report that set out the forecast cost of Phase 1 of the Princes Risborough Relief Road, which highlighted where greater cost certainty had now been obtained and outlined the main risks. The report asked for the Shadow Executive's support to progress the scheme through a detailed design phase and the start of negotiations. It was confirmed that further updates would be provided to the new authority in 2020/21 to determine the way forward.

Due to the confidential nature of the item a detailed discussion took place in a confidential session.

After a thorough debate had taken place The Leader confirmed the following resolution had been made.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To note the latest projected costs for Princes Risborough Relief Road Phase 1 and support Option 3 which involves progression of the scheme through detailed design and commencing CPO process/land negotiations, funded from the existing Wycombe District Council capital programme funds.
2. To support the release of the funding which forms part of the WDC approved budget.
3. That an update report be brought to the new Buckinghamshire Council in 2020/21 to update on costs and potential section 106 and other income.

11 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED:** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**Paragraph 3 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)**

12 **Spending Protocol: Princes Risborough Relief Road**

13 **Main Payscale, Rewards and Terms Conditions**

14 **Date of next meeting**

3 December 2019.

Chairman at the meeting on  
Tuesday, 12 November 2019