



Buckinghamshire Council
Annual Report
2021/22

Foreword

It's twelve months on from our first Annual Report - twelve months of living under the shadow of a global pandemic and the challenges it brought and continues to bring, I continue to be extremely proud of the resilience of our residents, partners, and staff, who continue to rise to the challenge of delivering services and supporting residents in unprecedented times. This annual report reflects the achievements of Buckinghamshire Council against our Corporate Plan, which outlines our ambitions and priorities.

We are committed to making Buckinghamshire the best place to live, raise a family, work, and do business. We want our county to be a place everyone can be proud of, with excellent services, thriving businesses and outstanding public spaces for everyone. We want our residents, regardless of background, to have access to great opportunities, living healthy, successful lives and ageing well with independence.

As a council, all Members have played a key role in the delivery of our achievements for our residents, communities and businesses over the last year.

We can look back and be proud of what we have achieved; the challenges of the pandemic will certainly remain with us over the coming months and beyond, but we have a unique opportunity to build on our successes. Buckinghamshire's Strategic Vision for 2050 will help deliver many of these ambitions which will not only benefit our residents but also the wider economy.

I am pleased to be able to reflect in this report how we have continued to develop and grow as a new council and on the many achievements we have collectively made.

Martin Tett
Leader, Buckinghamshire Council



Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet Members



Angela Macpherson
Deputy Leader and
Health & Wellbeing



Martin Tett
Leader



Gareth Williams
Deputy Leader and
Planning & Regeneration



Steve Bowles
Communities



Nick Naylor
Housing,
Homelessness
& Regulatory
Services



John Chilver
Finance,
Resources,
Property &
Assets



Anita Cranmer
Education &
Children Service



Steve Broadbent
Transport



Peter Strachan
Climate Change
and Environment



Clive Harriss
Culture & Leisure

Our Key Priorities

Buckinghamshire Council's Corporate Plan for 2020-25 sets out the key activities the Council planned to undertake over that period to achieve its strategic objectives and vision.

Supporting this plan will be a number of strategies and policies which will detail how we will deliver our ambitions and priorities.

This annual report shows what was achieved during 2021/22 under the following priority headings:

1. Strengthening our communities
2. Protecting the vulnerable
3. Improving our environment
4. Increasing prosperity

We have also included information around our achievements with regards to our people and internal developments.





Strengthening our communities

People in Buckinghamshire are living longer and healthier lives, with health outcomes better than the national average. We have strong communities and a thriving, dedicated not for profit sector.

Buckinghamshire is a healthy and inclusive place to live, work and visit but we have a number of challenges. These include building more affordable homes now and for future generations, providing extra help and support for an increasingly older population and improving the health of people who live in the more deprived areas of Buckinghamshire.

We also face the challenge of supporting our communities and residents to recover safely from the coronavirus pandemic.





Strengthening our communities

Our achievements this year

Community boards have delivered

415 projects

total committed budget of £3,789,513

Achieved total contributions of **£2,140,033** for every

£+£ £1 of Community Board funding we secured £0.71 in match funding



Delivered **112 Community Board**

projects with an environmental focus, totalling £683,000, including:

Tree planting, woodland activities, forest schools and 'Go Green' initiatives not only tackling environmental issues, also addressing mental health and providing new skills

Improvements to parks, green spaces creating new communal areas and community gardens

Delivered

29 Community Board

projects with an economic recovery focus, totalling £172,000



Supporting people to access training or employment, support for setting up a new business, and providing financial advice and support

Supporting shops and businesses in our town and villages with shop local campaigns



Launched a new searchable Bucks Online Directory with 3,000 community groups & organisations, making it easy for residents and professionals to find local activities and support



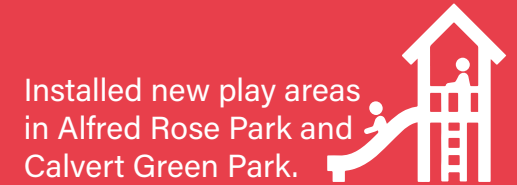
Opened the **Chilterns Lifestyle Centre in Amersham**

(72k visits in January & c110k visits in the first 8 weeks)

Completed the new swimming pool at Chalfont Leisure Centre



Opened a **new 3G pitch** at Aqua Vale Leisure Centre in Aylesbury



Installed new play areas in Alfred Rose Park and Calvert Green Park. Multi Use Games Areas resurfaced at Bedgrove Park, Oakfield Road Park and Calvert Green Park

Opened new Boathouse Café at The Rye Park in High Wycombe following a **£334k revamp** completed in partnership with High Wycombe Town Committee



Delivered a successful WhizzFizzFest arts and literary festival



Rolled out the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme

Since May 2021

supported **3,420** Aylesbury & Wycombe residents to get more active through our Active Communities pilot and introduced **nine** Active Park Walks



Active Communities Pilot Project,

a community-based approach that engages with local people and various assets within a community

Active Movement Project is underway in High Wycombe and Aylesbury.

This research project aims to

reduce sedentary behaviour



&



increase physical activity levels

among children aged 4-11 years old as well as adults who have contact with those children within the wider community



The government's Wellbeing for Education Return programme was successfully cascaded across all schools in the county. Providing additional mental health and emotional well-being support to our family of schools, including direct support to school staff and headteachers

Held the first ever

Open Weekend in partnership with Buckinghamshire Culture, in July 2021 with over **75 creative events & activities** across Buckinghamshire

Launched partnership with Action4Youth in High Wycombe Library;



circa 800 young people have registered as members



Launched the Blue Light Project (BLP) with One Recovery Bucks, which is an initiative developed by Alcohol Change UK to develop alternative approaches and care pathways for treatment resistant drinkers who place a burden on public services

Relaunched the Civilian Military Partnership Board



Some

500 nominations were received for the **Proud of Bucks Awards.**



Presentations and events have been held celebrating these achievements



Supported the Covid response

across Buckinghamshire: over **400,000** boxes of lateral flow tests have been distributed; **17,568** phone calls made to provide support and advice to residents with Covid; **1840** tests and Trace £500 support payments made and a further **836** discretionary payments; **100+** volunteers supported surge testing across the County

Over 600 days

of patrols carried out by Street Wardens dealing with 1637 incidents/ campaigns/ matters



Over 340 "Friends Against Scams" were trained during 2021 to help protect their local communities from scams and fraud



Protecting the vulnerable

While most people in Buckinghamshire live independent and healthy lives, some need extra support and protection. We know that the number of children and adults who need this extra help is increasing and the impending social care reforms, set out in the 'People at the Heart of Care' White Paper will have significant impacts for us as an authority. There are also rising numbers of people with mental health difficulties, special educational needs, disabilities and complex needs.

We want to give everyone the best chances in life, so that – together with their families and carers - they are resilient and can identify their own solutions. We will continue to work with our partners and communities to innovate and improve our offer, helping people recover from illness sooner, promoting fostering, reducing social isolation and loneliness, and supporting our most vulnerable residents.

Our goal is to reduce inequalities and give everyone the support and skills they need to live independent, happy and fulfilling lives.





Protecting the vulnerable

Our achievements this year

Launched a new

Domestic Abuse Partnership Board

on 6th October 2021 in line with new statutory duties contained with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021



Welcomed five Afghan families as part of the Home Office's Afghan Resettlement Programme and are on track to resettle 10 families in the first year and 30 long term

Over 5,500 requests for support have been received by the **Helping Hand** team

with over **50%** of these received between Jan and March 2022

Hosted Buckinghamshire Domestic Homicide Review Learning Event with male victims of domestic abuse



helping hand

Working with the VCS sector the **Helping Hand** team have successfully utilised just under **£3.5 million** of grant funding,

provided through the Local Support Grant and Household Support Fund, to support financially vulnerable families

Live Well Stay Well has supported **1,600 residents** to quit smoking since 2018. The average quit success rate across the four years is 52 %



Established the Financial Insecurities Partnership in April 2021 with partners from the Voluntary & community Sector (VCS), including MIND, Carers Bucks, Connections, and local Housing Associations



The Family and Carer Support Service in One Recovery Bucks has provided **228** family group support interventions and **1,650** family one to one interventions

Worked with the community & health partners to deliver **110 outreach Covid-19 vaccination clinics** in community venues & faith settings



The **Helping Hand** service (utilising Government Funds) have provided

just over 60,706

holiday food vouchers support via schools and early years settings to families with children eligible for pupil premium, early years' pupil premium or 2-year-old funded free education places

In partnership with Carers Bucks we identified and supported **1299** new carers and invested **£150,000** to enable carers to attend vaccination appointments & purchase Personal Protective Equipment





Redesigned and updated Care Advice Bucks webpages with the help of residents



Improved online services making it easier for residents & professionals to raise welfare and safeguarding concerns

Launched the new hospital discharge pathway between Adult Social Care & Buckinghamshire Health Trust



Commissioned a Home from Hospital service which supported 843 people to return home after a hospital admission (Apr-Dec 21)

Supported

1600 hospital discharges

with over **80%** of individuals going straight home from hospital with a package of care

Launched 'community cafes' which provide 60 face-to-face appointments each week for residents to speak with adult social care workers and with other agencies. 343 residents have been helped to date



Delivered the supported housing project at Ardenham House, Aylesbury (with Hightown Housing Association) providing accommodation for **9 rough sleepers with high support needs** and a further **7 properties** (with Harrow Churches Housing Association) providing move-on accommodation for rough sleepers



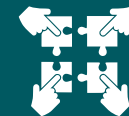
Successfully bid for Government Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme funding to deliver a further **18 units of accommodation** for former rough sleepers in partnership with YMCA and Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust (due to be delivered in 22/23)

Provided specialist weight management services **in areas with the highest rates of diabetes** to help make it easier for people who want to lose weight

Collaborated with Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust and Stoke Mandeville Stadium to create a temporary



"Intermediate Care Centre" with a Transfer of Care hub at Olympic Lodge to help people get out of hospital



Created a collaborative multi-agency hub in our Early Resolution and Safeguarding Service (including Women's Aid, One Recovery Bucks, and the ambulance service)



Children's Services in Buckinghamshire are no longer judged to be 'Inadequate'

Between 1 January and 31 December 2021,

82%

of Education, Health and Care Plans were issued within **20 weeks** (compared to 75% in 2020)

Launched a range of community projects to prevent male suicide particularly targeted at those areas most at risk



Between 1 January and 31 December 2021 approved 15 new foster carers (25 placements) & 14 new adopters approved



As of 31 December 2021, **98.6%** of early years providers were rated **good or above by Ofsted**

As of 31 December 2021, **89.3%** of schools were rated **good or above by Ofsted**

90% of families referred through Family Support Service had a planned outcome (1 January – 31 December 2021) with **95%** of initial Family Support Plans completed within 31 working days (1 January – 31 December 2021)



We launched our first ever Buckinghamshire Adult Safeguarding campaign with our partners **See Something, Say Something, Do Something**



76% of care leavers aged 19-21 are in Employment, Education or Training

During 2021, all 4 of our in-house children's homes were inspected by Ofsted.

All achieved a rating of 'Good' with one having features of 'Outstanding'



Buckinghamshire Family Information Service won the National award for the Best Promotion of Two-Year-Old Funding



Since April 2021, **180 partners across the council, VCSE and the NHS** have received Making Every Contact Counts training, helping them to support residents improve their health and wellbeing

Public health worked closely with NHS colleagues to target and provide vaccine outreach clinics to communities with low vaccine uptake or those at greater risk of Covid-19



Launched our **Adults & Health Careers Advice Service** to ensure our workforce is equipped with the right information and tools to support their learning and development



Launched our second cohort of Health and Social Care Cadets, through which local students gain experience with service users and understand the different areas and roles within social work. The programme supports career progression into health and social care



In 2021 our Trading Standards team saved vulnerable consumers in Buckinghamshire over £800,000 through their interventions.

One of the ways they did this was installing call blockers in the homes of vulnerable people being plagued by fraudulent scam calls. In 2021 the call blockers stopped over 24,000 scam and nuisance calls. Each £1 spent on call blockers saves vulnerable residents £32

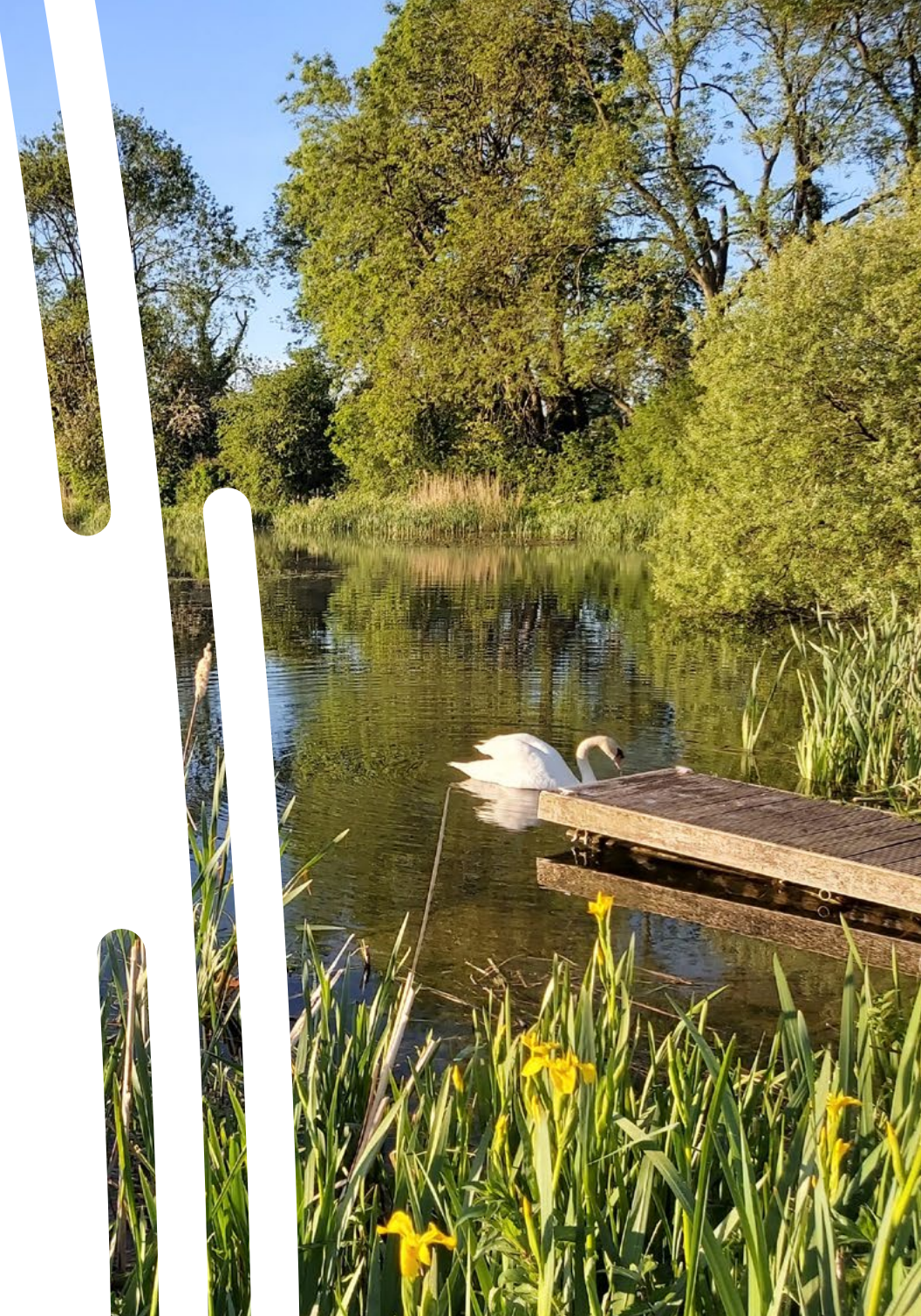


Improving our environment

Buckinghamshire is a beautiful county and our stunning natural and historic landscape is valued by all. Over a quarter of our county is within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a third is covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Protection of the county's beautiful countryside, including areas of outstanding natural beauty and green belt will be achieved through the 'Brown before Green' principle.

We know we have to deliver more homes and associated infrastructure for our growing population. By managing growth sensibly and responsibly, we can protect and enhance our natural environment and the benefits it brings. Aylesbury Garden Town is an exciting example: putting green spaces and natural environments at the heart of future development.





Improving our environment

Our achievements this year



Adoption of Climate Change & Air Quality Strategy

First trees planted in February 2022 towards the target of planting 543k trees. Over 4,542 trees being planted by end of March 2022



(QGC - Queen's Green Canopy, agricultural estate & LATF - Local Authority Treescapes Fund)

Each School and care home has been offered a free tree as part of our support for the Queen's Green Canopy



63 schools in Buckinghamshire have been awarded **Modeshift STARS** accreditation in recognition of their work promoting sustainable travel in 20/21

This year's survey of the Rights of Way network showed 75% of the paths easy to use, 94% of structures were accessible and 94% of direction signage at roadside was in place



One of the first councils to trail a pioneering electric car club with innovative induction charging

Pilots held at three locations to test the implementation of **Moving Traffic Offences** and a public consultation held with a view to being one of the first Council's to introduce these restrictions outside of London



Haydon Hill Cycleway extension opened in August 21 to provide a continuous off-road link between Haydon Hill, Aylesbury Parkway Station and onto the Waddesdon Greenway – another step forward to fulfilling Buckinghamshire's aspiration for creating a continuous cycleway running north-south across the county

Successful mobilisation of Veolia delivering waste services in the former South Bucks area, with new vehicles introduced in November 2021



Successfully bid into the Government's Air Quality Grant for **£578k** to upcycle our first refuse collection vehicle to electric

We have delivered an overall carriageway, footway, drainage and structures capital programme of

£34M
this year



Invested £4m in drain and gullies work programme to clean each of the 85,000 gullies in Buckinghamshire at least once and repair those that needed it

£500k traffic signals maintenance grant secured from DfT (Department for Transport) toward refurbishment of the Walton Street Gyratory, Aylesbury



Bus Service Improvement Plan completed and submitted within 9 months, introducing 60 Real Time Bus Displays to provide passengers with live information on how full the buses are

Improvements to Aylesbury Bus Station including refurbishment of the toilets, improvements to electronic information displays and audio systems and upgraded lighting



Buckinghamshire's first Bee Friendly Bus Shelter with a living green roof installed on Bicester Road, Aylesbury



Introduced a new online spare seat application process that has enabled parents to have better information on the availability of paid for seats on Council run buses before they apply. **This has improved the success rate for parents to secure seats from about 50% in 2020 to 84% for September 2021**



The introduction in September 2021 of 14 new commercial school bus routes which run independently of the Council, enabling parents to buy tickets directly from bus operators and ensuring that vital home to school transport options were sustained



In May 2021 we launched an online SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) home to school transport application form

Personal Transport Budgets launched as an alternative option for SEND students, giving over **360 families so far** freedom and flexibility to make their own transport arrangements and supporting children's independence

Launched 'Adopt a Patch' in our country parks, with over 300 bags of rubbish collected by our dedicated volunteers to date



Took part in the Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean and undertook additional litter and cleansing campaigns called Big Bucks Tidy Up which accounted for nearly 3000 miles of additional mechanical sweeping and over 2000 hours of additional litter picking and detritus removal across Buckinghamshire

6 Green Flag Awards for our Parks



Heartlands in Buckingham, Bedgrove Park and Vale Park in Aylesbury, the Rye and Hughenden Park in High Wycombe, and Higginson Park in Marlow

Greatmoor waste facility continues to generate enough energy to meet the needs of 40,000 households



The facility reduces the mileage for Council refuse vehicles - some 139,000 miles

A survey in June 2021 indicates that 99% of respondents visiting our Housing Recycling Centres are satisfied with the service overall and 100% felt safe when visiting the sites during the pandemic



First 'pop-up Repair Café' held in February to teach people how to repair rather than throw away



Continuing to work with the property supply chain and supporting customers and partners. Embracing new ways of working to maintain delivery of key Council construction projects through 2021, despite COVID and other challenges

Implemented the Wilder Road Verges pilot to encourage wildflower establishment at 13 roadside sites across Buckinghamshire



First Council in the UK to accept BRITA water filters at our Household Recycling Centres



Won 'Best Local Authority Recycling Initiative' for our innovative Zero Waste Map at the Awards for Excellence in Recycling and Waste Management in July 2021



We have been **leading on national digital planning reforms** - Back Office Planning System and Reducing Invalid Planning

Applications - and received praise from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

We **hosted the COP 26 Regional Roadshow** - Green Wheels in Motion highlighting a range of technologies and innovative approaches to decarbonising transport emissions being developed or deployed in Buckinghamshire



GREEN WHEELS IN MOTION



Installed our largest solar panel array with 150kW of generating capacity at the new Chiltern Lifestyle Centre

The Planning Service won awards at LABC Building Excellence Awards 2021 Central Region for Best Individual New Home, Best Medium Volume New Housing Development and Best Residential Site Manager



We continue to operate a zero-tolerance approach to fly tipping. As of March 22: 98 cases have been fully investigated, 50 suspects reported for prosecution, 48 Fixed Penalty Notices issued, and we have seized and disposed of two commercial fly tippers vehicles

This year, our planning team have issued **141 formal enforcement notices** making us one of the leading authorities outside London in issuing these notices, and keeping to our manifesto promise to be tough on planning infringements. In addition, this year, the team has also closed **2,683** individual enforcement cases

Delivered a demonstrable improvement in progress of complex planning cases - Year on year increase in the number of formal notices issued and better overall case management whilst maintaining a no-nonsense approach to enforcement



We have continued our robust and proportionate approach to unauthorised encampments. Across the last three years there has been a steady decline in encampments - **from 38 in 19/20, 18 in 20/21 and 14 in 21/22**

Bierton Crematorium listed as RIBA South Award Winner



Continue to lobby HS2 and EWR to agree improved processes for example an improved process for road repairs in Bucks

Two new marshals appointed to monitor contractor activity on the ground, provide a presence and reassurance for local communities regarding work on the public highway and respond to enquiries and complaints



First 8 schemes approved to receive funding from our HS2 Road Safety Fund.

Tranche 2 application window now open (closes 31 May 2022) and seeking applications from a pot of £1.6m

Brought the total value of funding secured via Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery programme to **over £7m**, to support domestic energy efficiency



Increasing prosperity

Buckinghamshire is a prosperous county and a successful place to do business, contributing £184.8 billion to the UK economy and ranked as the fourth most productive area in England.

The county has low unemployment, higher than average household incomes, and boasts world-leading sectors. From Pinewood Studios in the south to Silverstone in the north, Buckinghamshire is a great success story.

We are also well placed to take advantage of emerging opportunities because of our proximity to London and Heathrow, and our location in the middle of a leading economic area with global strengths in science, technology, and high-value manufacturing.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted this and the national trend shows that high levels of productivity and growth are beginning to slow, and levels of unemployment are rising. Our High Streets have been badly affected and are still facing challenges, including the change in retail habits with increased online demand and falling footfall in Town Centres. and action is needed now to ensure our economy remains fit for the future.






Increasing prosperity


Our achievements this year



Buckinghamshire Strategic Vision adopted by partners of the Buckinghamshire Growth Board

£15m Future High Streets

Funding programmed for delivery, including £3m direct investment from the Council –  unlocking a 3 year regeneration and public realm scheme for great economic and social recovery outcomes of the town centre.

Just under £1million of Reopening High Streets Safely and Welcome Back Funding invested in towns  and villages across Bucks to support high streets during lockdown(s)



Creation of the new Buckinghamshire Film Office and Film Officer appointed.

The Film Office will maximise economic and social benefits to the county through increased inward spend, employment opportunities and a boost to tourism while minimising disruption from filming




This year has seen an acceleration in activity in Property, working on major land deals, disposals acquisitions, and developments which, over the next 3 to 4 years, will realise additional income for the council of more than £5.3m in ongoing revenue and £75m in Capital Receipts, which will be reinvested to support Council priorities

New Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy implemented in September 2021, harmonising requirements for the licensed trade and for users across the Buckinghamshire Council area




Launched our new Occupational Therapy Apprenticeship and Post Graduate Social Work Degree programs

Overall, Attainment 8* scores for 2021 are above both statistical neighbour and national averages. 

**Attainment 8 is a measure of a pupil's average grade across a set suite of eight subjects including English and maths and is one of two ways of measuring how well children do in key stage 4*



Held the first ever Buckinghamshire Council Jobs and Apprenticeships fair in Chesham, led by Chesham Community Board with over 30 employers exhibiting opportunities and over 700 attendees

Working with Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE)  we are bringing best practice models such as the Named Worker into Adult Social Care in Buckinghamshire, gaining national recognition



Through our capital schools programme, we completed construction of the new Kingsbrook Primary, Amersham, Holmer Green and Buckingham Schools – as well as the topping out of Kingsbrook Secondary

190 employees

on apprenticeship programmes across the Council and our maintained schools

Successfully **set-up the Kickstart programme** for Buckinghamshire Council, recruiting 39 Kickstarters to the organisation, 5 of which have been offered full-time posts with the Council



Over £950,000 top up vouchers committed to improve broadband in rural areas funded through getting building fund



Delivered a successful strategic funding bid for the Community Renewal Fund for two Buckinghamshire projects, NDSA mentoring into employment £38,830 and BBF build back better for the tourism and hospitality sector **£713,971**



The Council has continued to support local businesses negatively impacted by Covid and has paid £3.2 million to 866 business under the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant (OHLG). The main benefactors of this grant are restaurants, cafes and public houses

The Additional Restrictions Grant has seen over **£22 million** re invested to support recovery of vital businesses across Buckinghamshire. **Nearly £1 million** allocated for activities that help recovery of our town centres has been invested across Buckinghamshire town centres. We have worked with a range of partners including Community Boards



The Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF) application process has been set up.

This is mainly for secondary hospitality businesses which were not eligible for the expanded retail relief.

The Economic Growth and Regeneration Team continue to monitor employment levels across the county.

Covid and lockdowns caused many employers to lay people off due to business closures. This has prompted many people to reconsider the sector they work in or re-evaluate the skills they have.



Our Trading Standards and Environmental Health teams continue to support businesses with advice on regulatory matters, working closely together where relevant



Building, leading and managing the organisation

Our achievements this year

Major retendering programme for all school transport contracts completed with an **annual saving** from the exercise **estimated at**

£3.14m

We have successfully completed the first phase of our Revenue and Benefits improvement plan moving Aylesbury and Wycombe onto a new system and this will be followed by Chiltern and South Bucks in Summer 2022



Awarded bronze ENEI (Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion)

Shortlisted for Municipal Journal – Local Authority of the Year and Senior Leadership Team award

Won Young local authority of the year



Invested in our staff through our 'Being a Buckinghamshire Manager' development programme. 190 employees on apprenticeship programmes across the Council and our maintained schools

Ran a **blind recruitment trial** – a trial which removes any identifying factors from applications to reduce the risk of bias in recruitment

Agreed on a reverse mentoring scheme



– an equalities initiative for senior members of staff to shadow junior staff members from underrepresented groups



Established and piloted a **reasonable adjustments toolkit** which provides a consistent process for staff with disabilities or long-term conditions to request reasonable adjustments to the workplace, e.g. software/chairs to enable them work to the best their abilities

Established an internal EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment) register



Over 5000

training places were provided to staff on to train them on the new social care case management recording system launched in 2021



15% more FOI requests

responded to within 20 days

15% more complaints

responded to within 20 days

25% fewer complaints

progressing to stage 2

234

Subject Access Requests processed



The new Buckinghamshire Council website, replacing the legacy district and county council websites **has grown over the last 12 months** from less than 400 pages to more than 1200, providing the residents of Buckinghamshire with a better, more co-ordinated online experience. We remain on track to have all information migrated to the new website by Christmas 2022

In the same time period we have also removed more than 3,500 pages of legacy or duplicated content.



Whilst we do this, we are taking the opportunity to simplify and provide more accessible content for all visitors to the website, an initiative that continues to see us achieve consistently high levels of accessibility and readability



We have also launched several new areas of the site, including a simplified planning section and a greatly enhanced reporting process for areas such as road defects, parking and licensing applications



Monitored, reported and managed performance across the organisation via a suite of 115 KPI's reported quarterly to Cabinet. At the end of Q3, 69% of these were Green

240 public committee meetings

from 1/4/21 to today



Delivered the **Better Buckinghamshire programme** to modernise services and realise the benefits of becoming a Unitary Council, at the end of Q3, all reviews were on track with expected timescales



Achieved revenue budget savings of

£12.9m in 2021

Grown our digital communication channel audiences, to complement non-digital channels, and maintained newsletter open rates



In our staff survey:

72% average staff engagement score (ahead of external benchmark which is 65%)

77% of staff said they're happy to be working for Buckinghamshire Council (ahead of external benchmark which is 67%)

86% of staff said they have a positive working relationship with their manager



Mental Health and Physical Health Networks have over 40 members, with colleagues actively engaged in activities such as leading virtual workouts on Teams, walk and talks, and podcasts and 'Tea Break Talks' sharing experiences and discussing mental health

The average number of attendees to our staff briefings in 2021 was **1,178 colleagues.**

We held **23 staff briefings** in 2021.

Our four equalities networks continue to support our equality, diversity and inclusion agenda, delivering the internal awareness campaigns to celebrate equalities, including LGBT+ History Month, Carers Rights Day, Black History Month and Autism Awareness Week.



Our residents newsletter is sent electronically to just over 200,000 people. In 2021 we sent 18 newsletters. Regularly opened by 40-50% of recipients.

Consolidation of multiple systems

- Single network – due May 2022
- Single Customer relationship management system – due to be phased in from June 2022 subject to business case and procurement
- Single reporting tool for potholes - FixMyStreet now single system to report and log these
- Planning System – project in progress
- Information governance system – implemented Feb 2022

Business process re-engineering

- reviewing and simplifying the Council's Incident Management Process; creating efficiency in the Archives service by reviewing the process for managing payments and invoicing



Replacement of multiple legacy council policies with a single BC policy – including the Buckinghamshire Council Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy



Strengthening partnership working – including reshaping the structure and operating model of the Community Safety service

Single staffing structures

- the number of posts deleted through reviews to date is 56, and 19 of these were in tiers 1-3



Using technology and digital approaches to create efficiency – including using digital forms in Revenues and Benefits which integrate directly into the back-end system

Maximising the use of data – integrating datasets to develop a better understanding of our vulnerable residents



The next chapter

We have 410,262 Local Government electors registered at 1 December 2021 and 393,948 Parliamentary electors registered at 1 December 2021, following the elections in May 2021 our 147 elected members continue to help us deliver the strategic ambitions of the authority.

Our reflections on the lessons learned from the pandemic and the lasting effects of the pandemic continue to help us shape our services around people and communities. We continue to collaborate with strategic partners, businesses, and residents as the strength in this is still as relevant as it was at the height of the pandemic.

As a Council, we have a lot of experience from our Afghan resettlement programme and recognise the trauma that families displaced by these sad events have endured. This experience has proved very valuable in co-ordinating our response to the Ukraine crisis, enabling us to lead the way in responding to this crisis and supporting people displaced from their own homes and country under traumatic circumstances.

Our local strategic partnership places us in the best possible position across the whole of Buckinghamshire to co-ordinate a strong response to whatever scenario presents. It means we have representatives from accommodation, education, health, safeguarding and other services and partners all aligned to support any arrivals as best we can. Ensuring targeted wrap around support which will be critical to ensuring that refugees are facilitated to set up a new life here in Buckinghamshire.

Together we are evolving, and our longer-term Strategic Vision and Recovery & Growth Proposal will help us maximise the benefits of our new unitary status. We have the advantage of strong local alignment and the most coterminous county structure in England as all our key partner organisations share our county geography. We can utilise our economic assets and governance strengths with a combination of direct project investment, broader investment funds, and specific freedoms and flexibilities that would enable us to deliver services more efficiently and effectively.

We will make sure Buckinghamshire grows as a thriving, resilient and successful county. By listening to local voices, offering local choices, and delivering local action, Buckinghamshire Council will continue to deliver on its ambitions and priorities to make **Buckinghamshire the best place in which to live, raise a family, work, and do business.**

