

SHADOW EXECUTIVE

TUESDAY, 10TH MARCH, 2020

Present: Councillor Martin Tett in the Chair

Councillors K Wood (Vice-Chairman), S Bowles, B Chapple OBE, J Chilver, A Cranmer, I Darby, T Green, P Hogan, A Macpherson, D Martin, N Naylor, M Shaw, W Whyte, M Appleyard, D Dhillon and J Rush

1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Gareth Williams, Cllr Clive Harriss and Cllr Fred Wilson. Deputising were Cllr Mike Appleyard, Cllr Dev Dhillon and Cllr Jonathon Rush.

2 Minutes

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2020 were AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of interest

Cllr Angela Macpherson declared an interest in relation to item 6, Registered Providers Charging Arrangements, as she was a member of the Vale of Aylesbury Housing Trust board. Following advice from the Monitoring Officer, Cllr Macpherson would leave the meeting while item 6 was discussed.

4 Question Time

Cllr Robin Stuchbury

'In the light of the fact both Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council have both agreed motions challenging the Cambridge to Oxford Expressway, will there be an early item placed on the agenda of the new local authority to agree a policy of mitigation against any environmental impact from any proposed future route. Also, will the Shadow Authority be seeking a full understanding of the government's intentions in advance of the new authority coming into operation regarding the Cambridge to Oxford expressway, as this may be the most financially challenging and environmentally damaging project for the life of the new Buckinghamshire Council in the early years.'

Response provided by Martin Tett

Both AVDC and BCC had passed motions against the expressway. Buckinghamshire Council would come into existence on 1 April 2020 so there was not yet a policy and any policy would be decided by the new Leadership.

An announcement on whether the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway would proceed was expected as part of the Budget on March 11th 2020 (tomorrow). Depending on this decision will then depend on the mitigations that would be put in place.

5 Forward Plan (28 Day Notice)

RESOLVED: The Shadow Executive NOTED the forward plan.

6 Registered Providers Charging Arrangements

A Macpherson left the meeting.

I Darby introduced the report, which set out the status of charging arrangements that currently operated with each district and the options that had been reviewed for the arrangements that would be put in place from vesting day. It was stated that cross council arrangements would take some time to fully implement although any new registered provider would be harmonised. It was also stated that district zoned Bucks Home Choice charging arrangements would continue in the meantime and there was a clear timeline for harmonisation with 30 September 2020 as a completion date.

The report set out that it was recommended to continue the existing Aylesbury Vale Affordable Housing Partnership Agreement from vesting day on the basis that the new Buckinghamshire Council would review working arrangements with Registered Providers and may develop and implement a new countywide Affordable Housing Partnership Agreement as required.

Following a question from a member of the Shadow Executive it was confirmed that the officers that had formed the workstream as part of the unitary transition programme would continue to take forward the piece of work until completion in September.

It was highlighted that there was an opportunity to improve relationships with not only housing providers but also children leaving care.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To draft and implement a timetable for the development and introduction of a harmonised countywide system for charging Registered Providers to advertise tenancies via the Bucks Home Choice scheme with a target completion date of 30 September 2020.**
- 2. To Continue the existing district-zoned Bucks Home Choice charging arrangements in Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe post-vesting day until new countywide harmonised charging arrangements are introduced**
- 3. To continue the existing Aylesbury Vale Affordable Housing Partnership Agreement from vesting day on the basis that the new Buckinghamshire Council will review working arrangements with Registered Providers and may develop and implement a new countywide Affordable Housing Partnership Agreement as required.**

7 Street Naming & Numbering Policy

A Macpherson re-joined the meeting.

K Wood introduced the report that set out the proposed Street Naming and Numbering Policy which would come into effect on 1 April 2020. It was highlighted that all existing councils had their own policies in place which were now being brought together as one new policy for Buckinghamshire Council.

Members of the Shadow Executive raised the following points:

- All were in support of the new policy.
- Pleased to see that parish councils and the new Community Boards were in the new policy.
- Welcomed that the policy would promote names with historical local figures and events.

- It was suggested that street names put forward by developers for consideration should be recorded and officers agreed to look into that being done.
- Parish councils should still be given flexibility.

RESOLVED:

All four Authorities are to make provisions to adopt the proposed Street Naming and Numbering Policy prior to vesting day with the policy taking effect from 1 April 2020 MT read the recommendations.

8 MK Strategy 2050

M Tett and A Macpherson introduced the report that summarised the MK Strategy for 2050 that had been unanimously agreed by Milton Keynes Council and highlighted the negative impacts it would have on Buckinghamshire. The Strategy was not welcomed by councillors across the county and the poor timing of the consultation, as most of this would be during Purdah.

Members of the Shadow Executive raised the following points in discussion:

- The draft response from the Shadow Executive was attached to the report. It was agreed that individual letters would be sent from each of the existing 4 district councils.
- It was the shared view across all existing Buckinghamshire councils that the strategy saw MK Council housing growth spread over its own borders and into Buckinghamshire where there was already a high demand for housing.
- It was highlighted that not all MK councillors had voted in favour of the strategy.
- It was unacceptable that a local authority should spread outside of its own borders.
- The local members for Winslow highlighted that residents in that area were also opposed to the strategy.
- It was agreed that the wording of the response would be tightened up for greater impact.
- Town and parish councils would also be responding.
- Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes MPs would be copied into the letter.

RESOLVED:

That the Shadow Executive submits a response to the Milton Keynes Strategy 2050 on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council as set out in Appendix 1.

9 Modern Day Slavery Statement

I Darby introduced the Modern Slavery Statement report and highlighted the legislation behind the statement and even though it was not a legal duty to have one, it would be a backward step not to. All local authorities were to support four key themes:

- Pursue - prosecuting and disrupting individuals and groups responsible for modern slavery
- Prevent - preventing people from engaging in modern slavery crime
- Protect - strengthening safeguards against modern slavery by protecting vulnerable people from exploitation and increasing awareness and resilience against this crime
- Prepare - reducing the harm caused by modern slavery through improved victim identification and enhanced support and protection.

It was highlighted that once the Statement was agreed it would be reviewed on an annual basis.

All Members of the Shadow Executive supported the introduction of the Statement and urged members of the public that if they suspected any exploitation happening locally, to report it.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To agree the Modern Slavery Statement for Buckinghamshire Council**
- 2. To agree the process for annual review and publication of the document**
- 3. To note the likely legal duties in relation to modern slavery and exploitation.**

10 Carers Strategy

A Macpherson and W Whyte introduced the report and outlined that the previous Carer's Strategy had expired in 2019 and the new strategy had been produced with the Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure a single approach. It was highlighted that it was recognised that carers were one of the most valued assets in the county with over 49,500 carers who all require the right support. It was a joint strategy for adults and children's and would come into effect on 1 April 2020.

In the development of the strategy key stakeholders and carers were involved and focused on five key areas:

- Services and systems that work for Carers
- Employment and Financial Wellbeing
- Supporting young Carers
- Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider community
- Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers

The report also contained a measurable action plan that had been developed in collaboration with key stakeholders; which would be reviewed regularly.

Members of the Shadow Executive raised and discussed the following points:

- It was important to understand the different types of carers across the county, which was highlighted in the strategy.
- Officers highlighted that not only did carers support people to live independently but their contribution also had a massive economic benefit; unpaid carers saved a total of £132bn across the UK.
- The importance of keeping the strategy and action plan under review and it was suggested this was done annually.
- Members were pleased to see the recently developed website for carers giving, support, information and advice www.careadvicebuckinghamshire.org
- Buckinghamshire Council to set an example as a caring and compassionate employer for all staff that had caring responsibilities.
- Once the strategy was embedded there was a need to put resources into identifying those carers that were not known to the authority in order to be able to offer them the right support.

All members of the Shadow Executive gave their thanks to carers throughout the county.

RESOLVED:

To AGREE the All Age Carers Strategy.

11 Emergency Plan

K Wood introduced the report which set out the Emergency Plan for the new Buckinghamshire Council to be considered and agreed, which was a requirement to be published prior to vesting day and followed the agreement of the Civil Contingencies Policy by the Executive in October. The plan remained consistent with national guidance and the multi-agency plans of the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF) and other organisations.

Members of the Executive raised and discussed the following points:

- Members would be expected to provide strategic direction and to make urgent decisions and provide communication, therefore bespoke training would be provided that would also include a live exercise.
- It was highlighted that with 147 members in the new council, providing the right training for the different member roles was important e.g. local member (to understand local issues i.e. flood areas), Cabinet Member and back bencher. It was also mentioned that some members may have specific skills that could be utilised as part of the role in an emergency. More detailed discussions of approach and risks would be an important part of the member induction process.
- Conversations had taken place with some parish councils about their own emergency plans and the support available to them to produce these. Officers confirmed that they wanted to engage with those parish councils to give them support and to also ensure their emergency plans were in line with the Buckinghamshire Council one. The agreed emergency plan would be shared with town and parish councils. It was suggested that this could also be communicated via the new community boards.
- There needed to be clarity in the roles between Leader and Deputy Leader and if the Deputy Leader was to take action only if the Leader was unavailable. This would be made clearer in the plan.

RESOLVED:

That the Emergency Plan for Buckinghamshire Council is considered and agreed.

12 Abbey Barn Lane Realignment (ABLR)

M Tett advised that that the item had a public and private report to consider and the meeting would move into a private session and would then provide a summary of the recommendations in public, once the private discussions had concluded.

M Shaw introduced the report that set out the requirement to build a road to enable around 700 homes to be built on the Abbey Barn North and Abbey Barn South Reserve sites which form part of the Wycombe District Local Plan reserve sites. It was important now that the ABL Realignment project moved to the next stage of procurement.

Members of the Executive raised and discussed the following points:

- The scheme was vital in order to providing housing as set out in the Wycombe District Local Plan.
- The current road could not currently deal with the expected level of traffic.
- Environmental mitigation would be part of the development of the planning application; at this stage the report is requesting agreement to enter into a contract and the planning application is expected to be ready to submit later in the year.

RESOLVED:

Delegation of authority to the Head of Highways Infrastructure Projects to enter into a NEC4 Option C (Target Cost) contract with Galliford Try through the Midlands Highways Alliance Framework for the Abbey Barn Lane Realignment (ABLR). This will initially only be for Early Contractor Involvement.

13 Managing the Care Market: Proposal for Fee Increases

M Tett advised that that the item had a public and private report to consider and the meeting would move into a private session and would then provide a summary of the recommendations in public, once the private discussions had concluded.

A Macpherson introduced the report that set out the options and proposals for fee increases to care market providers in 2020-21. It was highlighted that there was ongoing significant pressures on Adult Social Care (ASC) budgets due to the need to provide quality care while

under considerable staff pressure, increasing costs, national living wages and cost of properties, all having an impact.

The aim was to work closely in partnership with providers and carefully consider all options. There would be an increase of up to 2% and would be assessed on a case by case basis. It was stated there was a budget of up to £3m to accommodate the recommendations and providers would need to submit a robust business case.

It was also highlighted that costs had risen across the service due to the number of those being looked after had risen but also needs had become more complex.

RESOLVED:

- **That option 2 is adopted: Uplift of up to 2% based on evidence of increased cost. Contractually required uplifts awarded to Heritage and Freemantle block contracts.**
- **Utilisation of the following monies to meet fee uplift costs:**
 - **£1,142,000 earmarked for fee uplifts from the £9.5m demand growth monies.**
 - **Up to £750,000 from the corporate contingency budget set aside to fund increases in the NLW.**
 - **The balance from the additional £1m released to Adult Social Care from contingencies as part of the final approved budget.**

14 Programme Update

R Goodes, Programme Manager gave an update and highlighted the following additional information to the report provided:

- The number of 'must haves' to be completed for vesting day had gone from 115 to 114 as the Town and Parish Council Charter had moved to June.
- Tasks remain on track and the programme team remain confident that remain in a place to launch the new council.
- Sarah Murphy-Brookman had been appointed as interim Corporate Director for Resources and would take up the post during March.
- A lot of activity continued on social media to promote the new council and this would continue post 1 April 2020.
- In a good position with HR and customer services processes and response teams are in place for any help needed after 1 April 2020.
- Thanks were given to all staff and members that had supported the transition programme.

M Tett thanked all staff that had been involved in the programme and those that had indirectly supported the programme by back filling other posts. He stated that the programme had come an enormous distance and the biggest testament would be that residents did not notice a difference in the service provided to them. He also thanked members of the Shadow Executive for all their work.

RESOLVED:

To note the update report.

15 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To resolve 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).

16 Confidential Minutes

RESOLVED: The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2020 were AGREED as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

17 Abbey Barn Lane Realignment

18 Managing the Care Market: Proposal for Fee Increases

19 Date of next meeting

31 March 2020, The Oculus, AVDC.