



## NOTICE OF MEETING

### Council

**Wednesday 25 April 2018, 7.30 pm**

**Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ**

### To: The Council

Councillor Mrs McKenzie-Boyle (Mayor), Councillor Finch (Deputy Mayor), Councillors Allen, Mrs Angell, Angell, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, G Birch, Brossard, Brunel-Walker, Dudley, Finnie, Ms Gaw, Mrs Hamilton, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Dr Hill, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Leake, McCracken, Mrs McCracken, Mrs McKenzie, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Ms Merry, Ms Miller, Peacey, Phillips, Porter, Skinner, Mrs Temperton, Thompson, Tullett, Turrell, Virgo, Wade and Worrall

TIMOTHY WHEADON  
Chief Executive

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Published: 17 April 2018



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Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media at meetings which are held in public are permitted. Those wishing to record proceedings at a meeting are however advised to contact the Democratic Services Officer named as the contact for further information on the front of this agenda as early as possible before the start of the meeting so that any special arrangements can be made.

## **AGENDA**

Page No

*The meeting will be opened with prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain*

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28 February 2018.

5 - 16

3. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.

Any Member with an affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.

4. **Mayor's Announcements**

5. **Deputation Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 9**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 (Public Participation), a deputation was submitted by Mr T Parker, resident of Great Hollands North with regard to street lighting on behalf of Bracknell Liberal Democrats and the residents of Wildridings and Easthampstead:

*“The Council’s changes to street lighting in residential areas, costing some £7m across the borough, including £405k in Wildridings and Great Hollands alone, have caused great concern regarding safety and security amongst residents due to inadequacies in the design of both the lampposts and the lights themselves. Therefore, I urge the Council to complete a review regarding the effectiveness of the installed lighting in residential areas of Wildridings and Easthampstead and either:*

- a. *Remediate the lighting deficiencies; or*
- b. *Inform residents in a published statement why they believe the lighting to be adequate”.*

6. **Executive Report**

To receive the Leader’s report on the work of the Executive since the Council meeting held on 28 February 2018. 17 - 22

Council is asked to note the Executive decisions detailed in the report.

7. **Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18**

To adopt the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2017/18 and consider the proposed amendment to the Constitution to reflect the Overview and Scrutiny’s changes to its Panels. 23 - 40

8. **Member Development Annual Report 2017/18**

To approve the Member Development Strategy 2016 – 2020 and note the Member Development Annual Report 2017/18. 41 - 68

9. **Champions' Annual Report 2017/18**

To note the Champions’ Annual Report 2017/18. 69 - 84

10. **Question Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10**

By Councillor Mrs Temperton to Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Housing:

*The Homelessness Reduction Act extends existing homelessness protection to anyone who is homeless or at risk of being homeless irrespective of their priority need; including single homeless people and childless couples.*

*Extending the period of threat of homelessness from 28 days to 56 days will enable the Council more time to do preventative work, but after this time, the eligible applicant will be owed a duty to be housed.*

*This accommodation must also be available for at least 6 months.*

*What temporary accommodation is available to meet any such increase in homelessness duty and what subsequent extra permanent housing is being secured?*

**COUNCIL**  
**28 FEBRUARY 2018**  
**7.30 - 9.14 PM**



**Present:**

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Tina McKenzie-Boyle), Councillors Finch (Deputy Mayor), Allen, Mrs Angell, Angell, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, G Birch, Brossard, Brunel-Walker, Ms Gaw, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Heydon, Dr Hill, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Leake, McCracken, Mrs McCracken, Mrs McKenzie, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Ms Merry, Ms Miller, Peacey, Phillips, Porter, Skinner, Mrs Temperton, Tullett, Turrell, Virgo, Wade and Worrall

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Councillors Dudley, Finnie, Mrs Hamilton, Ms Hayes and Thompson

**45. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meetings held on 17 January and 1 February 2018 be approved, and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**46. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Dr Barnard declared an affected interest in item 7, Financial Plans and Revenue Budgets, by virtue of being on the Keep Mobile Management Committee.

Councillor Virgo declared an affected interest in item 7, Financial Plans and Revenue Budgets, by virtue of being a Trustee at South Hill Park Trust.

Councillor Mrs McKenzie-Boyle declared an affected interest in item 7, Financial Plans and Revenue Budgets, by virtue of her spouse being a Trustee at South Hill Park Trust.

**47. Mayor's Announcements**

History of Chaplaincy

The Mayor welcomed her Chaplain Reverend Roy to the meeting to explain about the history of chaplaincy.

Updates from the Mayor

- The Mayor was pleased to announce that the two waste trucks had been named.
- The Mayor thanked everyone who had supported her Business Forum on Apprenticeships which was held on 23 February 2018. Over a hundred people had attended the event with businesses represented such as Fujitsu; Dell; Honda; JLP; Waitrose; Berkely Homes and Legal and General. Among the presenters had been Steve Nicholson of the National Apprenticeship Service and MP Dr Philip Lee. The event had been organised to focus on how the borough's schools and businesses work together to give students an alternative to university and

have a long and rewarding career. She also thanked Councillor Dr Barnard for his role on the Q&A Board.

- Due to the adverse weather conditions the Charity Quiz Night had been rescheduled from Friday 2 March to Friday 23 March at Easthampstead Park Conference Centre.
- The Mayor reminded colleagues of upcoming charity events e.g. Sky Dive on 22 April, Golf event on 27 April and Shoot on 29 April.
- The Mayor asked everyone to save the date for her end of year celebration which was being held on Friday 11 May at Coppid Beech.

#### Mayor's Business Forum

Councillor Dr Barnard reiterated that he was pleased to see school leaders and the Bracknell and Wokingham College represented at the Business Forum as he considered it was key to offer students an alternative to University.

The Mayor presented him with a certificate in recognition of his contribution to the event.

#### Recycling Incentive Scheme

Councillor Mrs Hayes OBE advised the members present that the Council's waste partner, Suez, gave the Council £1k per quarter to give to local organisations and initiatives. The names of 45 organisations which had received such funding over the past three years were shown on the chamber's screens. She encouraged Councillors to nominate recipients in their Wards and explained that it was donated blue bin points which allocated funds. She handed cheques to Councillor Mrs Birch on behalf of Birch Hill Pre School and Councillor Peacey on behalf of 1st Warfield Girl Guides.

#### Dogs for Good Charity

Councillor D Birch reported to the meeting that the first charity of its kind, which used dogs to assist vulnerable people and people with autism to lead fuller lives, would be showcased at Crufts on 9 March 2018.

#### 48. **Executive Report**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison OBE, presented his report on the work of the Executive since that reported at the Council meeting on 17 January 2018. The Executive had met twice on 23 January and 13 February 2018.

The Council noted the Executive decisions detailed in the report. The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

- It was noted that the Executive's recommendations relating to the Council's revenue budget and capital programme would be considered separately on the Council's agenda.
- The Council had already considered the consultation on the Draft Local Plan at its Extraordinary meeting on 1 February 2018.

- The creation of the proposed Bracknell Forest lottery had been supported in principle and a Working Group would be established to consider the detail with supplier, Gatherwell and local voluntary sector. A further viability report would be considered in the summer.
- The Executive had agreed to the creation of a new post, Director of Public Health to increase local focus. Bracknell Forest would continue to participate in pan Berkshire arrangements for health protection and some cross boundary contracts. Interviews for the post would be in late March.
- School Places Plan and Capacity Strategy: There had been a significant increase in pupil numbers since 2009. This was being addressed by £125m of investment of additional capacity across borough. Further growth was expected until 2023 when they are expected to be 1,441 Primary pupils (14% increase) and 1,523 Secondary pupils (22%). However it was noted that the timing of the arrival of children was largely dictated by developers and the plan set out the Council's planned response to these changes.
- The Procurement plan for Internal Audit had been agreed.

In relation to the Bracknell Forest Lottery Councillor Mrs Temperton queried whether the raised funds by the lottery would be used as a supplement for the voluntary sector organisations or replace the current revenue stream. Councillor Bettison OBE confirmed that funds available would be in addition to existing funding provided.

#### 49. **Independent Remuneration Panel Report**

The Independent Remuneration Panel appointed by the Council met in February and September 2017 at the Council's invitation. The Council considered what action it wished to take in response to their recommendations which included advice on its Members' Allowances scheme and the amounts to be paid.

On the proposition of Councillor Bettison OBE, Leader of the Council, and seconded by Councillor D Birch it was:

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the IRP's recommendations as set out in the agenda report with the exception of recommendation 5.1 (iii) which was amended so that the proposed indexing did not apply to Basic Allowances or Special Responsibility Allowances;
- (ii) the list of approved conferences, set out in Annex A of the agenda report, be approved for insertion in the Scheme; and
- (iii) the Council note that Neil McGregor had resigned from the Panel and thanked him for the contribution he had made.

#### 50. **Financial Plans and Revenue Budgets**

The Council considered the report by the Borough Treasurer which set out the financial plans and revenue budgets for the financial year 2018/19 and the supporting information which presented the Council's spending plans for 2018/19 and detailed budgets for the General Fund and Capital Programme.

Councillors Dr Barnard, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle and Virgo had declared an affected interest in this item but this did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion or the vote.

Councillor Heydon gave a comprehensive presentation placing a particular focus on:

- He thanked the Chief Executive, the Treasurer, the Director of Resources and their senior teams for all their efforts and support.
- 2018/19 would be the third year of the Government's four year settlement with no further funding changes in the Provisional Finance Settlement issued on 19 December 2017.
- Bracknell Forest had experienced £4m of increasing cost pressures from adult and children's social care areas over the previous 12 months. Councils with social care responsibilities had been given additional flexibility to raise council tax by an additional 1% to help fund these additional costs.
- The Council had received confirmation that the joint bid to form a business rates pool as a pilot area had been approved and as a result at least £35m of additional funding would come into Berkshire next year, of which £25m was for major transport infrastructure investment, to be managed by the Local Enterprise Partnership. The remainder would be retained by the individual local authorities in proportion to the increase they had achieved in business rates income since the current 50% rates retention system was introduced in 2013. Although Bracknell Forest would be the biggest beneficiary in Berkshire he reported that it was not proposed to use the additional money to help balance the 2018/19 budget as this was a one-off benefit but would be helpful to manage the budget position in future years.
- The initial budget plans for 2018/19 were approved by the Executive for consultation on 19 December 2017 but unfortunately there had not been many responses. He thanked those who have taken the time to do so including Councillor Mrs Temperton on behalf of Labour.
- In developing the final budget proposals the Council considered:
  - there were increased cost pressures in children's social care, balanced by reductions in the cost of adult social care;
  - inflationary pressures were much higher than originally planned for, a result of unexpectedly high cost indices; and
  - a request from the Trustees of South Hill Park to delay the reduction of its grant by a further £100k in order to allow more time for their income generating proposals to be implemented. South Hill Park was recognised as a highly valued facility but the Council looked forward it becoming more self sufficient.
- The capital budget proposals for 2018/19 were relatively modest. The Council would continue to maintain its existing facilities to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and make enhancements to College Town and Wooden Hill schools, as well as the complete projects such as Binfield Learning Village and the demolition of Easthampstead House.
- Two key new schemes which were commencing in 2018/19 were the upgrade to the A322 on Downshire Way removing the only remaining single carriageway part of the M3 / M4 link and the Heathlands development which would provide much needed care home beds to meet local needs and help manage market prices.
- The Council's final budget plans include unavoidable £6m cost pressures mainly in children's and adult services plus previous commitments of over £1m. Together with grant reductions of £3.5m and the impact of inflation, mean that the Council has had to find £15m of savings or additional income to achieve a balanced position.

- The Council had previously achieved over £80m of savings and a further £3m of small scale efficiency savings had been proposed for 2018/19 by reviewing every cost line in the budget.
- The Transformation Programme introduced 18 months ago was contributing £6.5m of savings in 2018-19.
- The Council was going to use £2.5m of balances to fund services and maintain reserves slightly above the minimum prudent level.
- It was proposed to increase council tax by 3% specifically to fund adult social care costs and by a further 2.99% for rising costs in general and in support for vulnerable children in particular. Overall the increase equated to £1.38 extra per week for a Band D council tax payer and would raise £3.2m.
- He stated that none of the Council's facilities would close and no vulnerable person would be unsupported as a result of the budget.
- Bracknell Forest would continue to be amongst the lowest of any unitary area in England.
- Members had been provided with updated detailed papers showing the individual council tax figures including other preceptors had been revised to include a minor amendment to roundings (by 1 pence) for the Berkshire Fire Authority's element of the council tax for some bands however this had no impact on the recommendations.

On the proposition of Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance, seconded by Councillor Bettison OBE the recommendations as set out on the tabled papers were moved.

As required by legislation a recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion and the voting was as follows:

FOR (36) Councillors Allen, Mrs Angell, Angell, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, G Birch, Brossard, Brunel-Walker, Finch, Ms Gaw, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Heydon, Dr Hill, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Leake, Mrs Mattick, McCracken, Mrs McCracken, Mrs McKenzie, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Ms Merry, Ms Miller, Peacey, Phillips, Porter, Skinner, Tullett, Turrell, Virgo, Wade and Worrall

AGAINST (1) Councillor Mrs Temperton

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

## **1 Capital Programme 2018/19 - 2020/21**

- i) General Fund capital funding of £58.221m for 2018/19 in respect of those schemes listed on pages 181 to 185 of the summary report for Council, including £30m previously approved by Council on 29 November 2017 for commercial property investments to be made available in the current financial year, be approved;
- ii) The inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for 'Invest to Save' schemes be approved;
- iii) The inclusion of £3.480m of expenditure to be funded from S106 be approved, as outlined in the summary report for Council (page 179) and included on pages 181 to 185 of the summary report for Council;
- iv) those schemes that attract external grant funding be approved for inclusion within the 2018/19 capital programme at the level of funding received;

## **2 Revenue Budget 2018/19**

- i) The budget proposals set out in Table 1 (page 4) of the summary report for Council, subject to the changes identified in sections 3.2 (page 5), 3.3 (pages 6 and 7), 3.5 (pages 8 and 9), 3.6 (page 9), 3.9 (pages 10 to 11), 7.2 (page 20) and 7.4 (page 20) of the report, be agreed;
- ii) Fees and charges as set out in Annexe G of the summary report for Council (pages 83 to 165) be approved;
- iii) A provision for inflation of £2.422m be approved;
- iv) The commitment budget as set out in Annexe A of the summary report for Council be approved (pages 23 to 24);
- v) The Schools Budget be funded at the level set out in section 4.1 (page 12) of the summary report for Council, subject to any amendments agreed by the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning;
- vi) A contingency of £2.500m be approved to be included, use of which is authorised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Borough Treasurer in accordance with the delegations included in the Council's constitution;
- vii) Subject to the above recommendations the revised draft budget proposals be agreed;
- viii) A contribution of £2.515m (after allowing for additional interest from the use of balances of £0.031m) be approved from revenue balances to support revenue expenditure;
- ix) Total net expenditure (after use of balances) of £81.140m, be approved;
- x) The Council's Council Tax requirement, excluding Parish Council precepts, be set at £57.345m;
- xi) The Council Tax for the Council's services for each Valuation Band be set as follows:

Band	Tax Level Relative to Band D	£
A	6/9	843.96
B	7/9	984.62
C	8/9	1,125.28
D	9/9	1,265.94
E	11/9	1,547.26
F	13/9	1,828.58
G	15/9	2,109.90
H	18/9	2,531.88

- xii) The Council approved the following indicators, limits, strategies and policies included in Annexe E of the summary report for Council (pages 55 to 74):
  - The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2018/19 to 2020/21 contained within Annexe E(i);
  - The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy contained within Annexe E(ii);
  - The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, and the Treasury Prudential Indicators contained in Annexe E(iii);
  - The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator in Annexe E(iii);
  - The Investment Strategy 2018/19 to 2020/21 and Treasury Management Limits on Activity contained in Annexe E(iv);
- xiii) The formal Council Tax Resolution contained in section 3 be approved.

### **3 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION**

- 3.1 that the recommendations of the Executive outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 be agreed.

3.2 that it be noted that the amounts calculated for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 are :-

**(a) 45,298 TAX BASE FOR THE WHOLE COUNCIL AREA**

*being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, as its council tax base for the year*

**(b) TAX BASE FOR PART OF THE COUNCIL'S AREA**

**EACH PARISH AREA**

Binfield	3,855
Bracknell	19,209
Crowthorne	2,764
Sandhurst	7,854
Warfield	4,801
Winkfield	6,815

*being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as amended, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate*

3.3 That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2018/19 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act), noting that Bracknell Town Council's (BTC) precept is subject to confirmation by BTC on 27 February:

(a) £294,955,070 **TOTAL EXPENDITURE INCLUDING GENERAL FUND, PARISH PRECEPTS AND THE COUNCIL'S SHARE OF ANY DEFICIT ON THE COLLECTION FUND**

*being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act*

(b) £234,355,267 **TOTAL INCOME INCLUDING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND THE COUNCIL'S SHARE OF ANY SURPLUS ON THE COLLECTION FUND**

*being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act*

(c) £60,599,803 **BOROUGH AND PARISH PRECEPTS NET EXPENDITURE TO BE FINANCED FROM COUNCIL TAX**

*being the amount by which the aggregate at 3.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3.3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year*

- (d) £1,337.80 **AVERAGE BAND "D" COUNCIL TAX FOR WHOLE BOROUGH**

*being the amount at 3.3(c) above, divided by the amount at 3.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including Parish precepts)*

- (e) £3,255,253 **PARISH PRECEPTS**

*being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act*

- (f) £1,265.94 **BOROUGH COUNCIL TAX FOR BAND "D" PROPERTIES**

*being the amount at 3.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3.3(e) above by the amount at 3.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year if there were an area of the Borough to which no special item relates*

- (g) Part of the Council's area **BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH PARISH FOR BAND "D"**

Binfield	£1,314.67
Bracknell	£1,349.60
Crowthorne	£1,341.01
Sandhurst	£1,339.23
Warfield	£1,303.34
Winkfield	£1,338.97

*being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3.3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 3.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate*

(h)	Part of the Council's area			<b>BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL TAX IN EACH PARISH FOR EACH VALUATION BAND</b>				
<b>Parish</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Binfield	876.45	1,022.52	1,168.60	1,314.67	1,606.82	1,898.97	2,191.12	2,629.34
Bracknell	899.73	1,049.69	1,199.64	1,349.60	1,649.51	1,949.42	2,249.33	2,699.20
Crowthorne	894.01	1,043.01	1,192.01	1,341.01	1,639.01	1,937.01	2,235.02	2,682.02
Sandhurst	892.82	1,041.62	1,190.43	1,339.23	1,636.84	1,934.44	2,232.05	2,678.46
Warfield	868.89	1,013.71	1,158.52	1,303.34	1,592.97	1,882.60	2,172.23	2,606.68
Winkfield	892.65	1,041.42	1,190.20	1,338.97	1,636.52	1,934.07	2,231.62	2,677.94

*being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3.3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands*

- 3.4 That it be noted that for the year 2018/19 the Police and Crime Panel have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council regarding the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley	121.52	141.77	162.03	182.28	222.79	263.29	303.80	364.56

- 3.5 That it be noted that for the year 2018/19 the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, subject to confirmation by the Fire Authority on 27 February, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	42.90	50.05	57.21	64.36	78.66	92.96	107.26	128.72

3.6 That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3.3(h), 3.4 and 3.5 above, the council, in accordance with section 30(2) of the act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2018/19 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Parish	(a) Part of the Council's area			TOTAL COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH VALUATION BAND				
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Binfield	1,040.87	1,214.34	1,387.84	1,561.31	1,908.27	2,255.22	2,602.18	3,122.62
Bracknell	1,064.15	1,241.51	1,418.88	1,596.24	1,950.96	2,305.67	2,660.39	3,192.48
Crowthorne	1,058.43	1,234.83	1,411.25	1,587.65	1,940.46	2,293.26	2,646.08	3,175.30
Sandhurst	1,057.24	1,233.44	1,409.67	1,585.87	1,938.29	2,290.69	2,643.11	3,171.74
Warfield	1,033.31	1,205.53	1,377.76	1,549.98	1,894.42	2,238.85	2,583.29	3,099.96
Winkfield	1,057.07	1,233.24	1,409.44	1,585.61	1,937.97	2,290.32	2,642.68	3,171.22

#### 51. Contract Standing Orders

The Council considered a report regarding the Governance & Audit Committee's recommendation to amend the Contract Standing Orders to transform procurement processes in line with the approach taken to the Council Wide Support Services review. The intention was to make procurement practices and processes more streamlined and more commercial as well as make other minor changes.

On the proposition of Councillor Allen, Chairman of Governance and Audit Committee and seconded by Councillor Heydon it was:

**RESOLVED** that the changes to the Constitution Part 4 Section 11 – Contract Standing Orders as set out in Appendices A and B to the agenda report be adopted.

#### 52. Establishment of Appointment Committee: Director of Public Health

The Council considered the report which informed Members of plans agreed by the Executive to create a Director of Public Health post and sought to establish a Committee to undertake an appointment to the post in conjunction with Public Health England and the Faculty of Public Health.

On the proposition of Councillor McLean, Chairman of Employment Committee and seconded by Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE it was:

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) a Committee of the Council of four members (3:1), (plus up to four substitute members) be appointed, augmented by representatives of Public Health England and the Faculty of Public Health with the following terms of reference:

“To interview and appoint on behalf of the Council and Public Health England to the Director of Public Health post”.

(ii) That Councillors D Birch, Mrs McCracken, McLean and Mrs Temperton be confirmed as the nominated members; and

(iii) That Councillors Dr Barnard, Thompson, Peacey and Virgo be confirmed as the substitute members.

**53. Question Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10**

Councillor Harrison asked Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport the following question:

*This Council is consulting on a Local Plan Draft which contains significant housing allocations in the Parish of Winkfield whose nearest railway station is Martins Heron. In light of this, will the Executive Member ensure that South Western Rail is fully engaged in the Local Plan consultation process to ensure that their passenger number projections and service plans for Martins Heron and Bracknell stations take full account of the new evidence in the form of the emerging Local Plan.*

*Additionally will the Executive Member stress to the Department of Transport that Bracknell Forest's growth plans, including the already delivered £250m regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre and commitment to clean air goals justify further investment in public transport links to Heathrow, the Elizabeth Line and Sandhurst and Crowthorne to Gatwick via Wokingham and Guildford?*

In response Councillor Turrell stated that residents need to be able to get to and from the borough for a variety of reasons by various modes of transport. He stated that for some years, the Council had had regular communication with transport providers and would continue to engage with the current train operating companies on both the Windsor Lines and North Downs Lines.

He added that it was important that the borough's Local Transport Plan objectives for Rail were progressed and the current operators on both lines had consulted on plans for creating greater capacity and improved frequency. He stated that as a result the Council had highlighted the need for a high level of service across all Bracknell stations including the importance of Martins Heron which had seen a 15% increase in patronage over the last 5 years. He reported that Network Rail had formed an alliance with South Western Rail which would include any rail infrastructure issues.

Councillor Turrell stated that the Council had also developed positive and productive relations with bus operators with new and augmented commercial services beginning before the opening of the Lexicon.

He agreed with Councillor Harrison that it was very important to give out timely information and the Council would continue communication on likely future movements as the Local Plan progressed towards submission, examination and adoption.

He added that the Council continued to push for Southern Rail Access to Heathrow which was likely to be delivered as part of any expansion plans at Heathrow, that they were monitoring the remaining stages of the Elizabeth Line project which was due to reach Maidenhead in the next year, and Reading in 2020. The Council was also watching announcements on Crossrail 2 which could benefit users of the Windsor Lines.

Councillor Turrell concluded his response by stating that air quality was monitored regularly, especially in the Council's two Air Quality Management Areas. He reported that the situation had remained stable since 2012, despite increases in traffic on roads.

No supplementary question was asked.

**MAYOR**

To: **COUNCIL**  
**25 APRIL 2018**

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## **EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL** **The Leader**

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 28 February 2018, the Executive has met twice, on the 13 March 2018 and the 10 April 2018. This report summarises decisions taken by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Updated Forward Plans are published every Friday and can be viewed online at [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk). Full details on the decisions taken by individual portfolio holders can also be accessed online through the Council's website.

### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **Council is asked to note the Executive decisions detailed in this report taken since the last Council meeting on 28 February 2018.**

### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The reasons for recommendations are set out in the supporting information and in the reports considered by the Executive.

### **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Alternative options are discussed in the relevant individual reports considered by the Executive.

### **5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### **Transformation and Finance**

#### **5.1 Easthampstead Park Conference Centre (EPCC)**

- 5.1.1 The Executive agreed that Easthampstead Park Conference Centre be sold to a high quality hotel and conference centre operator and that the Borough Solicitor and Chief Officer: Property be given delegated authority to conclude the property transaction.
- 5.1.2 Easthampstead Park Conference Centre was transferred to Bracknell Forest Borough Council (BFBC) in 1998 upon the dissolution of Berkshire County Council and the establishment of 6 unitary authorities.
- 5.1.3 Prior to 1997 the building had a variety of uses but was poorly maintained. Since 1999 there had been some limited investment that has improved the facility to its current level. However, in recent years, EPCC had been making a significant annual operating loss in the region of £250,000 per annum. In addition, the repairs and

maintenance requirements for a listed building of this age and scale is significant with an estimated £4m of back dated maintenance work required to ensure the listed building is protected well into the future. Protecting the asset so that it remained as a conference/hotel venue and is not ‘cannibalised’ for residential development was a major Council objective.

- 5.1.4 Given the scale of annual losses and with no realistic prospect of reversing this trend, Christie and Co, the leading property specialist with regards to conference centres, were appointed in May 2017 to determine whether there was a reasonable prospect of selling EPCC as a *going concern* in order to remove BFC’s losses and, equally importantly, to remove the risk associated with the long term and expensive maintenance of a listed building.
- 5.1.5 Disposal as a going concern is essential as EPCC takes bookings many months in advance with wedding bookings taken up to 18 months in advance. It was therefore essential that existing bookings would not be compromised or future ones jeopardised.
- 5.1.6 After a comprehensive process three highly regarded organisations submitted “best and final offers”. Officers, supported by Christie and Co, have assessed all bids and concluded that Bidder C provides best value to the Council. Not only was this the highest capital bid made at the “best and final offer” stage but the development proposals are robust and ambitious.
- 5.1.7 Agreeing a sale will require the relocation of the Council’s Education Centre, IT Training Suite and the emergency back-up for the Forestcare IT data. All bidders were content for the Education Centre to be on a rolling 6 month lease at no additional cost. The Council’s IT training suite will be accommodated in Bracknell Library and while an exact location for the Forestcare IT data back up had not yet been identified the requirements are minimal and is not considered to be problematic.

## **Council Strategy & Community Cohesion**

### **5.2 Council Plan Overview Report**

- 5.2.1 The Executive noted the latest Council Plan Overview Report covering the third quarter of the 2017/18 financial year (October - December 2017). At the end of the third quarter 154 actions (74%) were on target to be completed within the timescales set; 27 actions (13%) had been completed; 22 actions (11%) were at risk of falling behind schedule and 5 actions (2%) had fallen behind schedule.
- 5.2.2 Progress against the key indicators in the Council Plan was also generally positive with 37 (66%) green – i.e. on, above or within 5% of target; 6 (11%) amber – i.e. between 5% and 10% of target; and 13 (23%) red – i.e. more than 10% from target.
- 5.2.3 The Lexicon continued to attract large numbers of visitors and this is reflected in the early car parking figures that indicate a very positive financial position. The most popular car park as expected is The Avenue whilst the new town centre highway infrastructure is working extremely well in managing traffic flows. Equally encouraging is the information from bus operators that patronage of town centre buses has increased by 17.59% between October and December 2017 compared to the previous year. In addition, the first full quarter since The Lexicon opened has seen a 32% reduction in shoplifting and a 27% reduction in criminal damage

compared to the same quarter last year. This all paints a very positive picture of the impact of the new town centre.

- 5.2.4 Transformation continued across the organisation. In the libraries review, the tender evaluation process for the assisted opening and self-service kiosk technologies was completed and the contract awarded. Design work on physical alterations to the libraries was currently underway. There were also parallel discussions regarding the future of both Bracknell and Harmans Water libraries.
- 5.2.5 We continue to see a higher number of households in B&B than the target. These have been mainly single people with complex needs. The requirement to house them in B&B has often been based on risk assessments provided by support agencies such as the probation service. Actions are being taken to ensure we manage this as well as we can.
- 5.2.6 The Council has lost a number of key staff due to our successful Ofsted report for Children's Services last year and this has inevitably impacted on our current Social Worker caseload figures. This is a challenge as demand through the number of referrals continues to rise.
- 5.2.7 Recruitment more generally is becoming increasingly problematic. Our quarter three figure for voluntary staff turnover is 3.4%, which is an increase of 0.6% compared to the same period last year. There can be seasonal variations which can affect this figure. However, the general trend does seem to be an increasing figure. Since the end of quarter three, the Overview & Scrutiny Commission has held two helpful workshops looking at recruitment and retention.

## **Planning & Transport**

### **5.3 Capital Programme 2018/19 Integrated Transport**

- 5.3.1 The Executive approved the Capital Programme for Integrated Transport for 2018/19 and its implementation. The programme supports the adopted Local Transport Plan which sets out the key challenges facing Bracknell Forest through the period 2011-2026.
- 5.3.2 Historically, funding for the programme has been made up of an Integrated Transport Grant from central Government, alongside developer contributions for transport mitigation measures (S106/CIL). However, this year the Council has also been successful in securing additional funds from central Government through the Local Growth Fund (LGF) towards implementing transport measures linked to economic growth and carbon reduction. Previous LGF schemes included Warfield Link Road, the Coral Reef Junction improvement and Bracknell town centre accessibility improvements. A current LGF scheme is the A329 London Road Corridor improvement which would continue in 2018/19.
- 5.3.3 Further Government funding of £3.29m has now also been secured for the conversion of Downshire Way to a dual carriageway. This work is due to start in 2018/19 and continue into 2019/20. The total cost of the project will be £4.7m.

### **5.4 Highway Maintenance Works Programme 2018-19**

- 5.4.1 The Executive agreed the Highway Maintenance Works Programme. This includes £1.369m for non-routine highway maintenance schemes which is funding provided

via the Department for Transport's Highway Maintenance Capital Funding. This is a reduction on last year.

- 5.4.2 There was, however, an additional £200,000 from the Council's own capital programme by way of capitalised revenue for road maintenance and street lighting. This funding is generally used to support the schemes within the estates and for footpaths.
- 5.4.3 In addition to the capital programme, the Council also made provision in its revenue budget with around £2.2m included in the 2018/19 proposals. This will be used for routine and reactive maintenance purposes on all our highway network assets, our winter service and our 24/7 emergency event response service.
- 5.4.4 Even with this level of funding, the level of maintenance demand far exceeds the available budgets. Accordingly funding has to be targeted. The Local Transport Plan defines how we prioritise spending according to an assessment of need having regard to the condition of the asset.

## **5.5 Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPASPD) – Adoption**

- 5.5.1 The Thames Basin Heath SPA covers parts of Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire. It is home to three important bird species, (the Dartford Warbler, the Nightjar and the Woodlark) and is protected by international law (the EU Birds Directive and the EU Habitats Directive), national legislation (the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017) and by planning policy as a 'Special Protection Area' (SPA).
- 5.5.2 A public consultation on the draft SPASPD took place between 8 January 2018 and 19 February 2018. Details of the consultation were sent to key stakeholders including: Parish Councils, other local authorities, developers, housing associations, local environmental groups and government agencies. The draft document was also made available on the Council's website, in local libraries and Council reception areas and the consultation was published on 10 January 2018 in the Bracknell News paper.
- 5.5.3 There were a total of 63 consultation responses from 16 respondents to the consultation on the SPD. Their responses were subsequently collated and, where appropriate, changes were made to the SPD. The Consultation Statement summarised the main issues raised during the consultation and how these issues were addressed in the SPD.

## **Adult Services, Health & Housing**

### **5.6 Housing Strategy 2018 – 2036**

- 5.6.1 The Executive agreed the Housing Strategy for Bracknell Forest 2018 – 2036. This sets out the Council's key principles of:
- supporting a vibrant housing market
  - increasing the percentage of affordable housing
  - providing the right homes for vulnerable people
  - contributing to sustainable communities
  - using Downshire Homes Limited as a vehicle to provide accommodation to key groups of vulnerable people and reduce costs to the Council.

The Housing Strategy statement was developed within the context of the Council's other key strategies and plans. The Council was currently consulting on the draft Local Plan which would be key to achieving the Housing Strategies key principles.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor's comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

### Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer's comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Equalities issues, where appropriate, have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Any strategic risks have been identified in the reports to the Executive.

### Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 13 March 2018 and 10 April 2018

### Contact for further information

Hannah Stevenson, Resources - 01344 352308  
Hannah.stevenson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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**TO: COUNCIL  
25 APRIL 2018**

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## **2017/18 ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to submit an annual report to the Council on overview and scrutiny activities and their outcomes. The attached report informs Members of progress made in respect of the operation and development of Overview and Scrutiny in Bracknell Forest during 2017/18. The Commission recommends that Council adopts the report.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That the 2017/18 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission be adopted;**
- 2.2 **That the Constitution be amended to reflect the changes referred to in paragraph 5.4 as set out in Appendix A; and**
- 2.3 **That the commitment, role and value of the Overview and Scrutiny function be acknowledged and that non-executive Members continue to be supported in their role.**

### **3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To meet the requirements of the Constitution.

### **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Not applicable.

### **5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### Structure of Overview and Scrutiny

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission formed a Working Group consisting of members from both the Adult Social Care and Housing and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels to consider whether combining the work of the two panels would be logical, beneficial and more effective and then the logistics of such a merger.
- 5.2 Once the principle of merging the panels was agreed the Working Group considered the logistics of the new Panel and proposed that:
- the new panel should be called Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel
  - it should be effective from the start of the municipal year
  - the panel size should increase from nine to 12 members
  - it should retain the existing co-option and Healthwatch role
  - it should increase the number of meetings to six per year
  - the new panel should determine its work programme once formed

- an induction process should be undertaken to support the new panel to become effective
- a review should be undertaken after a year to ensure that it was fit for purpose

5.3 As set out in the Constitution at Part 3, Section 3 relating to Overview and Scrutiny Panels where the Overview and Scrutiny Commission seeks to discontinue or appoint overview and scrutiny panels other than as set out in the Constitution, it may do so provided that it has consulted with interested parties, if appropriate. Any change would then be reported to the proper officer and then to the next meeting of the Council by the Chairman of the Commission, so that the Constitution may be amended accordingly.

5.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission supported all of the Working Group's proposals and recommends to Council the proposed changes to the Constitution (as set out at Appendix A) to reflect those changes.

#### Activities

5.5 The activities of Overview and Scrutiny in 2017/18 are summarised in the Annual Report.

#### Outcomes

5.6 The Commission and Panels have maintained a rolling coverage of various matters including budget scrutiny and rigorously monitoring the performance of all Council Departments. The main focus of the Overview and Scrutiny's function has been playing a key role examining and commenting on the Council's Transformation Programme. Due to staffing changes the activity of working groups significantly slowed down during this period but progress is reflected within the report.

#### Future Developments

5.7 The work programme for Overview and Scrutiny in 2018/19 is still under development with consultation with the Corporate Management Team and the Executive ongoing and will also be dependent on emerging work of the transformation programme.

#### Outcomes

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#### Future Developments

5.7 The work programme for Overview and Scrutiny in 2018/19 is still under development with consultation with the Corporate Management Team and the Executive ongoing and will also be dependent on emerging work of the transformation programme.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Statutory Scrutiny Officer

- 6.1 The Annual Report demonstrates the depth and breadth of the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Panels and highlights the outcomes of this work. Overview and Scrutiny has exercised its functions in order to support the development of policy within the Council; to scrutinise the Council's financial proposals; and to improve services the Council and its partners provide with the overarching objective of seeking to benefit local communities. The team has had some changes to personnel during the year which has had an impact on timescales for some of the working groups. However, the new team members will be able to support the Scrutiny function in 2018/19 to develop further in line with the changes to council services.

#### Borough Solicitor

- 6.2 The Scrutiny function has an important role to play in providing local accountability and transparency in decision-making. It was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 primarily to serve as a check and balance on Executive powers. Subsequent legislation has conferred on Councils the responsibility for scrutinising local NHS Trusts, the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, and other partners, such as the Environment Agency. It sits alongside the Council's Standards regime in delivering the accountability that constitutes one of the Seven Principles of Public Life.

#### Borough Treasurer

- 6.3 Combining the two panels was considered to make the Council's scrutiny process more efficient and respond to the joined up and strategic approach of the Council and its health partners. As a consequence this will reduce the number of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman from four to three saving £5,701 which has not yet been reflected in the budget. The proposals also reduce the number of overall meetings by two per year but this will have a minimal impact on resourcing which is difficult to quantify. Once finalised the agreed work programme will need to be managed within the existing resources.

#### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 This report has no impact on equalities issues.

#### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 This report has no impact on strategic risk management issues.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

#### Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman.

#### Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Through emails and at meetings to consider the draft report.

#### Representations Received

- 7.3 None.

## Background Papers

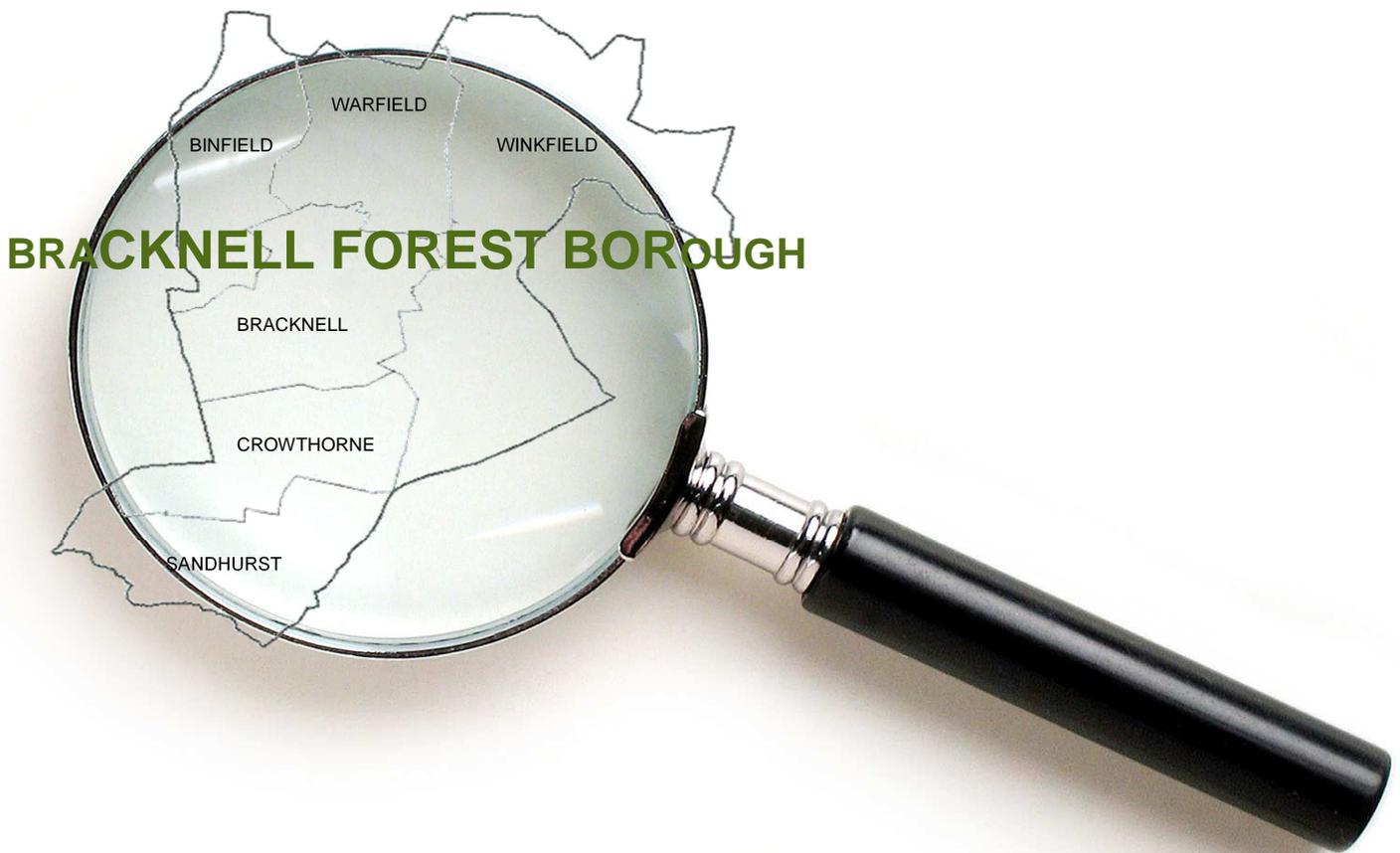
Agendas, Minutes and papers of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, and Panels in 2017/18.

## Contact for further information

Councillor Ian Leake  
Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Commission  
[ian.leake@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk](mailto:ian.leake@Bracknell-Forest.gov.uk)

Kirsty Hunt  
Governance and Scrutiny Manager  
[kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)  
01344 353108

# Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017-18



**Helping to make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive: living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment**

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## Foreword from Commission Chairman

This municipal year the main focus of the Overview and Scrutiny's function has been playing a key role examining and commenting on the Council's Transformation Programme. The effort that Members have put into the Gateway Review processes has been effective, positive and has contributed to the decision making process. As I mentioned in my foreword last year, the steps that we are taking to transform our services, while at the same time both preserving and enhancing services to our residents, are not without risk. The level of that risk continues to be higher than would normally be contemplated. The Commission, along with its supporting Overview and Scrutiny Panels, has sought regular reports and updates on the progress of the various 'strands' of transformation activity taking place at this critical stage. There is still much work to be done to achieve our aim of long term and effective transformation. The Commission will continue to closely and carefully monitor progress.

The Overview and Scrutiny Commission has agreed the merger two of its Panels in order to ensure that the Scrutiny response in respect of adult social care and health issues reflects the new joined up and strategic approach being taken by the Council and other health partners.

Once again I extend my thanks and appreciation to Members who undertake the Overview and Scrutiny role: it is not always an easy task! Likewise our thanks need to go to our previous Overview and Scrutiny officer Andrea Carr along with all the other officers who have helped us during the year. The officer team dealing with scrutiny matters has been restructured with Kirsty Hunt taking a lead role. Additional members of the team have been appointed and will be taking up their posts shortly.

We look forward to working with the new Governance and Scrutiny team and developing our next work programme for 2018-19.

**Councillor Ian Leake**  
**Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Commission**  
**April 2018**

## Overview and Scrutiny – An overview

- The aim of Overview and Scrutiny is to improve public services and consequently the quality of life for local residents.
- Overview and Scrutiny allows Councillors to examine, question and evaluate various functions of the Council and other providers of public services on behalf of the public in an open and effective way.
- As well as Council Members, the Commission and some of the Panels include other co-opted members and Church, Parent Governor and Teacher Representatives.
- Residents are encouraged to contribute ideas and concerns to the meetings of the O&S Commission and the Panels. The Public Participation scheme for O&S, which gives residents an opportunity to raise issues of concern to them, at Overview and Scrutiny meetings in public.
- Work is steered by the Work programme which is agreed by the Commission following consultation with the Executive and Corporate Management Team, is flexible and allows the addition of new reviews as required.
- Working groups are formed to provide an input to policy development or carry out investigations. Council officers, expert witnesses, partner organisations and service users participate in these reviews involving site visits and independent research.
- Meetings details, agendas and papers are available on the Council's website and are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend
- Active input to the development of Council Policy during 2017/18, by participating in the Gateway Review meetings and other forums connected with the projects contributing to the Transformation Programme.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Commission, along with the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, examined the Council's revenue and capital budget proposals for 2018/2019, together with the proposed fees and charges for Council Services. These views were reported to the Executive as part of the open consultation on the budget.
- There were no Community or Councillor Calls for Action or no 'call-in' requests during 2017/18.

### 5 Broad Functions of Overview & Scrutiny



Holding the Council's Executive and its statutory partners to account in the public interest



Supporting the development of effective policies and initiatives which have a beneficial impact on the community through policy review and development



Contributing to continuous improvement in services through performance monitoring



Having a positive impact on the work and outcomes of external agencies and providers of public services



Aiding Councillors in engaging with their communities and playing their role of community representatives and leaders

# Overview and Scrutiny Commission

## During 2017-18 the Commission:

- met every two months
- carried out the Council's statutory 'Crime and Disorder Committee' function
- reviewed the Quarterly Service Reports for the Resources Directorate
- decided on the O&S work programme
- monitored the progress of all O&S work by receiving regular 'traffic light indicators' from the Chairmen of the Commission and all four Panels on their progress against the agreed annual work programme for O&S
- co-ordinated the work of the O&S Panels and reviewed corporate issues concerning the whole Council
- appointed Panel Members
- monitored the forthcoming decisions of the Council's Executive
- monitored progress of Transformation Programme projects
- responded to the consultation on the budget examining the Council's revenue and capital budget proposals for 2018/2019, together with the proposed fees and charges for Council Services
- discharged the Council's 'Crime and Disorder Committee' requirements by monitoring crime and disorder issues, including the periodic performance reports of progress against crime indicators and key actions for community safety. In July 2017, met with the Assistant Chief Constable, also the Superintendent responsible for policing in Bracknell Forest, together with the Chairman of Bracknell Forest's Community Safety Partnership. The principal issues discussed were the 2016/17 annual crime figures, the partnership's performance and the priorities in the Community Safety Plan.
- had discussions, asked a number of questions and requested additional information in areas including:
  - Communications and Marketing
  - Update on the Council's Financial Position
  - Commercial Property Investment Strategy
  - Bracknell Forest Infrastructure Provision
  - Matters relating to the Local Plan
  - School Places Plan and School Capacity Strategy
  - Transformation update

**Chairman:**  
**Councillor Leake**

**Vice-Chairman:**  
**Councillor Angell**

**Members: Councillors Allen, Mrs Angell, Mrs Birch, Brossard, Finnie, Harrison, Mrs McCracken, Peacey, Porter, Mrs Temperton, Tullett and Virgo**

**Co-Opted Member:**  
**Mrs L Wellsted (Secondary)**

**CURRENT WORK PROGRAMME**

 Regeneration	 Coral Reef	 King's Academy	 Re3	 BID
 Transformation	 Transformation	 Transformation	 Transformation	 Transformation
 Child sexual exploitation	 Budget	 Highway investment	 Forestcare	 Fostering

Years One and Two – What's been achieved?




New SUD's features



30



**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY**  
16 November 2017



**SCHOOL PLACES PLAN & SCHOOL CAPACITY STRATEGY**

Chris Taylor  
Interim Chief Officer Strategy Resources & Early Help



### **Working Group Update – Merger of Overview and Scrutiny Panels**

A Working Group made up of members from both Panels met twice to agree the principle and then consider the practical arrangements for combining the Adult Social Care and Housing and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Their proposals for how this could work were accepted by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 29 March for implementation from the Annual Council meeting.

### **Working Group Update – Recruitment and Retention**

Working with the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer: Human Resources the Overview and Scrutiny Commission met twice as a Working Group to develop ideas for recruitment and retention of council staff. Suggestions being developed included: rebranding the Council's approach to recruitment including working with universities, career flexibility with rotation and workforce planning.

### **Joint Working Group Update - Sustainability & Transformation Partnership (STP)**

A Working Group made up of members from both Adult Social Care & Housing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels were tasked with monitoring the Sustainability & Transformation Partnership (STP). The Working Group's progress was slowed down significantly due to reduced officer resource and other technical issues.

Since the Working Group was originally set up the landscape has moved on with some of its intended work being superseded by other external factors. The Group believes that its original remit still exists and therefore the new combined O&S Panel should consider how to monitor the Integrated Care System (ICS) as part of its future work programme.

## Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel

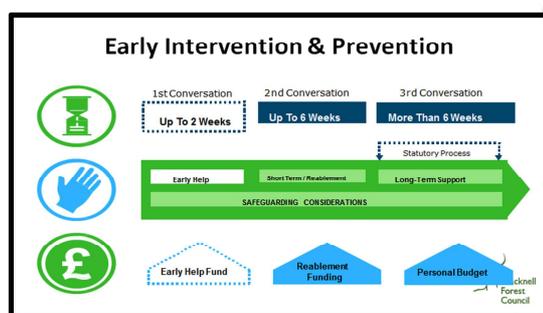
During 2017 - 18 the Panel has:

- met quarterly
- regularly monitored the performance of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department through QSRs in delivering housing services and all aspects of adult social care including safeguarding adults, providing services for older people and for people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and long term conditions
- had discussions, raised questions and requested additional information in areas including:
  - Provision of Community Based Intermediate Care Service
  - Charging for Adult Social Care
  - Motor Neurone Disease Charter
  - Housing Related Support for Young Single Homeless People
  - Annual Compliments and Complaints Report 2016-17 for Adult Social Care
  - Charging Options for Care and Support at Home
  - Transforming Care Programme
  - Merging of the Adult Social Care & Housing and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels
  - Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report 2016/17
  - Care Quality Commission (CQC) Area Review
  - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2017
  - Conversations approach

**Chairman: Councillor Harrison**

**Vice-Chairman: Councillor Allen**

**Members: Councillors Mrs Angell, Finch, Finnie, Mrs McKenzie, Ms Merry, Peacey and Mrs Temperton**



### **Working Group Update – Housing Strategy and Supply**

The Working Group completed its work reviewing the Council's Housing Strategy but its progress slowed down significantly due to reduced officer resource. The Working Group plans to visit to other local authorities before reporting its overall findings to the Executive.

## Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

During 2017 - 18 the Panel has:

- met quarterly
- continued to take a close interest in the performance of National Health Service organisations serving Bracknell Forest residents
- kept an on-going interest in the developing healthcare scene, asking for information as necessary and contributing our views. This included monitoring important developments to the NHS both nationally and locally, and the activities of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- had discussions, raised questions and requested additional information in areas including:
  - Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
  - The Patients' Experience
  - Quality Accounts 2016/17
  - Sustainability and Transformation Partnership - Update
  - Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Transformation Programme
  - Healthwatch Bracknell Forest Annual Report 2016/17
  - Primary Care Survey Results
  - Bracknell Forest Council Investment in the Berkshire Shared Public Health Team
  - Conversations approach
  - Update on Integrated Care System (ICS) engagement process

**Chairman:**

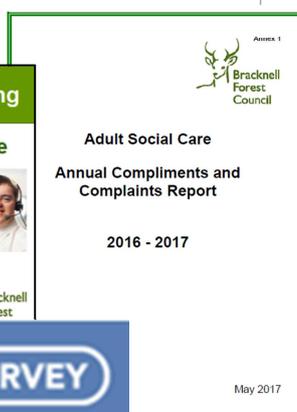
**Councillor Mrs McCracken**

**Vice-Chairman: Councillor Virgo**

**Members: Councillors G Birch, Finnie, Dr Hill, Mrs Mattick, Mrs Temperton, Thompson and Tullett**

**Co-opted Representative  
Dr Norman (non voting)**

**Local Healthwatch Bracknell  
Forest Observer  
Mark Sanders (non voting)**



Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report  
April 2016 - March 2017



### Working Group Update - Primary Care Patient Experience

Reviewing the results of the GP Patient Survey 2017 with the aim to highlight best practice across eight topic areas in the GP Survey.

Background and survey research has been completed and now the group will be meeting and speaking with General Practice staff to get better insight into best practice.

## Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

### During 2017 - 18 the Panel has:

- met quarterly
- monitored the work of Bracknell Forest's Children, Young People and Learning Department which provides education and social services for children and young people and lifelong community learning services to residents in the Borough
- received the minutes of meetings of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel (CPAP)
- had discussions, raised questions and requested additional information in areas including:
  - Statements of Purpose for 2017/18 and Annual Reports for 2016/17:
    - Adoption Service
    - Private Fostering Service
    - Larchwood Short Break Unit
  - Work with Young Carers
  - Children's Services Ofsted Inspection Outcome
  - Schools Ofsted Inspection Outcomes
  - Life Chances Team Annual Report 2016-17
  - Pupil Premium Consultation
  - Working Model for Child Minders and Available Funding
  - Virtual School Annual Report 2016/17
  - Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2016/17
  - Children Young People and Learning Statutory Annual Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Report 2016/17
  - Children's Social Care Quality Assurance and Annual Report 2016/17
  - Received minutes of the School Improvement Accountability Board
  - Early Years' data
  - Presentation about Childminders in the borough
  - Cornerstone Presentation
  - visit by members to Larchwood and the new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

**Chairman: Councillor Mrs Birch**

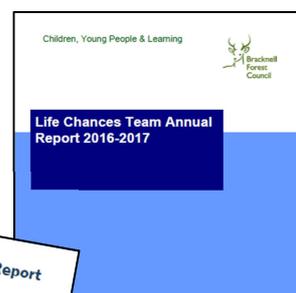
**Vice-Chairman: Councillor Brossard**

**Members: Councillors Ms Gaw, Mrs Hamilton, Ms Hayes, Mrs McCracken, Skinner, Mrs Temperton and Virgo**

**Parent Governor Representatives:  
Ms L Wellstead**

**Teacher Representative:  
Miss V Richardson (non-voting)**

**Social Care Representative:  
Miss C Barrett (non voting)**



## Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

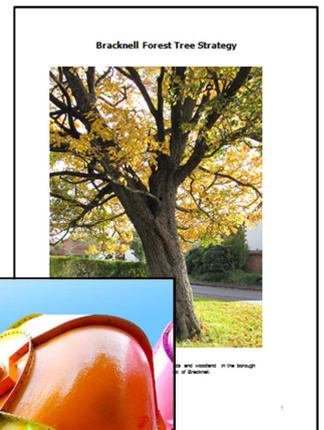
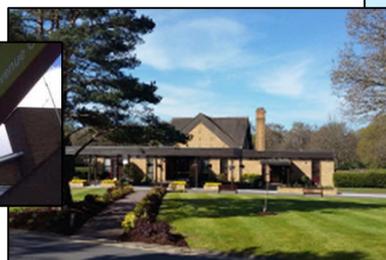
During 2017 - 18 the Panel has:

- met quarterly
- monitored the performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department which provides environment and public protection, leisure and culture, and planning, transport and countryside services. through review of its Quarterly Service Reports
- had discussions, raised questions and requested additional information in areas including:
  - Highways maintenance contract: Annual report
  - Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Joint Strategic Partnership Board, income and spending
  - Cemetery and Crematorium update
  - Coral Reef
  - Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan update
  - Annual Review of the General Practitioner Referral Scheme
  - Bracknell Forest Tree Strategy
  - National Highways and Transport Network Survey Report 2017
  - Delivery of Highway Infrastructure
  - Public Protection Partnership Update
  - Library Service Update

**Chairman: Councillor Angell**

**Vice-Chairman: Councillor Porter**

**Members: Councillors Mrs Angell, Brossard, Finnie, Mrs Ingham, Mrs Mattick, Mrs McKenzie and Mrs McKenzie-Boyle**



### Working Group Update – Houses in Multiple Occupation

Four meetings have taken place with contributions from: Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection; Team Manager: Environment and Community Engagement; Chief Officer: Housing; Chief Officer: Planning, Transport and Countryside; Chief Officer: Customer Services and Community Safety Officer.

To complete their Work programme, they will invite participation from the following:

- Thames Valley Police
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Estate Agent with portfolio of HMO's
- HMO landlord

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3. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

3.1 (a) The Overview and Scrutiny Commission shall establish such overview and scrutiny panels as it shall determine, currently including ~~at least~~ the following ~~three~~four panels:

- Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- ~~Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel~~

with terms of reference as set out below. The Commission may discontinue any overview and scrutiny panel and/or appoint alternative or additional panels, subject to there being a minimum of the ~~three~~four standing panels. The Commission may also amend the terms of reference of the panels as appropriate.

(b) Where the Overview and Scrutiny Commission seeks to discontinue or appoint overview and scrutiny panels other than as set out in the Constitution, it may do so provided that it has consulted with interested parties, if appropriate. Any change will be reported to the proper officer and then to the next meeting of the Council by the chairman of the Commission, so that the Constitution may be amended accordingly

3.2 Terms of Reference

The ~~three~~four above mentioned overview and scrutiny panels shall

(i) conduct scrutiny reviews or policy development projects ~~approved~~ ~~located~~ by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission from ~~the corporately~~an agreed work-programme developed by the Panel, preparing such evidence-based reports and recommendations as it deems necessary.

(ii) at the ~~request~~direction of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- consider any matter affecting the Borough or its ~~inhabitants~~residents or businesses.

(iii) have responsibility for performance monitoring activities such as:

- to receive appropriate performance data reports on the work of the relevant Department
- to question any relevant Executive portfolio holder and officers thereon.

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- to require reports on such topics / subjects in the departments remit as they deem necessary.
- (iv) Where appropriate refer to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission any such issues, arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process, that it considers should be reported to Council.
- (v) In addition the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel (ASCH&H) will:
- undertake all the statutory functions of a scrutiny committee in accordance with Sections 244-246 (and regulations made under those sections) of the National Health Service Act 2006, as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and subsequent legislation. The power to refer to the Secretary of State concerns over consultations regarding substantial development or variation in health services is reserved for Council decision.
  - through constructive challenge and accountability, work with the Executive, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Service Providers to help ensure good health services are provided to residents of Bracknell Forest, reducing health inequalities, and helping everyone to stay fit and lead healthy lives.
  - recommend to Council that it appoints representatives to the following committees as and when it deems appropriate:
    - The Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
    - The Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Buckinghamshire County Council.

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~~In addition, the following panels shall have responsibility for performance monitoring activities as set out in the table below.~~

<del>Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel</del>	<del>To receive Quarterly Service Reports on the work of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department and to question the relevant Executive portfolio holders and senior officers thereon, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission where necessary.</del>
<del>Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel</del>	<del>To receive Quarterly Service Reports on the work of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department and to question the relevant Executive portfolio holder(s) and senior officers thereon in so far as it relates to the Adult Social Care and housing functions of the Council, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission where necessary.</del>
<del>Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny</del>	<del>To receive Quarterly Service Reports on the work of the Children, Young People and Learning</del>

Panel	Department and to question the relevant Executive portfolio holder(s) and senior officers thereon in so far as it relates to the Children, Young People and Learning functions of the Council, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission where necessary.
Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	<p>To undertake all the statutory functions of a scrutiny committee in accordance with Sections 244-246 (and regulations made under those sections) of the National Health Service Act 2006, as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and subsequent legislation. The power to refer to the Secretary of State concerns over consultations regarding substantial development or variation in health services is reserved for Council decision.</p> <p>To receive Quarterly Service Reports on the work of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Departments relating to health and to question the relevant Executive portfolio holder(s) and senior officers thereon in so far as it relates to the health functions of the Council, reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission where necessary.</p>

The overall aim of Health scrutiny is: Through constructive challenge and accountability, to work with the Executive, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Service Providers to help ensure good health services are provided to residents of Bracknell Forest, reducing health inequalities, and helping everyone to stay fit and lead healthy lives.

In addition, the Council has established/participates in the following overview and scrutiny committees:

- (i) The Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- (ii) The Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Buckinghamshire County Council.

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**TO: COUNCIL  
25 APRIL 2018**

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**MEMBER DEVELOPMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18  
Director of Resources –Democratic and Registration Services**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The attached Annual Report appraises all Members of the work and progress on Member Development during the year 2017-18. The report informs Members of activities and their outcomes and outlines proposed future activities. The Member Development Strategy has been reviewed by the Member Development Charter Steering Group.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Member Development Strategy 2016 – 2020 be approved;**  
**2.2 That the Member Development Annual Report 2017 - 18 be noted.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 As part of the Member Development Strategy the Council committed to considering annual reports on the Member Learning and Development progress.
- 3.2 Bracknell Forest Council acknowledges the importance of learning and development for all those who work to deliver good public services and have therefore developed the strategy to support and guide the continuous improvement of Member Learning and Development. The Strategy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Member Development Charter Steering Group to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and focuses on recognising Members' role in ensuring the delivery of the Council's priorities for the benefit of Bracknell Forest residents.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 None.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 The Member Development Charter Steering Group has been focused upon the Charter Plus reassessment as well as the review of the Member Development Strategy.
- 5.2 The Strategy was adopted by the Council in April 2016 and reflects the new narrative of the Council Plan and supports the Council's priorities. The Steering Group has undertaken its annual review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and considered it only required outdated job titles to be corrected. The Strategy is appended to the Member Development Annual report as Annex B.

## **6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

### Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

### Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The costs associated with the Member Development work detailed in the Annual Report 2017/18 have been contained within the 2017/18 budgets for approved conferences (£9,690) and Member training (£6,820).

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The Member Development Strategy and the Charter framework have an inclusive approach embedded within them. Training in Equalities issues is also a component of the Member Development Programme.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Councillors have a pivotal role in taking forward the Council's objectives, therefore effective Member development is essential to ensure that councillors enhance their knowledge, capabilities, networks and experiences and learn new skills. Without it there is a risk that the Council will not be as well placed to deliver its objectives.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

### Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Member Development Charter Steering Group.

### Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Meetings and emails.

### Representations Received

- 7.3 All representations have been incorporated within the final documents.

### Background Papers

None

### Contact for further information

Ann Moore, Head of Democratic and Registration Services – 01344 352260  
[ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)



# Member Development

## Annual Report 2017-18

### April 2018



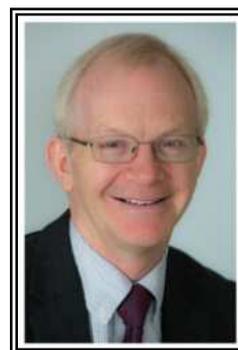
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE





## Foreword

The Council's focus this year has been its transformation programme and, through their involvement, members are expanding their knowledge of the Council's services and processes. Our Member Development program is targeted on informing our members about the Council's priorities so that decisions are made from a strong knowledge base. The more information the Councillors have, the better decisions we make.

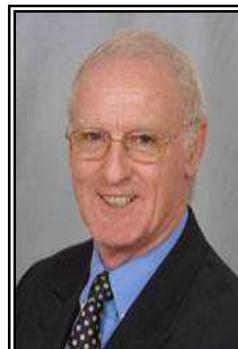


The Member Development Charter Steering Group has looked inwardly again in order to complete a self assessment for re-accreditation for Charter Plus. Whilst there are no significant step changes in how we deliver member development I am pleased to say that initial analysis indicates that we are still meeting the required standard. I look forward to discussing this further with assessors on 19 April.

**Councillor Nick Allen**  
**Chairman of Member Development Charter Steering Group**

## Message from Executive Member

As we come to the end of 2017-18 and move into the final year of this administration, I can reflect on the impact of the overall member development programme so far. The members newly elected in 2015 benefited from an established member development programme which included a revised member induction together with refreshed ICT support. Those members were on a steep learning curve and were supported to become effective and engaged in decision making. Together with their returning colleagues they have continued to participate in a range of learning opportunities offered to them. This embedded learning approach has contributed to solid decision making which in turn has supported the multitude of successes at Bracknell Forest. These successes culminated in the recent accolade of being recognised as 'Council of the Year' by IESE.



**Councillor Iain McCracken**  
**Executive Member for Culture, Resources and Public Protection**

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to appraise all Members of the work and progress on Member Development during the year 2017-2018. The report informs Members of activities and their outcomes and outlines proposed future activities.

## Member Development Charter Steering Group

The Steering Group meets as needed during the year with updates and important matters dealt with via email and Chairman's briefings. This year the Member Development Charter Steering Group has been focused upon the reassessment for Charter Plus, review of the Member Development Strategy and developing the member development programme. The Steering Group comprised eight Councillors meeting with appropriate officers.

The Steering Group members in 2017-18 were Councillors Allen (Chairman), Wade (Vice-Chairman), McCracken, Mrs McCracken, Mrs McKenzie, McLean, Ms Merry and Thompson.



## Charter Plus reassessment

South East Employers are due to assess whether the Council is continuing to meet the standard of the Charter Plus for Elected Member Development in April 2018 following the positive direction of travel assessment in September 2016.



The Charter provides a robust, structured framework designed to help the authority enhance and hone member development. The Charter accreditation framework has been revised and focuses on three key areas:

1. There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support
2. The council has a strategic approach to councillor development
3. Learning and development is effective in building councillor capacity.

The Member Development Charter Steering Group has undertaken a self assessment and prepared a storyboard to update assessors on the progress made since the last assessment and collated evidence against the framework elements.

The assessment team will interview Members and officers as well as Partner organisations to ensure that Bracknell Forest Councillors are appropriately developed and supported so that they can be effective in their roles.

**“Bracknell Forest Council continues to be proud of its commitment to member development, the financial pledge will be maintained and the support of its councillors remains an ongoing priority”**

**Councillor Bettison OBE,  
Leader of the Council**

**“Officers recognise the value of member development in the decision making process and continue to support the delivery of the development programme. It has become automatic for officers share their professional expertise, identify briefing topics and use various methods to keep Members informed”**

**Timothy Wheadon,  
Chief Executive**

**“We are keen to share development opportunities with our Parish and Town Council member colleagues as well as those across the region. These sessions provide opportunities to share best practice as well as developing supportive networks”**

**Nick Allen,  
Chairman MDCSG**

## Access to Development

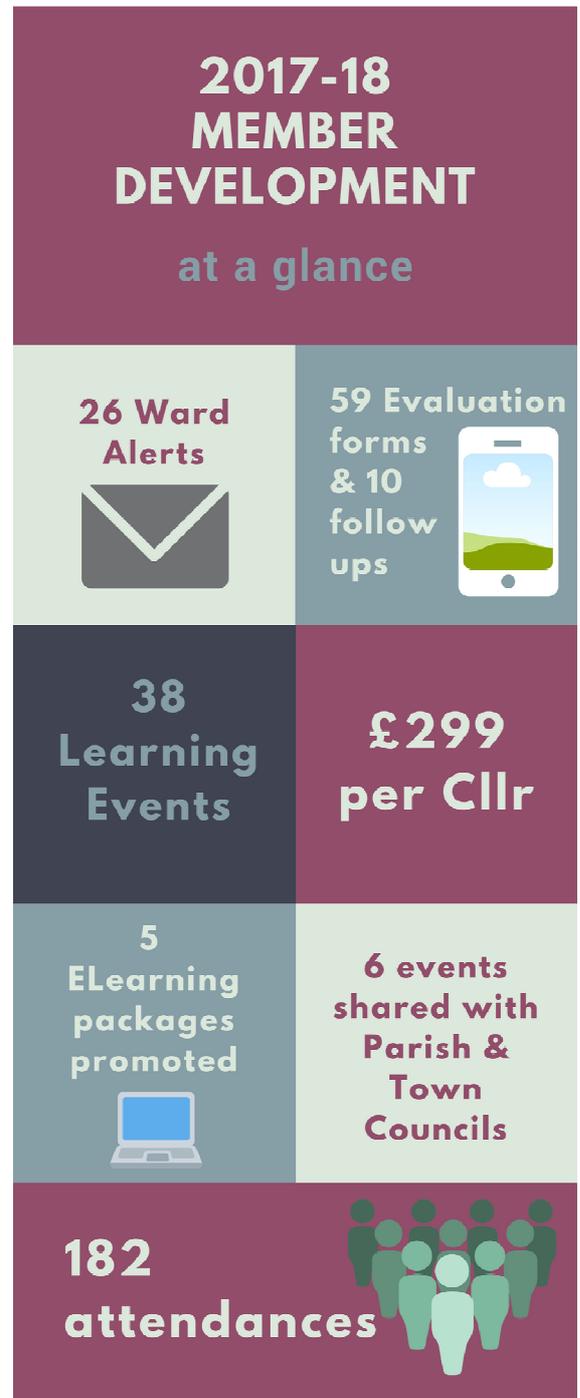
Charter Plus best practice suggests opportunities should be taken to share the cost of development activities with neighbouring authorities and where appropriate Parish and Town Councils. It is hoped that this will make it possible to run popular sessions on multiple occasions which would benefit Bracknell Forest Council Councillors through:

- a) Offering multiple dates (therefore increasing the chances of being able to attend)
- b) Sharing knowledge with other councils
- c) Networking with peers
- d) Recognition of Bracknell Forest as a leading member development authority.

The Strategy was revised last year to include reference to working collaboratively to share costs and widen development opportunities. Since the last annual report three sessions have been offered to neighbouring authorities and six sessions have been offered to Parish and Town Councils.

38 learning events were held which included 14 member development briefings or training sessions, 21 additional conferences and 3 approved conferences.

In 2017-18 £299 was spent per Councillor on Member Development. This calculation excludes travel costs or officer time to prepare and deliver Member Development sessions.



## Young Councillors' Weekend

**Delivered on 18 – 19 November 2017 and attended by 1 Councillor**

The Young Councillor Weekender event is designed to give Councillors aged 40 and under an opportunity to benefit from some focused leadership skills development aimed at helping them to make progress in their political career. The event also provides a chance for them to meet with and build up their network of other young councillors from different political parties and parts of the country.

**Strategic themes supported:** People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive



## Education Information Sessions - Statutory Duties

Delivered on 5 March 2018 and attended by 16 Councillors

*Interactive group discussion led by officers from CYPL department*

The first of three sessions looking at education which covered the statutory duties of the LA with a particular focus on School Improvement and the current transformation work taking place in the area.

**Strategic themes supported:** People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive

“It was a very good session – it’s amazing how quickly education changes”

Councillor Finnie

## Voice of a Councillor Conference

Delivered on 21 November 2017

Attended by 2 Councillors and 1 Officer

*Conference providing a unique opportunity to hear what Councillors are doing to develop their roles and positively change their communities. It will help Councillors consider what next steps can be taken to progress local leadership in their area.*

**Strategic themes supported:**

People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive



### THE VOICE OF THE COUNCILLOR

The Lights, Aintree, SP10 1AH  
Conference Agenda Outline for 21 November 2017

10AM	<b>REGISTRATION</b> Explore the Market Place offering stalls from a variety of local government organisations	12 NOON	<b>BEST PRACTICE WORKSHOPS, SECOND SESSION</b>
10.30AM	<b>WELCOME FROM THE HOST ORGANISATION, TEST VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL</b>	12.50PM	<b>FREE LUNCH</b> Opportunity to look around the Market Place Stalls and for further networking opportunities
10.35AM	<b>OUTLINE OF THE COUNCILLOR COMMISSION FINDINGS</b> Delivered by Professor Colin Copus of De Montfort University's Local Governance Research Unit	1.35PM	<b>BEST PRACTICE WORKSHOPS, THIRD SESSION</b>
11.10AM	<b>BEST PRACTICE WORKSHOPS, FIRST SESSION</b> Run by Test Valley Borough Council, Kirklees Council, The Councillor Commission	2.25PM	<b>PLENARY PANEL SESSION</b> A Q&A session with feedback from the Test practice workshops. Representatives of the Commission and other bodies to answer questions and consider ways to take forward the recommendations of 'The Voice of the Councillor' report
		3.30 PM	<b>CONFERENCE ENDS</b>



## Developing Skills in Speed Reading

Delivered on 9 February 2018 and attended by 6 BFC Councillors

*Facilitated by Miranda Blythe, Balkie Wood Consultancy*

Delegate spaces were sold to Parish and Town Councillors as well as neighbouring Councils.

By the end of this programme delegates were able to:

1. Co-ordinate eye movements better to minimise any poor reading habits
2. Identify and minimise barriers to reading
3. Read from electronic screens more efficiently by using a number of tips and techniques
4. Improve retention of information by using an active reading style.

**Strategic themes supported:** People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive

### Reading Styles

- Reading for pleasure
- Proof-reading
- Scanning
- Skimming
- Careful reading.



## Feedback from Residents' Survey and Engaging Communities

Delivered on 13 November 2017 and attended by 19 Councillors

Facilitated by Lisa Reynolds from IODA

The object of this session was to provide Members with an overview of residents' responses and their views broken down to ward level so that Members know what their residents really think about the Council. It also covered how to engage with diverse communities in their ward and what they needed to know about member's responsibilities arising from the Equality Act 2010.

The event was open to Bracknell Forest Borough and Town and Parish Councillors.

**Strategic themes supported:** All themes

Before you speak or



- T** Is it **TRUE**?
- H** Is it **HELPFUL**?
- I** Is it **INSPIRING**?
- N** Is it **NECESSARY**?
- K** Is it **KIND**?

ioda

Examples of how session was likely to change the way attendees worked:

- Use key points – organise speeches better
- Incorporate features identified as beneficial
- Prepare more for public speaking events

## Public Speaking and Contributing to meetings

Delivered on 10 November 2017 and attended by 5 Councillors

Facilitated by Miranda Smythe of Balkie Wood

*We arranged for a facilitator to deliver a session for developing skills in public speaking and contributing to meetings. This was an interactive session where attendees got the chance to practice new techniques.*

**Strategic themes supported:** People have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive

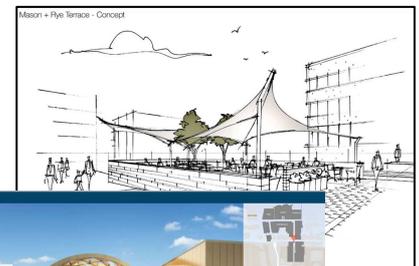
## Town Centre Regeneration

Delivered on 14 June 2017 and attended by 15 Councillors

Facilitated by Timothy Wheadon, Chief Executive and Victor Nicholls, Assistant Chief Executive

*The objective of this session was to provide Members with an update on the town centre development.*

**Strategic themes supported:** A strong and resilient economy



# Promoting Local Democracy

## Newly elected School Councils met the Bracknell Forest Mayor

The first Cluster School Council meeting between local schools in the borough was held during local democracy week on 13 October 2017. The children met the Mayor to discuss Democracy.

Young people participating in the meeting came from 8 local schools; Wildmoor Heath Primary, Uplands Primary, Crowthorne Church of England Primary, St Michaels (Sandhurst) Primary, College Town Junior, New Scotland Hill Primary, and Owlsmoor Primary and Sandhurst Secondary School who also hosted the meeting. The children discussed with the Mayor why they wanted to be elected and explained that they wanted to share ideas and make their schools even better.

Sandhurst Secondary Students spoke to the school councillors about why their voice as school councillors was so important and shared some hints and tips.



**“I really enjoyed meeting the young people for their first joint council meeting. All the children participated and had some great questions. They were very bright and I can tell we have some future Borough Councillors at these schools.”**

**Mayor, Councillor Mrs McKenzie-Boyle**

## National ‘Takeover’ Day

On Friday 24 November, young people from across the borough took part in a national ‘Takeover Day’.

X young people were partnered with executive members, directors or chief officers, to have the opportunity to understand how public figures make decisions and to catch a glimpse of their day-to-day work.

The participants were able to attend meetings and visit the many sites and offices the council is involved with and were encouraged to share their perspective and opinions on council matters.



## Promotion of the Office of Mayor

The Bracknell Forest Mayor Twitter account was taken over by the incumbent Mayor, Councillor McKenzie-Boyle and the civic office continues to tweet about upcoming events and report activity which are regularly re-tweeted by followers and the local press. Followers are increasing with 851 at the time of writing. The Mayor has continued to visit numerous schools attending their assembly or school events. At each opportunity the Mayor talks to young people about the role of Mayor and how the Council works.



Follow Bracknell Forest's Mayor at [www.twitter.com/MayorBFC](http://www.twitter.com/MayorBFC)

## Second Cluster School Council Visit

The second Cluster School Council visit was made to the Council Chamber on 16 March 2018. Students from six schools: Crowthorne Church of England Primary, St Michaels (Sandhurst) Primary, New Scotland Hill Primary, Uplands Primary, Wildmoor Heath Primary and Owlsmoor Primary attended and enjoyed discussing how they could improve recycling at their schools and in the local area.



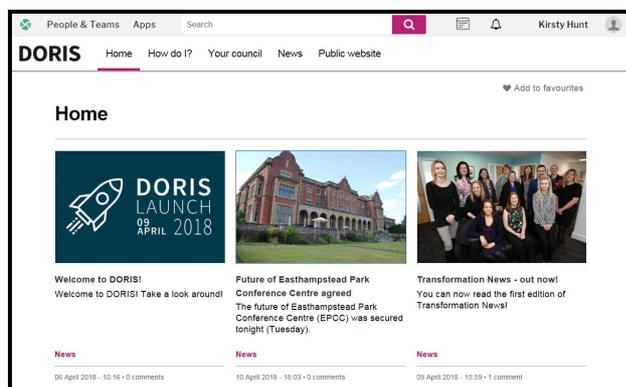
## Scouts and Parliament Week

During parliament week in November 2017 the local Scout troop from 1<sup>st</sup> Binfield borrowed election equipment to recreate the polling station experience. They even printed their own polling cards, developing manifestos and debating current topics before casting their votes.



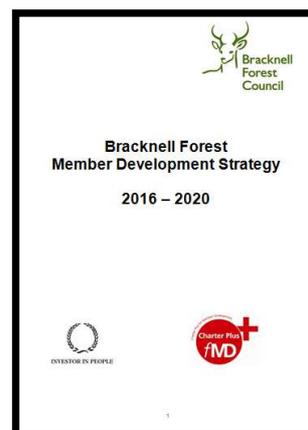
## Members' Pages on Doris

The Members' pages on BORIS will be relaunched with the new redesigned DORIS, the Council's intranet site. These pages will continue to be maintained to signpost Members to advice, guidance and various resources such as policy documents, briefing notes and previous Member Development presentations.



## Member Development Strategy 2016 - 2020

The Strategy which reflects the new narrative of the Council Plan and supports the Council's priorities was adopted by the Council in April 2016. The Steering Group has undertaken its annual review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. No changes are currently proposed. The Strategy is appended to this report as Annex B.



## Member Development Programme 2018 - 2019

The Member Development Charter Steering Group continues to be committed to improving Member Development at Bracknell Forest to ensure that its Members are equipped to provide the best possible services to its residents and supports the Member Development Programme which is being developed for 2018-2019.

Members have been canvassed for proposals for development sessions. Once finalised the development programme will be circulated to all Members and published on Doris.

## Events Delivered 2017 – 2018

Additional Conferences	Facilitators	Number of Councillors Attended
Unit 4 Connect Executive Conference	Unit 4	1
Pupil Premium 'Breaking Through Barriers' Annual Conference	Bracknell Forest Council / Reading Borough Council / West Berkshire Council / Wokingham Borough Council	1
Local Access Forum Conference 2017	Natural England	1
Commercialisation Workshop	South East England Councils (SEEC) and South East Strategic Leaders (SESL)	1
UK Rail Summit 2017	Transport Times	1
Leadership Essentials: Children's Services	Local Government Association	1
Beyond the Housing White Paper	Planning Advisory Service	1
Looked After Children Achievement Awards	Bracknell Forest Council	2
Young Councillors' Weekend	Local Government Association	1
The Voice of the Councillor	Councillor Commission	2
Leadership Essentials: Counter Terrorism	Local Government Association	1
Air Pollution in the UK Post-Brexit - Delivering a Cleaner, Greener Future	Public Policy Exchange	1
Westminster Health Forum Keynote Seminar: The future for general practice in England	Westminster Forum Projects	1
Annual Local Government Finance Conference 2018	Local Government Association	1
UK Bus Summit 2018	Transport Times	1
The road ahead for potholes and highway investment conference	Local Government Association	1
Life Chances Team Annual Conference	Bracknell Forest Council	4
Leadership Essentials - Planning: Decision Making	Local Government Association	1

Leadership Essentials: PREVENT	Local Government Association	1
Annual School Leaders' Conference	Bracknell Forest Council	1
Achieving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in the South East	The Transport Knowledge Hub	1
<b>Sub Total – Attended</b>		<b>26</b>
<b>Sub Total – Cost</b>		<b>£2,438</b>

Approved Conferences	Facilitators	Number of Councillors Attended
Local Government Association Annual Conference	Local Government Association	3
The National Children's and Adult Services Conference	Local Government Association / Directors of Adult Social Services	4
Institute of Licensing: 'Annual Training Conference for 2017'	Institute of Licensing	1
<b>Sub Total – Attended</b>		<b>8</b>
<b>Sub Total – Cost</b>		<b>£5,398</b>

<b>Member Development Sessions</b>	<b>Facilitators</b>	<b>Number of Councillors Attended</b>
Roles, responsibilities and conflicts for directors and trustees of Local Authority companies and outside bodies	Bevan Britain LLP	15
Training on Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Bracknell Forest Council	11
Police provision in Bracknell Forest	Bracknell Forest Council	13
Town Centre Regeneration	Bracknell Forest Council	15
Member Development Session: SUDS	Bracknell Forest Council	6
Public Speaking and Contributing to Meetings	Miranda Smythe, Balkiewood	5
Feedback from Residents' Survey and Engaging Communities	IODA	19
Licensing Training	West Berkshire Council	3
Information Commissioner's Office Requirements x 5 sessions	Bracknell Forest Council	23
Planning Enforcement Training for Borough Councillors	POS Enterprises	10
Public Speaking Training	Miranda Smythe, Balkiewood	1
Developing Skills in Speed Reading	Miranda Smythe, Balkiewood	6
King's Academy Binfield - Information Session for Councillors	Bracknell Forest Council	5
Education Information Sessions - Statutory Duties	Bracknell Forest Council	16
	<b>Sub Total – Attended</b>	<b>148</b>
	<b>Sub Total – Cost</b>	<b>£4,737</b>
	<b>Overall Total - Attended</b>	<b>182</b>
	<b>Overall Total - Cost</b>	<b>£12,573</b>



# Bracknell Forest Member Development Strategy

## 2016 – 2020



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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## **Introduction**

Bracknell Forest Council has always recognised the importance of learning and development for all those who work to deliver good public services and has sought to continuously improve Member learning and development, in the knowledge that organisations with effective learning and development are open, accountable and make better decisions. The Member Development Strategy provides a framework for the Council to deliver effective Member learning and development.

This is Bracknell Forest Council's third Member Development Strategy. The first strategy culminated in the award of the South East Charter for Elected Member Development; the first Council in the South East to achieve the accreditation. This commitment to Member learning and development enabled the Council to build on its strong tradition of providing Members with appropriate learning and development opportunities and commitment to the Charter's principles enhanced the Council's ability to strengthen and improve its arrangements through additional advice and robust external assessment.

The second strategy took this work forward and enabled the Council to achieve Charter Plus accreditation in January 2015; again, the first Council in the South East to do so. Charter Plus is based on the same criteria as the Charter although the evidence requirements and assessment processes are more rigorous.

This is the third strategy and spans the four year period from 2016 to 2020. The strategy builds on the work that has gone before and provides a robust framework within which Members will be given access to a high standard of development opportunities, support and information to drive forward the Council's goals. The strategy will be delivered in the context of achieving excellent value for money and responding to the changing priorities of the organisation resulting from the impacts of economic challenges facing the Council. The focus in the final year will be on the induction of Members following the Borough elections in May 2019.

## **The Strategy Vision**

Bracknell Forest's vision for Member development is for all Members to be engaged in the learning and development programme, taking advantage of learning opportunities and accessing support that will assist them in fulfilling their roles and helping the Council to deliver its services and objectives for the benefit of the Borough and its residents.

## **The Aim of the Strategy**

The Strategy outlines the principles and key themes for Member learning and development over the four years 2016 – 2020 and aims to maintain an embedded culture whereby Member development is considered to be a key factor in Bracknell Forest Council's success. It provides a framework for the provision of support that enables Members to acquire the necessary skills, information and knowledge required to fulfil their roles effectively. Members will be better equipped to balance conflicting and competing priorities and to work constructively with officers to achieve the best outcomes for Bracknell Forest residents.

Member development is defined as any learning or development activity, training programme, or provision of information specifically designed to improve the skills, knowledge and ability of Members in their varied roles.

## The Strategic Context

The Council currently faces an unprecedented financial challenge which means it is more important than ever that Members are provided with the information and development opportunities they need to respond effectively. In response the Council has agreed an ambitious transformation programme aimed at identifying significant savings that can be incorporated into the 2017/2018 budget and beyond.

The Council Plan sets out the approach being taken to address the financial challenges ahead and to deliver the commitments made in the 2015 election manifesto. This approach is expressed in a new narrative for the organisation:

- Bracknell Forest is a good place to live with a mainly affluent, well educated and independent population
- the council will provide leadership and work with others to keep the Borough a place where all residents can thrive and benefit from core services. What we do ourselves we aim to do well, but we must prioritise to live within our means
- we will provide an essential safety net, and target this to people and areas with greatest need. In targeting our services, we will continue to prioritise early help and prevention so struggling or vulnerable people can maximise their opportunities to become independent

This narrative is supported by six strategic themes which are underpinned by a number of key measures of success:

- value for money
- a strong and resilient economy
- people have the life skills and education opportunities they need to thrive
- people live active and healthy lives
- a clean, green, growing and sustainable place
- strong, safe, supportive and self-reliant communities

To underpin the Council's identity as a transforming and forward thinking organisation an Organisational Development Strategy has been created with a stronger emphasis on the organisation's values and on the qualities employees will be required to display in order to embrace transformation and create an adaptable and flexible organisational culture.

Elected Members are responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Council's goals which is dependent on them having the key skills and knowledge to help to provide the best possible services to its residents.

## Key Principles and Objectives

The principles of the South East Charter Plus for Elected Member Development form the core of this strategy and set out below are the actions required to support these principles:

- To maintain a clear commitment to Member development
- To foster a strategic approach to Member development
- To ensure that Member learning and development is effective in building capacity

- To support councillors in their various roles (detailed Member roles can be found at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/your-council/yc-members-of-the-council/yc-members-roles.htm>)

These principles are underpinned by the requirement to sustain a Member Development Programme.

### **What we will do to maintain a clear commitment to Member development**

- seek commitment to and approval of the strategy and our approach to Member development from Members and officers
- make planning and delivery of Member development the responsibility of Members and officers
- support the Member Development Charter Steering Group to oversee Member development and monitor the implementation of this strategy
- manage the Member development budget effectively
- ensure equality of opportunity and access for all learning and development activities
- provide appropriate training to Members Services staff

### **What we will do to foster a strategic approach to Member development**

- oversee the Member Development Programme and additional briefings and activities with the Member Development Charter Steering Group – to include consultation, communication and monitoring and evaluation
- annually refresh the Member Development Programme based on Member need
- champion and promote learning and development activities within political groups through representatives on the Member Development Charter Steering Group
- deliver an Induction Programme to all newly elected Members
- provide appropriate training to Members dependent upon their roles and responsibilities
- involve external partners in relevant learning and development activities

### **What we will do to ensure that Member learning and development is effective in building capacity**

- ensure that Members are clear about the outcomes and benefits of learning and development activities for them as individuals and for the Council
- develop Members' skills and capabilities across a range of areas including personal development, leadership skills, communication skills and ICT competencies
- develop Members' knowledge of particular issues or legislation
- develop Members' awareness of local and national issues
- develop Members' understanding of key issues, for example community development, community cohesion and equalities and diversity
- utilise a range of methods to deliver the Member Development Programme
- provide opportunities for Members to network with each other, other authorities, other partners and the community
- evaluate the outcomes and benefits of learning and development activities through participants' feedback
- monitor and record attendance at learning and development activities
- report annually to Council as part of the Member Development Annual Report

### **What we will do to support Councillors in their various roles**

- schedule learning and development activities into the Council diary and publicise forthcoming activities
- schedule learning and development at appropriate times and offer multiple sessions where possible
- provide assistance for those with caring responsibilities to attend learning events
- endeavour to meet individual identified development needs in the way that is most appropriate for the Member concerned
- make the best use of technology and resources to support Members
- actively promote local democracy, the role of councillor and civic life
- promote and improve the work/life balance of members

### **What we will do to sustain a Member Learning and Development Programme**

- develop a varied Member Development Programme covering induction; core knowledge and skills; service specific issues; Council and Committee issues; and individual needs
- support Members in identifying their own learning and development needs
- encourage Members to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP)
- encourage Members to complete 360° self assessments at least once each four year Council term
- provide Members with the opportunity to identify and take into account their own preferred learning style
- ensure that learning and development opportunities, including PDPs link back to the one of the Council's six strategic themes

## **Responsibility for delivery**

The following Members and officers have a direct involvement in Member learning and development.

### **Member Development Charter Steering Group**

The Member Development Charter Steering Group will lead and innovate the Council's approach to Member development, in conjunction with the Executive Member who has responsibility for Member Development.

The terms of reference of the Steering Group are:

- To monitor the progress of the Member Development Strategy
- To advise officers and the Council on Member development activities
- To report annually to the Council on progress with Member Development

### **Councillors**

All councillors will be responsible for:

- Identifying their own learning and development needs and engaging in the personal development plan and 360° self-assessment process
- Engaging in the Member Development Programme
- Sharing learning with others
- Accessing learning opportunities

## **Directors and senior officers**

Relevant officers will:

- Provide briefings to Members on key areas of service delivery and development
- Positively contribute to the development and delivery of the Member Development Programme
- Support the work of the Member Development Charter Steering Group

## **Democratic and Registration Services**

The Head of Democratic and Registration Services and Principal Democratic Services Officer (Governance) will be responsible for working with the Member Development Charter Steering Group to:

- Develop and evaluate the Member Development Strategy
- Maintain the Charter Plus Standard
- Identify Member learning and development requirements and work collaboratively to facilitate their delivery
- Promote the Member Development Programme
- Ensure a suitable infrastructure is in place to support Member learning and development
- Represent the Council at relevant regional and national network meetings

## **Support and Resources**

In addition to officer time there is a dedicated budget for Member learning and development. The budget holder is the Head of Democratic and Registration Services. There will usually be a mixture of internally and externally provided sessions with costs contained within the allocated budget. There is also provision for Member attendance at agreed conferences.

Any request to attend a conference or seminar that is not on the approved list, or any other individual training activity, will be considered in line with the procedure set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme, and authorised attendances will be funded from the Member Services budget.

Individual Members' needs will be considered once the core work programme has been determined and may need to be prioritised if there are insufficient funds to meet demand. Priority will be given to those training needs identified through the PDP and 360° self-assessment processes.

The Head of Democratic and Registration Services will bid for additional funding for specific initiatives if opportunities arise.

In order for Members to be able to carry out their roles effectively, they will be provided with the most up to date and relevant information from both internal and external sources. Each Member will be given support to access ICT facilities in the home, within the Council and, where applicable, on the move. The Council's intranet system, DORIS, will contain the most topical information regarding the Council's services and democratic issues. It will also include information and presentations provided at briefing seminars.

## **Equality**

Access to training and development will be equitable, based upon individual and Council needs. In practice this means making sure that there are no physical, social, religious or cultural barriers to Members wishing to take advantage of development opportunities.

## **Access**

Learning and development will be delivered in ways which allow the greatest take-up, taking into account different personal and domestic circumstances and preferred learning styles. A number of methods will be used in a positive attempt to address Members' needs including;

- Briefing notes, learning manuals and literature
- E-learning packages
- External conferences, seminars and network meetings
- In-house briefings, seminars and workshops presented by senior and specialist officers
- Joint Member and officer sessions
- Peer coaching and mentoring
- Sharing knowledge and best practice using the Members' pages on the Council's intranet site DORIS
- Training with partner organisations and neighbouring authorities
- Visits to other authorities

## **Sharing Learning**

In order to ensure that the learning and development programme offers the best support for Members to feel confident in implementing the Council Plan objectives every learning session will be evaluated. Feedback will be sought on the content and quality of each learning session and will be analysed and used to further develop the programme. Feedback will also be shared with the facilitator. The learning and development cycle, including the evaluation strategy is set out in Annex A.

Parish and Town Councillors will be invited to Member Briefing Seminars when the content is considered to be of relevance to them. In order to be able to run more sessions of interest to Members places on sessions delivered by an external facilitator may be offered to neighbouring authorities and charged at a level to at least fully cover the cost. Parish and Town councillors who are not also Borough councillors will be invited to attend at a discounted rate.

## **Monitoring the Strategy**

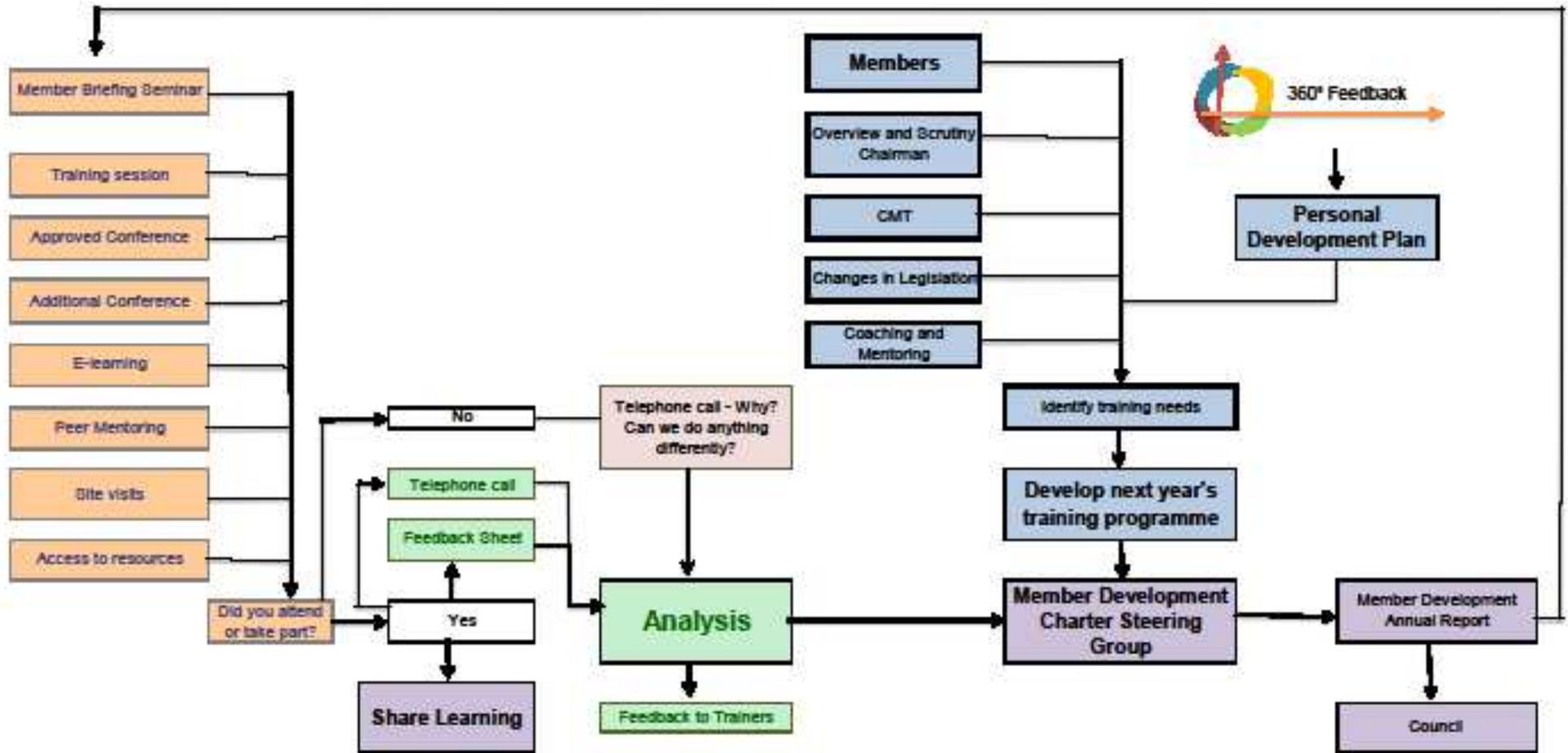
The Member Development Charter Steering Group will review the Strategy at least annually and update it as appropriate to ensure that it reflects changes and continues to meet Members' needs.

The date, time and location of all learning and development events will be reviewed on a regular basis and recommendations for change will be made if required.

Indicators of success will include:

- Positive feedback in Member Services surveys
- Engagement in the Personal Development Plan and 360° self-assessment processes
- Engagement in the Member Development Programme
- Positive satisfaction rates with learning and development activities
- Positive satisfaction rates with learning and development providers
- Retention of the Charter Plus accreditation

**Member Learning and Development Cycle**



Key	
	Training
	Evaluation
	Shared Learning
	Development of next years programme

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**TO: COUNCIL**  
**25 APRIL 2018**

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**CHAMPIONS' ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**  
**Director of Corporate Services – Democratic and Registration Services**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The attached Annual Report appraises all Members of the work undertaken by the Council's four Champions during the year 2017-18. The report informs Members of activities and their outcomes.
- 1.2 As part of the Council's Constitution one of the Champions' key tasks is to submit an annual report on work undertaken throughout the year for consideration by the Council.

**2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 At its discretion, the Council may, from time to time, designate Champions from amongst Councillors who are not Members of the Executive. The Council currently has four Champions:
- Business Champion - Councillor Wade
  - Commuters' Champion - Councillor Harrison
  - Older People's Champion - Councillor Thompson
  - Voluntary Sector Champion - Councillor Finnie
- 2.2 The role and function of a Council Champion is to act as a positive focus for the local community at elected member level in respect of the relevant section of the community or range of activities designated by the Council. This is to ensure that full consideration is given to the impact of Council activities and decisions upon the section of the community or range of activities.
- 2.3 The key tasks of Council Champions are to:
- (a) To make contact with local organisations concerned with the designated section of the community or range of activities and to establish effective and regular consultation arrangements with those organisations.
  - (b) To represent the views of such organisations to Officers, the Council, the Executive, Overview and Scrutiny Panels and other Committees, on all relevant aspects of the Council's activities.
  - (c) To act as an advocate on behalf of the relevant section of the community or range of activities within the Council as an organisation and to the wider community.
  - (d) To become familiar with the needs and priorities of the relevant section of the community, or range of activities concerned, and to weigh up interests expressed in order to provide sound advice on the implications of alternative courses of action.

- (e) To feedback decisions of the Borough Council and to explain the Council's position on specific issues of concern to relevant organisations and to individuals involved.
- (f) To publish an annual report on work undertaken over each year for consideration by the Council.
- (g) To appoint Panels to support their work where this would not overlap with other established liaison or consultative mechanisms, in line with the requirements of the Council's constitution.

### **3 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 3.1 The role of Council Champion is ensure that full consideration is given to the impact of Council activities and decisions upon the section of the community or range of activities which they represent.

### **4 STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 None relevant to this report.

#### Background Papers

None.

#### Contact for further information

Ann Moore, Head of Democratic and Registration Services – 01344 352260  
[ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:ann.moore@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)



# **Champions' Annual Report**

**2017-18**

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to appraise all Members of the work and progress undertaken by the Council's Champions during the year 2017-2018.

The report informs Members of activities and their outcomes and outlines proposed future activities.

## **Business Champion Councillor Wade**



### **1 The Business Environment**

The UK is set to leave the European Union at 11pm GMT on Friday 29 March, 2019. Leaving the EU will have an impact on every business in the UK and many further afield.

The 'transition' period from 29 March 2019 to 31 December 2020 will enable the UK to get everything in place and allow businesses and others to prepare for the moment when the new post-Brexit rules between the UK and the EU begin. It also allows more time for the details of the new relationship to be fully 'hammered out.' Free movement will continue during the transition period as the EU wanted. The UK will be able to negotiate its own trade deals - although they won't be able to come into force until 1 January 2021.

Leading campaigners for Brexit have suggested that if the UK was unable to secure replacement trade and leave the EU's single market, they could rely on World Trade Organisation rules to access European and other markets deals. However, the UK would face tortuous negotiations to fix the terms of its membership of WTO, its director-general has warned.

I repeat from a year ago, "Although the world markets are collectively much bigger than Europe; many trade agreements dealing with the rest of the world will need to be reviewed and negotiated by the UK as it leaves the EU."

The immigration controls seeking to manage the flow of people into the UK will also be challenging, since both highly skilled AND seasonal workers are important and in short supply. It will be difficult to categorise and monitor all groups.

Brexit poses serious challenges for all businesses in Bracknell Forest; and the way forward is still far from certain; making future investment decisions difficult to achieve.

Businesses are concerned about what Brexit will involve; while seeking to leverage the weaker pound. It's difficult to point to a precise or definitive impact of Brexit on the UK economy. Commentators and experts vary in their opinions, often proving either far too pessimistic, or far too optimistic.

### **2 Retention of key business**

Bracknell Forest is an unbeatable place for companies to locate. It's 'where great business is in good company' – and world leading names such as Dell, Fujitsu, Vodafone, 3M, Hewlett Packard, Honda and Panasonic all agree.

Over the last 7 years more than £700 million has been invested into Bracknell Forest by a range of key stakeholders. As part of this, the creation of The Lexicon is one of the biggest transformations the borough has seen in 70 years, which has performed over expectations.

The Thames Valley Berkshire Business Growth Hub is designed to support entrepreneurs and businesses. They help both start-ups and established companies, providing free support and advice that includes networking events and workshops on a range of business issues.

Bracknell Forest Council has played and continues to make, a significant contribution to the local businesses and organisations promoting business in the Borough through their involvement in the LEP and Economic Skills and Development Partnership.

### **3 Retention of small business**

There is a changing emphasis in small businesses and High Street retail outlets that now appear to largely focus on 'services' and 'convenience,' rather than 'product.'

The challenge of the internet with its ability to allow 'shopping around' and the convenience of on-line shopping/delivery has impacted the viability of many businesses, for example, local banks. This need for good value for money is caused by many residents of Bracknell Forest being 'asset rich' and 'cash poor.'

'Service' providers such as coffee shops, restaurants, hairdressers, beauticians, opticians, dry cleaners, IT and mobile phone support, electricians, plumbers, gardeners, lawyers and estate agents etc. are prolific. So much so, some have found the competition overwhelming!

Many 'product' stores have closed and some replaced by charity shops, which offer good value for money in the current cash-strapped environment and are also good for recycling!

Local outlets, such as 'convenience' stores, pharmacists, cobblers, butchers, DIY support, opticians are still in demand.

Clearly, the changes in purchaser's ability to access goods and services challenges business to adapt and those who don't may fail.

Working with the local community, efforts are being made to replace a post office and petrol station, the lack of which is viewed very "inconvenient!"

### **4 Fitness for work**

With all the changes in the work environment, the need to ensure 'fitness for work' is essential, through re-training, upskilling or apprenticeships. Great store is held in achieving the highest standards in education, but this does not guarantee the development of life skills. A willingness to work, attentiveness, time-keeping, appearance etc. are all as important to core skills when interacting in business.

The Mayor recently organised an Apprenticeship seminar at which 90+ participants discussed the merits of apprenticeships and the associated life skills achieved.

## **5 Infrastructure Impact**

One of the downsides of major success is the impact it has on the locality. Increased traffic, congestion, the inability to park and pollution all challenge the growth of established and new businesses.

The development growth in Bracknell Forest has inevitably increased traffic congestion, which is exacerbated by the new developments and the inevitable roadworks!

Through the planning process and the various Stakeholder Groups (associated with the larger developments,) providers, businesses and residents attempt to mitigate the conflicting requirements in such a way as to generally maintain the character and attractiveness of the area for all.

It is interesting to note that car sales have eased due to a combination of austerity, more reliability, the 'diesel vs. petrol vs. electric' debate, pollution, running costs and fuel economy.

Unfortunately, improvements to public transport systems are generally frustrated by complexity, cost and delivery. However, BFC lobbying and local pressure groups still promote the need for alternative methods of transport including National Rail and Airport links.

## **6 Environmental Impact**

Part of the success in retaining and attracting new business rests with the desire to make the place a good environment for work, education and recreation.

The BFC Local Plan, in consultation with all those involved, including business, educational and recreational interests, has and will continue to shape the environment attempting to preserve the environment within the needs for more housing.

Discussions with the Local Trader Association give an insight into the challenges they experience in attracting people into their shops. Environmental concerns are high on the list, especially street scene and parking.

## **7 Housing**

The significant housing programme in Berkshire has done little (so far) to make houses 'affordable.' The challenge for growing new businesses is access to viable accommodation. Ultimately, this issue could frustrate the creation and longevity of new businesses.

## **8 Bracknell Forest - Economic & Skills Development Partnership (ESDP)**

Bracknell Forest Economic & Skills Development Partnership facilitates and promotes the continued economic development of Bracknell Forest. The

partnership acts as the voice of business and brings together representatives from the private, public and education sectors, supported by the Business Champion.

## **9 Thames Valley Berkshire Local Economic Partnership (TVB LEP)**

Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership is a business-led, multi-sector partnership mandated by government to lead activities that drive local economic growth. To date they have secured and allocated £182m of UK and European public funds to deliver a wide range of initiatives in the Thames Valley Berkshire area.

One LEP director (Campbell Christie – CEO, Bracknell & Wokingham College) and Cllr Marc Brunel-Walker are members of the Economic Skills and Development Partnership. As a result, Bracknell Forest Council continues to significantly benefit from their membership.

## **10 Networking**

Business networks help business people connect with other managers and entrepreneurs to further each other's business interests by forming mutually beneficial business relationships.

The need for businesses to network is clear. Organisations such as the Thames Valley LEP, BFC Economic Skills & Development Partnership, Bracknell Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, various Business Forums, Stakeholder Groups, Education establishments and local Councils; all provide an opportunity information sharing and partnerships.

The role of Business Champion has been to participate in and inform (both formally and informally) the various organisations of the needs and pressures of business enterprises. Also, to get directly involved with the challenges of small businesses, including escalating Business Rates, issues affecting the environment and planning and supporting the impact of closures such as post offices and petrol stations.

## **11 Conclusion**

It is a decade since the UK economy peaked ahead of one of the most severe recessions in recent history. Ten years on, the UK is in a relatively strong position despite the uncertainties of Brexit: employment is at record levels, growth has been steady and business activity continues to rise.

However, whilst Great Britain may have record employment, wages have not kept up with inflation. The cumulative effect of inflation has pushed up prices by 33% since 2007. Wages have only risen by 15%. The economy is growing, but real wages are falling and living standards are not rising.

Article 50 was triggered in March 2017 - started the 2 year departure from the EU. However, due to the 'transition period,' complete freedom from direct EU controls will now extend to January 2021.

In the meantime, BF Council officers, Executive Members and Champions continue to promote the business and educational sectors, which includes aspects around the environment, infrastructure, health and housing provision.

Unrestricted

The Lexicon has given both existing and new business a very strong and vibrant place to grow, employing several thousand residents.

**Councillor Bob Wade**

[bob.wade@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:bob.wade@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

## Commuters' Champion Councillor Harrison



### Overview

Over the past year, Bracknell Forest's commuters, including yours truly have benefitted from the completion of the longer platforms and the introduction of ten car trains. The improved ticket hall in Bracknell with a seating area has provided some comfort during the cold, wet winter months.

In a previous year's report, slow services from Bracknell to Waterloo and overcrowding were identified as passengers' top two priorities. The Department for Transport has attempted to address these concerns during the franchising process by requiring bidders to explain how they will increase capacity and cut journey times. The longer trains already introduced have helped with the overcrowding and SWR plan to introduce a different style of carriage towards the end of the year, to provide more space when passengers are having to stand. It is also planned to remove the First Class designated areas to provide more space.

Rail passengers have experienced some significant disruption to services and will also have noticed the change in the franchisee on the Reading to Waterloo line from South West Trains to First MTR South Western Trains (branded South Western Railway.)

Ironically, this has been caused primarily by attempts by Network Rail and SWR to improve the passenger experience to meet commitments made to the Department for Transport as part of the franchise bid.

As part of the biggest rail modernisation programme in over one hundred years, some delays were caused by signalling work overrunning into the morning peak. Rail safety systems require that only one train may be present on a section of track at any time. The investment in the signalling will allow the sections of track controlled by each signal to be shorter and therefore more trains to be on the railway at the same time.

The RMT has also been taking industrial action in protest against the possible introduction of trains where the driver controls the opening and closing of the passenger doors. Under the present situation where the guard unlocks the doors, delays occur when the guard is caught up with selling tickets, assisting passengers or dealing with fare evasion and is in the wrong place when the train stops at a station. There are also occasions when trains are delayed from departing due to "lacking a member of staff." Allowing drivers, who are after all highly trained, safety conscious professionals, to control the doors could improve punctuality and reliability of services while reducing planned station dwell time could allow shorter travel times. SWR has stated it plans to keep the second member of staff on the trains, but the RMT do not accept the assurances.

The long running works at London Bridge station have now been largely completed, meaning commuters from Bracknell can travel on a simple London Terminals ticket

into the City of London, with a single change at Waterloo East, without needing to use the Underground.

Councillor Harrison would like to thank Officers and Members of the Council for their support in funding improvements to commuter services.

## **Activity**

### ***Rail Services***

#### **Bracknell Station Facilities**

The Commuters' Champion has regularly visited Bracknell Railway Station and seen the completion of the improvement works.

#### Delay Repay

SWR have joined the "Delay Repay" scheme where passengers whose journeys have been delayed more than 15 minutes can claim a refund into their bank accounts with a simple form online. The system seems to be working well and the Commuters' Champion has benefitted from a number of refunds and shared the link on social media for the benefit of other passengers when they complain about train delays.

#### Timetable Changes

As part of its bid to run the South Western franchise, SWR has committed to reduce journey times. While this is welcome, the revised timetable on which SWR consulted achieves this in part by reducing the frequency of stops at lesser used stations. This would impact Martins Heron station and a number of passengers have expressed their concern.

The Commuters' Champion has taken the issue up with SWR and along with the Ward Members for Harmans Water and the Executive Member for Economic Development, encouraged passengers to take part in the consultation.

It is likely that the revised timetable does not take into account the additional housing proposed in the emerging Local Plan. This new evidence will be used to urge SWR to reconsider the downgrading of Martins Heron and restore four trains an hour during peak times. The Commuters' Champion has lobbied SWR to achieve its faster journey times by use of technology, rather than by inconveniencing passengers.

### ***Road Transport***

The Commuters' Champion has participated in the Highways England Customer Forums to contribute feedback on the subject of the ongoing M3 Smart Motorway road works.

The Commuters' Champion is a nominated substitute on the Berkshire Local Transport Body and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP.) This body allocates devolved Central Government grants to strategic projects across Berkshire. The Commuters' Champion often attends, in addition to the Bracknell Forest Council's Executive Members and Officers, to stay informed and to help make Bracknell Forest's case for transport schemes that benefit our residents.

Unrestricted

Bracknell Forest Council has made a number of successful bids over the past few years which have funded new roads such as the Warfield Link road and junction capacity improvements to keep the traffic moving.

**Councillor John Harrison**

[john.harrison@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:john.harrison@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

## Older People's Champion Councillor Thompson



For the year to the end of March 2018 the principal focus has been on transformation within the Council, due to the necessity to curtail expenditure so as to be able to meet commitments and maintain services. Visible evidence of this is the move from the Council offices at Easthampstead House to Time Square.

Furthering the use of technology as part of this with a drive towards a paperless society has proved a challenge and will continue to do so. My concern in this connection is that in particular older people are not excluded. I am pleased to note that arrangements are in place to cater for the whole community.

Home based Social Care to enable residents to stay at home is the direction to which services have moved. Bracknell Forest 'Help Yourself' is a community website designed to help connect people to information, activities and services to stay independent and well. Alongside this the Council is securing more care home provision for residents where this is needed.

During the year the Care Quality Commission carried out a review of the local system in Bracknell Forest. I was one of those who met with the Commission. In October they issued a positive report finding that there was a system-wide commitment to serve the people of Bracknell Forest well, with good quality health and social care services being provided in a timely way.

Making care as person centred as possible and putting people in control of their care is at the heart of the plans to transform social care. More, older people than ever before are being supported through the use of personal care budgets and direct payments to arrange their own care the way they choose. This is now well embedded as the first choice option for people with care and support needs.

Last year I mentioned isolation and loneliness. Progress has been made in reducing this, but it is still with us. It is something where each one of us can help.

A significant change is the way that the Council is addressing this. For example, the Adult Social Care Health and Housing Department has recruited two staff members (community connectors) who will work with people to bring them back into the community and encourage those who are lonely to take up hobbies and make friends.

Public Health is also providing social prescribers who will work with health professionals and with the community connectors to support vulnerable and lonely people.

Generally I have continued my other activities on Overview and Scrutiny, Licensing & Safety, Planning, Governance & Audit and Performance Review and as a trustee of Age Concern Bracknell Forest and, as previously, ensure with these I give due regard the interests of Older People.

I have continued as Chairman of the Access Group which provides a positive channel for residents and interest groups to address their concerns

Matters I mentioned in last year's report included dementia, GP provision, general wellbeing, adult education and parks open spaces. These remain in focus.

Heatherwood Hospital is the subject of improvement works to include a planned care centre. This can be seen in the context of partnerships to assimilate the NHS working with social care and the voluntary sector - something to keep a close eye on in 2018.

The latter end of 2017 saw the opening of the Lexicon complex in the centre of Bracknell. The Lexicon is visitor friendly and is a place to go to shop and relax in a safe environment.

The interests and concerns of Older People are diverse as are organisations willing and able to help. Apart from the information available on the Council's website, information as to voluntary and community services can be accessed through Involve, the locally based community support organisation.

I commend this report to the Council.

**Councillor Clifton Thompson**

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## **Voluntary Sector Champion Councillor Finnie**



The importance of the role played by the Voluntary Sector in our Borough should never be underestimated, as we all benefit from their wonderful contribution.

Our youth organisations including the Guides, Scouts, Cadets, and many more are mainly organised by volunteers, who give an excellent service preparing youngsters for their future. This service is very important and gives youngsters a tremendous start to the challenges of life. On entering adulthood many of these go on to join leisure clubs, including sporting activities such as football, rugby, hockey, tennis, badminton and many more. Most of these clubs are also organised by volunteers, which again shows our debt to the Voluntary Sector.

Later in life, these “youngsters” will become senior citizens when they will be very grateful for the assistance which our senior citizens receive from many volunteers. Other volunteers give important help to our physically disabled residents and those suffering from mental challenges. We are extremely grateful to those wonderful volunteers who do so much to help those in need.

The volunteers who are helping to keep our libraries open during this period of financial constraint should also be mentioned for their commitment. Our Health Services also benefit from invaluable voluntary assistance and this is something for which we are all very grateful.

There is no doubt that all residents are enormously dependant on the voluntary services and we are very appreciative for the support the voluntary service gives. We are fortunate in Bracknell Forest to have an excellent organisation called INVOLVE (formerly Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action) who do so much to assist voluntary groups when required.

The one common request I receive from many voluntary groups and from Involve is the desire for more volunteers and I ask everyone to consider if they would like to become a volunteer in order to assist others. Many volunteers tell me that they find it really rewarding helping others. If you would be prepared to assist the voluntary sector in some way, please complete the attached form.

**Councillor James G. Finnie**

[jim.finnie@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:jim.finnie@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

I would like to VOLUNTEER and assist the –

**Youth – Disabled – Elderly – Other**

(Please indicate preference)

**Name** .....

**Address** .....

.....

.....

.....

**Email** .....

**Telephone number** .....

**Please return to:-**

**Councillor James G Finnie  
Voluntary Sector Champion  
Bracknell Forest Council  
Time Square  
Bracknell  
Berkshire  
RG12 1JD**