

To: **COUNCIL**
29 November 2017

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Since the Council meeting on 13 September 2017, the Executive has met three times, on 26 September 2017, 17 October 2017 and 21 November 2017. This report summarises decisions taken at the first two meetings by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall. A supplementary report will cover the decisions taken on 21 November 2017.

1.2 Updated Forward Plans are published every Friday and can be viewed online at 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 consider the recommendations set out at paragraphs 5.2.8 and 5.6.5.

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 Procurement Plan for Retender of Property and Motor Insurance Provider

5.1.1 The Executive approved the Procurement Plan for the tender of property and motor insurance policies. The Executive also approved the delegation of the award of the contract(s) to the Director of Resources subject to the new contracts being within budget.

5.1.2 The current insurance contracts were tendered with effect from 1 April 2013, with the initial term of 3 years and the option to extend for a further 1 plus 1 years. These extensions had been utilised and EU procurement regulations required the Council to re-tender these contracts for 1 April 2018

5.1.3 The estimated total contract value for the insurances is £3.5m based on a 7 year long term agreement. Insurance is a commodity which the Council is required to have.

Council Strategy & Community Cohesion

5.2 Council Plan Overview Report

- 5.2.1 The Executive noted the Chief Executives latest Council Plan Overview Report covering the first quarter of the 2017/18 financial year (April – June 2017). At the end of the first quarter 129 actions (83%) were on target to be completed within the timescales set; 4 actions (3%) had been completed; 16 actions (10%) were at risk of falling behind schedule and 2 actions (1%) had fallen behind schedule.
- 5.2.2 Progress against the key indicators in the Council Plan was also positive with 33 (80.5%) green – i.e. on, above or within 5% of target; 0 (0%) amber – i.e. between 5% and 10% of target; and 8 (19.5%) red – i.e. more than 10% from target.
- 5.2.3 The first quarter saw the arrival of Ofsted within Children, Young People and Learning, where a team of seven inspectors spent four weeks inspecting services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. Staff and partners rose to the challenge of this comprehensive inspection which led to the overall service being graded as 'Good' with services for Looked After Children, care leavers and adoption 'Outstanding'. This was an exceptionally good outcome.
- 5.2.4 Although the Ofsted inspection delayed work on the Children's Transformation programme, this and the other Transformation projects are progressing well albeit at different stages. The major achievement in this quarter was the completion of the recruitment process for the new support services structure for ICT, HR and Finance. With a 10% reduction in staff (with only six compulsory redundancies) delivering support services, the focus is now on reviewing processes to ensure the new structures are sustainable. These teams have now moved to Time Square. In order to help reinforce that there is more to the new support services arrangements than simply moving staff within the Council, the Corporate Services Directorate has been renamed "Resources". This reflects the One Council ethos and underpins an enabling approach to working alongside other service areas.
- 5.2.5 Of the indicators that are red, the main area of concern is the increase in referral rates into children's social care. This is one of the key areas being focused on by the Children's Transformation Programme in order to understand what might be behind this increase and reduce it by providing a more comprehensive and integrated early support offer..
- 5.2.6 In February, the Executive approved plans for the joint commissioning of Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) care home beds in Bracknell Forest. This involved entering into a funding agreement with NHS and Local Authority partners to finance the development of a Full business case in respect of developing a new care home on part of the Heathlands site. The total projected capital cost of the nursing home is £10m (including contingencies). Of this total, contributions of £3.123m are required from the CCG and Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead. However, it is unclear whether the CCG's contribution will be paid as a one off capital payment, or on an on-going basis on the bed price. The CCG has made a bid for a capital grant within the STP from the NHS of £3m for this project, and when the outcome of this bid is known, this will determine how the CCG will make its contribution. Council is therefore asked to agree to provide up to £7m of capital funding as Bracknell Forest's contribution to the scheme, noting that £3m of this will be met by the CCG in some way so will not fall as a cost to the Council.

5.2.7 The Executive also noted the intention to submit a joint bid with the other five Berkshire Unitary Authorities to be a pilot area for localisation of National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).

5.2.8 RECOMMENDED that Council approve the provision of up to £7m of capital funding as Bracknell Forest's contribution to the Heathlands EMI scheme, noting that £3m of this will be met by the CCG in some way so will not fall as a cost to the Council as detailed in Appendix B (an extract from the Council Plan Overview Report) to this Executive report.

Adult Services, Health & Housing

5.3 Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2016/17

5.3.1 The Executive noted the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report.

5.3.2 The Care Act 2014 states that each local authority's Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB) must publish an annual report detailing what the SAPB has done during the year to achieve its main objectives, what each member organisation has done to implement the strategy as well as detailing the findings of any Safeguarding Adults Reviews (previously known as Serious Case Reviews) and subsequent action.

The report details the breadth of activity undertaken by Board members and identifies the achievements against the Boards development plan during 2016/17.

During 2016/17 the Bracknell Forest and the Windsor and Maidenhead Safeguarding Adult Boards endorsed the proposal to merge and to create a new single Bracknell Forest and Windsor and Maidenhead SAB. The new board arrangements commenced on 1 July 2017. In line with the requirements set out in the Care Act the new joint Board will continually develop the strategic objectives and consult/take into account feedback from the public during the year.

5.4 Residential Nursing Care Service Contract Award

5.4.1 The Executive has approved the procurement plan for Adult Social Care, Health and Housing to enter into a maximum of four block contracts to purchase a maximum of twenty two nursing beds with local providers and that the contract award decision should be delegated to the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing.

5.4.2 Since 2013/14; the Council has seen an overall reduction of 205 residential and nursing beds with the closure of six homes. Over the period the demand has not reduced leading to much higher prices. Recent cost modelling evidences that the situation is getting worse. Other Berkshire local authorities have reported they are experiencing the same problems, as care managers for the limited beds available.

5.4.3 Whilst there are historic placements at the usual rates, recent placements are being made at much higher rates. In January 2017 taking into account all active nursing placements, the average weekly rate for a nursing bed was £827.88. However, the average price for new placements, made in this financial year, was £937.12 per week.

- 5.4.4 A large number of beds are now being sold privately at well above market value, leaving providers less inclined to sell to social services or enter into a block contract at competitive rates. However, as two new nursing homes were seeking business from the private sector and local authorities to fill their beds, an opportunity had arisen to purchase beds by way of a block contract at a more competitive rate than currently being paid. This will help contain costs until the new Healthlands project comes on stream.

Planning & Transport

5.5 Bracknell Forest Tree Strategy

- 5.5.1 The Executive has approved the draft Tree Strategy for public consultation. The Strategy will form the overarching framework by which the Council will approach the management of trees, both directly and indirectly on public and private land.
- 5.5.2 The Executive also agreed that, subject to the outcome of that public consultation, the strategy should be approved by the Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services & Public Protection.
- 5.5.3 Bracknell Forest is the third most forested authority in the country, with an independent survey identifying that 39.8% of the borough is covered by tree canopy (Bluesky, 2014). These trees define the character of Bracknell Forest and represent a significant natural infrastructure asset from which the Borough's residents derive multiple benefits.

To continue benefiting from this resource the council will require a co-ordinated approach to maintain the forest of Bracknell while meeting legal duties and management responsibilities, which fall to the authority as both a tree owner and a democratic body with specific responsibilities relating to trees.

- 5.5.4 Without a strategy, tree management across the borough would continue on a case-by-case basis without reference to a public policy document.

Children, Young People & Learning

5.6 Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2017 – 2019

- 5.6.1 The Executive is recommending the adoption of the Youth Justice Plan 2017-19.
- 5.6.2 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on Local Authorities to prepare a Youth Justice Plan to set out how Youth Justice services will be delivered locally within available resources. The statutory partners are the Council, National Probation Service, Police, and National Health Service.
- 5.6.3 The Plan was written in the same format as the Bracknell Forest Community Safety Plan 2017-2019, as the Community Safety Partnership had overarching governance responsibility for the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and the Youth Justice and Community Safety plans were closely aligned.

The Plan set out the strategic priorities for the period 2017 -2019 and a refresh of the Plan will be undertaken in 2018.

- 5.6.4 Within Bracknell Forest, governance of the YOS is provided by the YOS Performance Management Board who report into the Bracknell Forest Community Safety

Partnership. The YOS Management Board meets quarterly and is comprised of the Community Safety Partnership members who have statutory responsibility for YOS funding

5.6.5 RECOMMENDED that the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2017-19 be approved. (Appendix D to this Executive report)

5.7 Children, Young People & Learning Post Ofsted Action Plan

5.7.1 The Executive noted the Ofsted report arising from the inspection carried out in May 2017 and published on 14 July 2017.

5.7.2 A team of seven inspectors carried out the following tasks:

- Evaluate and explore a sample of children's cases in order to judge the quality of front-line practice and management and the difference this makes to the lives of children, young people, their families and carers
- Test the decision-making at all stages of a child's journey
- Shadow staff in their day-to-day work
- Observe practice in multi-agency meetings
- These activities included discussions with social work staff, including their managers and other professionals working with the child or young person as well as meetings with children, young people, parents and carers

5.7.3 The team concluded that the overall effectiveness of Bracknell Forest services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers are good, with areas of outstanding practice. Five relatively minor areas for improvement were also identified which will be addressed as part of the Action Plan.

5.7.4 The Executive endorsed the action plan and departmental vision following the Ofsted inspection.

5.7.5 The Executive formally recorded the Council's thanks to partners and staff on the successful outcome of this inspection.

5.8 Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report

5.8.1 The Executive noted the key messages and recommendations made in the annual report of the LSCB for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

5.8.2 The report set out the work included within the recently revised Safeguarding Business Plan 2017-18 which enhanced the previous plan that had shaped the work of the LSCB during the period.

5.8.3 The report indicated the strength of partnership working across the Borough, driving a number of initiatives, including increasing strategic links between local strategic partnerships and continuing to promote regional collaboration and national links. There was also particular reference to the learning and associated progress that has been made locally, reflecting a stronger culture of constructive challenge and a commitment to ongoing improvement; evidenced by the completion of a number of actions within the LSCB Challenge log.

5.8.4 Within the key messages, it was noted that there had been an 'enormous amount of good work undertaken across Bracknell Forest'.

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 – 26 September 2017 and 17 October 2017

Contact for further information

Hannah Stevenson, Resources - 01344 352308

Hannah.stevenson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk