

To: **COUNCIL**
27 February 2019

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 16 January 2019, the Executive met on the 12 February 2019. 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. 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 report.**

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 Business Case for the Creation of a Country Park at Horseshoe Lake

- 5.1.1 The Executive agreed to the implement enhancements at Horseshoe Lake, Sandhurst to create a country park. The Executive also agreed capital funding of £2.6m for the new Horseshoe Lake Country Park as set out in table 2 of the Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration's report.
- 5.1.2 The Parks and Countryside review forms part of the Council's Transformation Programme and over the last nine months it had been exploring ways in which savings could be achieved whilst transforming the way in which the service is delivered. The Gateway review demonstrated that a saving in the region of £475,000 could be delivered over 3 years with a Country Park contributing a potential £85,000 of additional income per annum.
- 5.1.3 Key proposals for the scheme include a newly built and re-located pavilion with an integrated café, function room and ancillary spaces such as toilets, kitchen and

storage. Existing car parking will be expanded to provide 140+ spaces, including disabled parking close to the pavilion. There will be a bespoke natural play area, water sports, changing and shower areas and a storage yard with biomass boiler.

- 5.1.4 Executive Members noted that there were some local concerns related to increased traffic flows on minor roads in the area and accepted that these would need to be dealt with through the normal planning process when the stage of submitting a planning application is reached.

5.2 Council Tax Discretionary Discount and Exemptions

- 5.2.1 The Executive agreed to maintain the current policy of not granting discount to taxpayers of Class A, B, C and D properties (empty and second homes). However, the decided that the Council Tax payable for properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of over 2 years should incur a 100% premium (up from 50%), in accordance with the Rating and Council Tax (empty dwellings) Act 2018 from 1 April 2019.
- 5.2.2 Council Tax Class A, B, C and D properties (Long term empties up to 24 months and second homes) are properties emptied of furniture and effects. The Council taxpayer previously benefited from keeping a property empty and unoccupied as they received a discount. The decision to remove all discounts increases the revenues that can be collected but more importantly encourages owners to bring empty homes into use whilst balancing the needs of owners of second homes and empty properties.

5.3 Capital Programme 2019/20 – 2021/22 and Revenue Budget 2019/20

A separate report on the agenda deals with these items.

5.4 Asset Management Plan 2019-2022

- 5.4.1 The Executive approved the Asset Management Plan 2019-2022. The current Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) was developed in 2016 to cover the period until 2018. The new plan has been developed in consultation with all directorates including a presentation to DMTs and Overview and Scrutiny.
- 5.4.2 The key principles underpinning the Council's Asset Management Strategy are very simple, being:
- i. Maximising the potential of operational land and buildings.
 - ii. Disposing of surplus operational land unless strategically important.
 - iii. Supporting the strategic development of Bracknell town centre, including the possibility of a joint venture.
 - iv. Maintaining a mixed commercial portfolio both historic and new.
 - v. Working with individual services to facilitate projects to improve service delivery.

The plan then sets out a number of objectives for each of the Council's directorates which will enable these principles to be delivered.

5.5 Strategic Review of Delivering Further Regeneration in Bracknell

- 5.5.1 The Executive endorsed the vision for future development in and around Bracknell town centre and noted the findings of the Place Based Review of Bracknell, undertaken as part of the One Public Estate programme. The Executive also

supported the findings of the Strategic Case developed by GVA and Pinsent Masons that considered options to take forward development of key Council owned site and authorised the Director: Finance to commence a procurement process to seek a Joint Venture partner to help deliver the agreed vision and objectives. A final decision on a preferred partner will be taken by the Executive in late 2019.

- 5.5.2 In parallel with development of the strategic case, the Council has been working with the Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) to understand and help secure their plans for the next steps in the development of the Lexicon. A commercial deal is being discussed that could see work commence this Spring on a major refurbishment of Princess Square and subsequently help secure construction of The Deck following the demolition of the ex-Bentalls store. The Executive authorised the Chief Executive to finalise such an agreement with Bracknell Regeneration Partnership.

Planning and Transport

5.6 Adoption of a Local List of Buildings and Structures of Local Architectural or Historic Interest

- 5.6.1 The Executive approved the principle of a local list of buildings of historical or architectural importance to sit alongside the preparation of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (BFLP). The local list will be a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications. The Executive also agreed the first nominations for inclusion on the local list, subject to the nominating bodies and individual property occupiers being notified. Following the notification of the individual property owners, the final decision in respect of the first buildings and structures to be included on the local list is referred to a later meeting of the Executive for approval. Subsequent additions will be confirmed by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport in consultation with the Director of Place, Planning and Regeneration.
- 5.6.2 The Council is required to have up to date evidence about the historic environment as part of the evidence base of the new local plan. This includes the identification of the Borough's heritage assets, whether designated (statutorily Listed) or non – designated and the contribution they make to the historic environment. The inclusion of a building or structure on a local list will be a material consideration in decision making.
- 5.6.3 The selection process has been based on agreed criteria relating to age of the building or structure along with consideration of the following factors:
- architectural interest;
 - historic interest;
 - value as part of a group;
 - contribution to local sense of place;
 - social importance;
 - industrial importance; and,
 - townscape value

5.7 Revised Local Development Scheme

- 5.7.1 The Executive agreed that the Local Development Scheme 2019 – 2022 would come into effect on 20 February 2019.

- 5.7.2 The Council is required to maintain an up to date LDS on its website. Preparation and approval of an up to date LDS aims to give residents, businesses and potential investors a clear indication that the Council remains committed to having an effective planning policy framework in place. Certain policies in the current Development Plan pre-date current planning legislation, policy and guidance and therefore need to be reviewed to provide a robust planning policy framework. The LDS provides the revised timetable for achieving this after the forthcoming elections.

Culture, Resources and Public Protection

5.8 Strategic Procurement Plan for Purchase of IT Hardware and Packaged Software

- 5.8.1 The Executive approved the approach laid out in the Strategic Procurement Plan for IT Hardware and Packed Software to enable ICT Services to procure IT hardware and software covering End User Devices; Network Infrastructure and Services; Server Hardware, Packaged Software and Miscellaneous IT Equipment over the next five years.

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 – 12 February 2019

Contact for further information

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