

TO: COUNCIL
29 FEBRUARY 2012

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider a summary of the decisions made by the Executive since the last meeting of the Council summarised by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Since the Council meeting on 23 January 2012, the Executive has met once, on 21 February 2012.
- 1.3 Agenda item 6 deals in detail with the Executive's recommendations regarding the Council's budget. Agenda item 9 deals with the recommendation arising from this report relating to the establishment of an Appointments Committee. The details are set out in section 1.3 of the annex to this report.

2 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Leader will include reference in his presentation to Council in support of this item.
- 2.2 The next Forward Plan will be published on 1 March 2012 and will be available for public inspection at Easthampstead House in the usual way and will also be available online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk , where you can also find full details on decisions taken by individual portfolio holders.

3 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 3.1 The Borough Solicitor's comments on each item referred to in the annex can be found in the reports presented to the Executive.

Borough Treasurer

- 3.2 The Borough Treasurer's comments on each item referred to in the annex can be found in the reports presented to the Executive.

Equalities Impact Assessment

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

Strategic Risk Management Issues

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

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Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 21 February 2012

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29 FEBRUARY 2012**

1 FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ASSETS

1.1 General Fund Revenue Budget 2012/13/Capital Programme 2012/13 – 2014/15

1.1.1 The Executive approved a set of final recommendations on the Council's budget and capital programme proposals for the coming year, having regard to the consultation responses on the draft proposals published in December 2011 and other decisions taken in relation to Ladybank Older Persons Home, the "In-house" Home Support Service for People with Long Term Conditions and the South Hill Park Annual Revenue Grant, referred to below. The recommendations and background to them are detailed separately in item 6 on this agenda.

1.2 Time Square Refurbishment – Award of Contract

1.2.1 The Executive has agreed that the decision to award the contract for refurbishment works at Time Square should be delegated to the Director of Corporate Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, Resources & Assets.

1.2.2 As the contract value is over £1m, contract standing orders would normally require the decision to be taken by the Executive. However, in this case, a substantial part of the funding for the works is linked to the signing of the variation of the development agreement with BRLP for the regeneration of Bracknell town centre. The timetable for submission of tenders was such that it would not have been possible to complete the evaluation of the tenders and recommend a contractor to the Executive on 21 February 2012. To delay the decision until the next meeting on 20 March 2012 would delay the start of the works and potentially add delay to the delivery of the regeneration of Bracknell town centre given that the timetable for the works is already likely to be very tight. Unless there is a delay in signing the development agreement variation, staff from Seymour House will need to be relocated to Time Square by the end of March 2013 in order for the town centre regeneration to progress in accordance with the currently agreed timetable.

1.3 Senior Management Structure

1.3.1 The Executive has approved a number of minor changes to the Council's senior management structure. These follow the resignation of two chief officers and national changes in Public Health provision which will see responsibility for most of this service transfer to local authorities from 1 April 2013.

1.3.2 The transfer of Public Health functions should be relatively straightforward where there is co-terminosity between PCT and local authority. However, in Berkshire there are currently 2 PCT's (East and West Berkshire), each with its own Director of Public Health and 6 local authorities. There is no prospect of each local authority creating its own Director of Public Health post as the cost would be prohibitive. Consequently, some form of joint arrangement based around one or two strategic cores (possibly an east/west or "urban/rural" split or possibly a single pan-Berkshire core) with local delivery of key public health functions in each of the six Councils will need to be developed. Discussions on this have started between the six authorities, but have been hampered to date by a lack of information from the Department of

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Health on the amount of money to be transferred to each authority as ring-fenced grant to provide the Public Health function.

- 1.3.3 Notwithstanding the need to work with the other five Berkshire councils to assess the format and function of the strategic core, in Bracknell Forest the obvious location for the new Public Health function to be provided locally will be within the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate. Although its activity underpins much of the Council's work and objectives, the Director of Adult Social Care and Health, reporting to the Chief Executive, will need to have overall responsibility for co-ordinating local activity and liaising with whatever strategic core is eventually formed.
- 1.3.4 The links between Housing and Public Health are well established. It is therefore proposed to transfer the Council's Housing function to the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate. This will also build on the existing synergies between the Housing and Social Care functions, fit logically into the Director of Adult Social Care & Health's portfolio and create additional capacity for the Director of Environment, Culture & Communities to co-ordinate the major retendering exercise in relation to environmental contracts in 2014 which it is hoped will lead to significant cost reductions. He will also undertake more income generation work. The addition of a chief officer to the Adult Social Care & Health Directorate will also create extra capacity to deal with the transfer of Public Health functions, when the detailed position becomes clearer during 2012. To reflect this change, the directorate will become known as Adult Social Care, Health & Housing from 1 April 2012.
- 1.3.5 The departure of the Chief Officer, Performance & Resources in Environment, Culture & Communities Directorate has provided the opportunity to reduce the total number of chief officers across the Council and to standardise the devolved support model. The plan is to replace the Chief Officer post in Environment, Culture & Communities with a Head of Service (at a lower grade) covering the essential devolved support functions of finance, human resources, performance and IT. It is intended to apply the same structure in Adult Social Care, Health & Housing from 1 April 2013, when the contract of the equivalent Chief Officer post, who is on a fixed term contract, ends. No changes are proposed in Children, Young People & Learning as its devolved support services are managed differently with the Chief Officer: Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention having responsibility for them and a range of other functions which justify the higher grade for the post. Overall, these changes will generate net savings of around £35K which will be factored in to the Commitment Budget for 2013/14.
- 1.3.6 The post of Chief Officer: Customer Services remains a critical post for further developing plans to reduce the cost of customer contact significantly whilst still maintaining the current high levels of customer satisfaction. The Customer Contact Strategy agreed in July 2011 aims to deliver savings in excess of £100k per annum. However, to be successful, the work will need to be lead and driven by an officer with sufficient seniority and wide experience of customer interfaces and change management. The Executive is therefore recommending that the Council advertises the post on its existing Chief Officer grade. It will be subject to Member appointment and, therefore, Council is recommended to establish an Appointments Committee with delegated power to interview and appoint to the post of Chief Officer: Customer Services. The recommendations and background to them are detailed separately in item 9 on this agenda.

2 CULTURE, CORPORATE SERVICES AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

2.1 South Hill Park Revenue Grant

- 2.1.1 The budget proposals for 2012/13 include a recommendation to make a grant of £419,140 to South Hill Park Trust. The Executive considered a report detailing the South Hill Park centre activities and proposals for the coming year. A draft Partnership Agreement for 2012/13 between the Council and South Hill Park Trust has also been approved as the basis on which the grant is awarded. Payment of the grant is conditional on the Partnership Agreement being signed. The Director of Environment, Culture and Communities has been authorised in consultation with the Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services to agree any necessary changes to the Partnership Agreement including future plans and performance indicators for 2012/13.

3 ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING

3.1 Modernisation of Older People's Services – Consultation on the future of Landbank older person's home with a view to re-providing long term care

- 3.1.1 The Executive has agreed to re-provide the residential care service currently provided at Ladybank through the independent sector. As a result, detailed work has commenced on securing alternative residential or nursing care provision with the few remaining residents and their families.
- 3.1.2 Ladybank is a 1970s building and was built at a time when the standards required of residential care were different. There is now a need for major capital expenditure on the building estimated at over £0.6million and even this would not result in improved accommodation in line with the latest standards. Work to bring the accommodation up to modern standards would also require relocation of the residents and staff for the duration of the works.
- 3.1.3 Increasingly older people are choosing to be cared for at home rather than go into residential care and initiatives such as Home First and Enhanced Intermediate Care have resulted in a drop in the number of people being admitted into long term residential care throughout the borough. During the period September to December 2011 only 3 people were supported into the type of residential care that Ladybank provides. Since mid 2010, Ladybank had been operating with a number of vacant beds and as at 1 February 2012, only five of the facility's 23 spaces were occupied.
- 3.1.4 Implementation of Personalisation and Individualised Budgets is further supporting people to have more choice and control in their lives. Consequently, and in line with emerging national guidance and policy direction as contained in the Vision for Adult Social care, investment and service developments for the future need to be focussed on community based services
- 3.1.5 The feedback from a consultation on the proposed closure of Ladybank resulted in the majority of respondents opposing it. However, taking into account the minimum level of financial investment required (£0.6m) and the savings (£275k pa) of commissioning from the private sector compared to the in house service, plus the decline in demand for residential care, has led the Executive to conclude that Ladybank should close.

3.2 Modernisation of Older People's Services – In house home support service for people with long term conditions

- 3.2.1 The Executive has agreed that home support for people with a long term condition should no longer be provided by an in-house service and should be commissioned from the independent sector.
- 3.2.2 In line with the overarching modernisation strategy for Older People's Services in Bracknell Forest a range of services are currently being remodelled to take a more focused approach to respond to a period of intense change in social care. In addition the Council is facing a challenging period with an increasing demand for social care services with associated budgetary and funding pressures.
- 3.2.3 Through externalisation of home support for people with long term conditions, the Council can significantly reduce costs whilst at the same time stimulate the development of a stronger and more sustainable diverse social care market. This is of significance as Personalisation will bring about changes in the profile of services, with less reliance on council provided services.
- 3.2.4 The independent sector currently provides 90% of the domiciliary care commissioned by the Council. This care is generally well received by the people in Bracknell Forest who receive it and all agencies providing it are regulated and inspected by the Care Quality Commission.
- 3.2.5 Discussions with providers have found that the market has sufficient capacity to deliver services to meet additional demand. Five new providers were recently accepted onto the Bracknell Forest Contracted Provider Approval List and a further six are currently going through the approval process. Furthermore, providers have expressed interest in supporting service developments for new types of provision alongside mainstream homecare.
- 3.2.6 As well as supporting the market developments towards Personalisation and innovating service developments, the re-provision of the service into the independent sector will lead to reduced costs and better value for money. The Executive accepted that a unit cost of £38.16 per hour providing care in house could not be justified when care purchased from the external market would cost just £14.40 per hour.

4 PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Warfield Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption

- 4.1.1 The Executive has adopted the Warfield Supplementary Planning Document and the Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment accompanying it. It sets out 16 development principles based on a range of sustainable development issues. A concept plan is included to indicate a potential layout based on the development principles. A Statement of Consultation has also been approved which details all responses made to both consultations undertaken in the preparation of the SPD and includes any actions proposed.
- 4.1.2 The Supplementary Planning Document has been produced to provide guidance to secure a comprehensive, sustainable, mixed use urban extension of 2,200 dwellings to the north of the neighbourhoods of Whitegrove and Quelm Park. The development will be informed by its semi-rural location with every effort made to retain this character across the site. This will be achieved by a number of measures,

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including the development of a green link called the East to West Greenway. This link will retain and add to hedgerows, trees, ponds and bridleways across the site. The seven character areas detailed in the SPD are intended to ensure that the existing site assets are retained and acknowledged in future development proposals and that only appropriate levels of development are provided in these areas. Additionally, it is envisaged that public access will be improved across the site with the establishment of a Country Park at Cabbage Hill on previously intensively farmed land and the creation of two river parks in the vicinity of The Cut and Bull Brook, improving public access to these areas.

- 4.1.3 The SPD now forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications affecting this area which will be an important part of the Council's five year land supply.

5 EDUCATION

5.1 School Meals Award of Contract

- 5.1.1 The Executive has agreed to delegate approval of the award of a contract for the new school meals service to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning in consultation with the Executive Member for Education.
- 5.1.2 The value of the contract exceeds £1m and, under the Council's Contract Standing Orders, The Executive's approval would normally be required.
- 5.1.3 The existing contract for school meals expires in July 2012 and approval to delegate the decision was sought to provide sufficient time to consult schools on whether they wished to participate in the new contract. This is a decision that would need to be taken by the Governing Body of each school on an individual basis at meetings spread throughout the 2012 spring and summer terms.
- 5.1.4 To ensure that schools have sufficient time to consult, a recommendation on the preferred bidder needs to be issued to schools once the tender process is complete in order to allow sufficient time for contract mobilisation and a contract start date of 24 July 2012 to be successfully met. Any delay following the evaluation of tenders would reduce the time to complete the process.