

TO: COUNCIL  
22 JANUARY 2014

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

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 27 November 2013, the Executive has met twice, on 10 December 2013 and 7 January 2014. This report summarises decisions taken at those meetings by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Updated Forward Plans are published every Friday and are available for public inspection at Easthampstead House in the usual way and 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 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The recommendations at paragraph 4.1.2 of the report are recommended to Council by the Executive.**

**3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Planning and Transport**

**3.1 Blue Mountain Golf Course-Section 52 Agreement**

The Executive recommended that Full Council consider this issue prior to the Executive Member for Planning & Transport making a decision on the potential release of a Section 52 Agreement. A separate report on tonight's agenda deals with the issue.

**3.2 Local Development Scheme 2014-2017**

- 3.2.1 The Council is required to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS) to guide the preparation of planning policy documents to deliver a spatial planning strategy for the Borough over the next three years.
- 3.2.2 As a result of a number of changes in national policy, the Council's current planning framework requires updating. The new LDS needs to reflect these national policy changes and take account of the following:
- Issues arising from the application of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS).
  - The partial revocation of the South East Plan (SEP) in March 2013.
  - The adoption of the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP) in July 2013 and the need to implement its proposals.
  - Changes to permitted development rights and the Use of Classes order (e.g. allowing change of use from offices to residential without the need for planning permission).
  - The need to respond further to the Government's growth agenda and changing role of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

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- The need to review the evidence base.

3.2.3 As a result the Executive has agreed that the Local Development Scheme 2014-2017 should come into effect on 15 January 2014. A number of topic based Local Plans will be produced that together will comprise the Local Plan for Bracknell Forest. This is inevitably a lengthy process and development site allocations for the period beyond 2026 will not be addressed in the near future. Instead, work will be undertaken on the following documents over the next three years:

- Development Management Local Plan
- Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan
- Comprehensive Local Plan

### **3.3 Approval of the Council's Bus Strategy**

3.3.1 The Executive has approved the Bus Strategy and associated Action Plan. This will deliver a range of public transport objectives for the Borough, including the procurement of supported bus services.

3.3.2 The Bus Strategy includes an Action Plan that sets out the headline tasks required to implement it. Important elements of the Action Plan are to introduce new supported bus services whilst working in partnership with commercial service operators to improve current services, extend commercial operations, and potentially facilitate changes to services in order to serve local amenities, for example The Royal Berkshire Bracknell Clinic at Brants Bridge.

3.3.3 The programme to deliver these contracts is very important, both to ensure that the Council provides continuity of operation across the Borough, and that bus services reflect the aims of the Bus Strategy. Revised contracts will be procured later in 2014 giving sufficient time for a smooth transition and appropriate publicity. Existing contracts will, therefore, continue in their current form until that time.

3.3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Bus Strategy Working Group played a key part in the development of the Bus Strategy and their comments have been included in both the Strategy and Action Plan. A major consultation process was also carried out from 26 July 2013 to 15 October 2013 which included the general public, bus users, bus operators, representatives from stakeholder groups and neighbouring local authorities.

3.3.5 The results of the consultation exercise and the full strategy have been published on the Council's website.

### **Transformation and Finance**

#### **4.1 Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2016/17/Revenue Budget 2014/15**

4.1.1 The Executive has approved the Capital Programme 2014/15 – 2016/17 and the Revenue Budget 2014/15 for consultation. Both will be considered in full at the Council meeting on 26 February 2014.

**4.1.2 Meanwhile, the Executive RECOMMENDS that Council approve the allocation and associated virements resulting from additional grants received in year as set out in paragraph 5.30 and Annex H of the Borough Treasurer's report attached as Appendix A.**

#### **4.2 Annual Audit Letter**

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- 4.2.1 The Executive has noted the External Auditors Annual Audit Letter 2012/13. This provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council. This will also be considered by the Governance and Audit Committee on 28 January 2013.
- 4.2.2 The external auditor, Ernst & Young, is required to provide the Council with an Annual Audit Letter. The letter summarises the findings from the 2012/13 audit and comprises two elements; the audit of the financial statements and the external auditor's assessment of the Council's arrangements to achieve value for money in the use of resources.
- 4.2.3 Members will be pleased to note that the auditor has made no recommendations within the report that the Council is required to address. This is the first time that absolutely no recommendations have been made by the auditor.

### **Children, Young People and Learning**

#### **5.1 School Places Plan**

- 5.1.1 The Executive has received and noted the School Places Plan for 2013 – 2018.
- 5.1.2 The annual review of pupil forecasts and school places is a key process for the Council, ensuring that a school place continues to be available for every child in the Borough who wants one. The School Places plan enables the Council to meet its statutory duties in relation to school places.
- 5.1.3 The Plan takes into account future housing plans, numbers of children on roll in schools and demographic data. It includes forecasts of school intake and total numbers on roll and calculates the impact of this on school places.
- 5.1.4 Within the Borough there is a continuing trend of increasing pupil numbers and pressures on school capacity particularly on the intake year in primary schools. This year's forecasts indicate that there could be a 23% increase by 2018. These high increases are part of a national trend, but Bracknell Forest is experiencing one of the highest growth rates in the country. At secondary level, the forecast increase in the number of pupils by 2018 is 893 (14%). As Members are acutely aware, the school places plan identifies particularly heightened pressure in north Bracknell where the annual shortfall is expected to be 274 places (17%) by 2018. There has also been an increase in recent years in the number of children with statements of special educational needs in Bracknell Forest and additional capacity to meet these school placements will also be required in the future.
- 5.1.5 In recent years the forecasts have been robust in forecasting accurately numbers of school places required, particular for the following school year. They also give a good guide for the years immediately following this. Last year's forecasts for 2013 were, for example, within 1% of the actual numbers of roll.

### **Economic Development & Regeneration**

#### **6.1 Thames Valley Berkshire City Deal**

- 6.1.1 The Executive has noted the Thames Valley Berkshire City Deal has been signed and agreed the appointment of a Joint Committee of the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities to manage and deliver the agreed outcomes of the City Deal initiative.
- 6.1.2 The City Deal was signed off by all the Berkshire authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnership, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Cities on 28 October 2013. There are two main components to the Berkshire City Deal. These are the

Employment and Skills Gateway and Business Growth Hub. The Bracknell Forest element of the City Deal will be co-ordinated through the Economic and Skills Development Partnership which will focus on business engagement and employment brokerage for 16-24 year olds.

- 6.1.3 A minimum requirement in terms of governance is the establishment of a Joint Committee arrangement for decision making between local authorities covered by the City Deal. It is proposed, therefore, that the decision making in relation to the City Deal will be delegated by the six authorities to a Joint Committee comprising of one Councillor from each. Reading Borough Council will be designated as the Accountable Body, with Bracknell Forest Borough Council fulfilling the role of Secretariat to the Committee.

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

### **7.1 Joint Commissioning Strategy for People with Dementia 2014-19**

- 7.1.1 The Executive has approved the Dementia Strategy 2014-2019 and has agreed the development of an Action Plan, driven by the Strategy, by the Dementia Partnership Board.
- 7.1.2 The current 2009-2014 Dementia Strategy runs until the beginning of 2014. Since it was agreed there have been significant changes in both the local and national policy landscapes. The 2014-2019 Dementia Strategy takes into account:
- relevant legislation and national guidance
  - an analysis of the needs of the local population and how these are likely to change in the future
  - an overview of the strengths and limitations of current support and services
  - resources currently available.
- 7.1.3 A 12 week consultation has also taken place with people in Bracknell Forest for their views on what the local issues are. This identified:
- better dementia awareness
  - improved information and advice
  - support for carers
  - personalised support and independent living
  - dementia friendly town centre and local communities
  - early diagnosis and intervention
  - joined up support
  - transport
  - improved support in care homes and during transition
  - GP services
  - support in general hospitals
  - specialist services
  - support for younger people with dementia

Each of these priorities are reflected in the strategy and should ensure that people living with dementia in Bracknell Forest have choice and control to manage their mental wellbeing and live as independently as possible.

## **Council Strategy and Community Cohesion**

### **8.1 Corporate performance Overview Report**

- 8.1.1 The Executive has received the Corporate Performance Overview Report for the first quarter of 2013/14 (April to June 2013). At the end of this quarter the Council

continued to perform well. Of the 307 actions 246 were either complete or on target and data relating to the key performance indicators show that 49 (82%) were classified as being green (on target), 4 (7%) were amber, with only 7 (11%) being red.

**9 Appointments and Delegations by the Leader of the Council**

- 9.1 The Leader has delegated to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities decisions relating to the processing and licensing of scrap metal merchants.

**10 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS**

Borough Solicitor

- 10.1 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

- 10.2 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

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

Strategic Risk Management Issues

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

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 10 December 2013

Executive Agenda – 7 January 2014

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