

TO: COUNCIL
16 JULY 2014

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 30 April 2014, the Executive has met twice, on 20 May 2014 and 24 June 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. Full details on the decisions taken by individual portfolio holders can also be accessed online through the Council's website.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations at paragraphs 3.3.5, 3.4.5 and 3.7.6 of the report are recommended to Council by the Executive

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Adult Services, Health & Housing

3.1 Commissioning of Sexual Health Services

- 3.1.1 The provision of sexual health services is a key area of spend for Public Health and as part of its public health duties the Council is mandated to provide sexual health services for local residents.
- 3.1.2 Work undertaken during 2013/14 has enabled the current block contract to be split according to usage rather than population size and removed service costs not attributable to the Council; a situation that has resulted in potentially significantly lower costs for Bracknell Forest Council going forward.
- 3.1.3 At the same time a review of the current service provision has shown that the existing main provider, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, performs well against national standards and receives strong positive feedback from service users. The current contract is considered to be excellent value for money and detailed financial modelling exercises have indicated that if the Council were to move from the current block contract format and tender for a tariff based system there is likely to be a significant increase in costs for a similar service model.
- 3.1.4 Taking these two issues together, the Executive has given its approval to the extension of the current contract with Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust for the commissioning of sexual health services for a further three years.

- 3.1.5 The lower costs resulting from the new method of splitting the contract and retaining the current terms and conditions will allow for greater investment in programmes tailored specifically to the needs of Bracknell Forest's residents for example extending the hours of the Garden Clinic at Skimped Hill Health Centre and increasing the range of services available through youth drop in clinics.

Transformation and Finance

3.2 Capital Programme Outturn 2013/14

- 3.2.1 The Capital Programme for 2013/14 consisted of £41.832million on projects and programmes. Performance during the 2013/14 financial year was broadly consistent with previous years with a projected outturn of £24.027million (57% of the approved budget). However, the capital budget is based on scheme approvals and does not reflect the anticipated cash flow. A more accurate reflection of performance can be obtained from monitoring the use of the cash budget. This shows that actual spend was 99.6% of the cash budget.

- 3.2.2 Departmental carry forwards totalling £17.717million have been approved and this has been reflected in the Council's cash budgets for the current year. These carry forwards will be used to finance projects that are either close to being completed or are contractually committed and underway.

- 3.2.3 The overall capital programme is under spent against the budget and Members' attention is drawn to two significant variances:

- £37,800 Corporate Services under spend due to less spending on ICT capital projects whilst PSN work was prioritised
- South Hill Park's ground improvement works are now complete and the final grant claim has been paid by the Heritage Lottery Fund resulting in an £28,100 underspend by Environment, Culture and Communities

- 3.2.4 Funding for capital projects is automatically permitted to roll forward for one year. After this, funding may only be automatically rolled forward if work on a project has commenced onsite. Work is planned to commence on a number of capital schemes carried forward from 2012/13 in the near future and the Executive has therefore approved the carry forward of £1.193million to enable these projects to start.

- 3.2.5 The following changes to the approved 2014/15 Capital Programme were approved:

- The £0.199million Community Capacity Grant will be used to provide alternatives to residential care enabling people to live in the most appropriate accommodation for them
- The Department of Education has re-profiled the Targeted Basic Needs Grant Allocation to reflect expenditure levels and £1.358million of the Council's allocation has been moved from 2013/14 to 2014/15.
- £0.165million of additional Section 106 funding was received and this will be used for a scheme at Easthampstead Park Community School
- Allocations made under the Government's Local Pinch Point Fund to tackle road congestion and improve the strategic road network have resulted in an additional £1 million of funding being made available. This will be used to finance works at Twin Bridges releasing £1.000million for future town centre related works.

3.3 Revenue Expenditure Outturn 2013/14

- 3.3.1 The Executive has noted the expenditure, budget carry forwards, earmarked reserves and virements relating to the 2013/14 budget. For the sixteenth successive year the Council has demonstrated strong fiscal management and delivered its budget within the levels agreed in February 2013.
- 3.3.2 The Outturn expenditure for 2013/14 stands at £84.207 million, this represents an under spend of £1.032 million compared to the approved budget. There have been a number of transfers to or from reserves during the year including the Insurance Reserve (-£0.281million), Public Health Reserve (-£0.286million) and Schools Reserve (-£0.360million).
- 3.3.3 The Executive has approved a number of earmarked reserves which are excluded from general balances including funding to support: future expenditure within the Dedicated Schools Block, the Education Library Service, S106 and Travel Plan Monitoring, early intervention work, economic development and the Members' Initiative Fund.
- 3.3.4 In line with financial regulations that require virements between £0.050million and £0.100million to have Executive approval, this has been duly given. Virements in excess of £0.100million require Council approval and these are set out at annex B of this report.
- 3.3.5 The Executive recommends to Council that:**
- i. the Treasury Management Annual Report (attached as Annex A) be approved.**
 - ii. the virements over £0.100million (attached as Annex B) be approved**

Culture, Corporate Services & Public Protection

3.4 Community Safety Partnership Plan 2014-2017

- 3.4.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on Community Safety Partnerships to publish an annual strategic assessment and a three year partnership plan setting out how the Partnership intends to reduce crime, disorder and substance misuse.
- 3.4.2 The Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership has agreed that underneath its agreed priority themes of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour the new three year Plan will focus on the following priorities:
- domestic abuse
 - burglary dwelling
 - drug offences
 - internet related crime
 - non rape sexual offences
 - robbery of personal property
 - vehicle offences
 - violence against the person
 - youth crime prevention
 - environmental anti-social behaviour
 - nuisance anti-social behaviour
 - Personal anti-social behaviour

3.4.3 The Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership is widely recognised as being one of the most effective in the Thames Valley, delivering its work through a series of sub groups and collaboration with other partnerships. In 2013/14 the Partnership's work contributed towards:

- A 5% reduction in all crime
- A 25% reduction in burglary dwelling
- A 15% reduction in criminal damage
- An 8% reduction in violence with injury

In addition, there were over 3,500 fewer victims of crime in 2013/14 when compared to 2008/09 and crime levels are at their lowest levels in over 20 years.

3.4.4 The implementation of the Community Safety Plan is the responsibility of all the statutory partners in the Partnership. The Council makes a major contribution to this work through its various functions including: child protection, youth services, education, social services, planning, licensing and environmental health. Adoption of the wide ranging and comprehensive Community Safety Plan will help the Council and its partners continue to drive forward improvements for all communities in Bracknell Forest. The Executive therefore recommend that Council approve and adopt the Community Safety Plan 2014-2017 (Attached as Annex C)

3.4.5 The Executive recommends to Council that the Community Safety Plan 2014-2017 (attached as Annex C) be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework.

3.5 Corporate Performance Overview Report

3.5.1 The Executive has noted the performance of the Council over the fourth and final quarter (January to March) of the 2013/14 financial year.

3.5.2 Analysis of the 2013/14 municipal year showed that that Council again achieved good levels of performance. Of the 255 key action and objectives included in departmental service plans 90% were completed/on target and 78% of the Council's key performance indicators were on target at the year end.

3.5.3 The Executive expressed its thanks to all Council staff for the hard work that has been put in to achieve these positive performance levels.

Planning and Transport

3.6 Community Infrastructure Levy Revised Charging Schedule and Draft Obligation Supplementary Planning Document for Consultation

3.6.1 The introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for collecting contributions towards infrastructure provision from developers was regulated for in the Planning Act 2008. The introduction of this standardised tariff system will provide the Council with an important mechanism by which it will be able to secure funding to both create new infrastructure and improve existing infrastructure to help support the growth set out in the Borough's Development Plan. Before CIL charging can be implemented, however, the Council is required to publish and consult on its draft charging schedule and then submit it for examination.

- 3.6.2 In line with this requirement, the Executive has approved the Council's Draft Charging Schedule, Draft Regulation 123 List of Infrastructure Projects for which CIL would be charged, the draft Instalments Policy and the draft Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation. Authorisation has also been given to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport to approve any minor modifications to the Draft Charging Schedule arising from the consultation process.
- 3.6.3 The consultation will run for a period of six weeks between 4 July and 15 August 2014 and will be available both online and in hard copy at public libraries, council offices and parish and town council offices. The results of the consultation will be reported to the examiner undertaking the examination of the draft Charging Schedule prior to its anticipated adoption and implementation in the Spring 2015.
- 3.6.4 The Council must be able to demonstrate that it has struck an appropriate balance between securing funding and the impact of CIL on the economic viability of development such that the strategy for planned development will not be significantly affected. To support this, and ensure that CIL is set at a justifiable and defensible level, consultants were commissioned to assess the viability of development in the Borough and provide up to date evidence of development costs and values. CIL Charge setting is not a one off exercise and levels will be reviewed and revised at intervals to ensure that changes in development viability brought about by market conditions are responded to.

Children, Young People and Learning

3.7 Children and Young People's Plan 2014-2017

- 3.7.1 Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements to secure co-operation amongst a number of partners set out in the Act. The approval and adoption of the Borough's third Children and Young People's Plan will help the Council and its partners continue to improve the quality of lives of the Borough's children and young people and their families.
- 3.7.2 The three year strategic plan provides a defining statement of the overall strategy and ambitions for children and young people in the Borough. It identifies the following six key evidence based priorities which are considered to be essential to ensuring improved outcomes for children, young people and families:
- Raising levels of attainment and pupil progress across all phases of learning for all pupils
 - Improving physical and emotional health and wellbeing from conception to birth and throughout life
 - Safeguarding and protecting children and young people
 - Improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people in the Borough
 - Strengthening families through effective multi-agency co-ordination and support
 - Reducing the impact of poverty on children and young people
- 3.7.3 The Plan is intended to provide a strategic framework for all agencies providing services for children and young people and has been developed using a wide evidence base including recommendations from Ofsted inspections, peer reviews,

local and national research, a needs analysis and significant consultation with the Borough's children and young people.

3.7.4 To secure the maximum benefit possible from the Plan, key priorities have been matched up across partnerships and the actions in the action plan will be led by a range of partners including the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Thames Valley Police.

3.7.5 The Executive recommends to Council that the Children and Young People's Plan (attached as Annex D) be adopted as part of the Council's Policy Framework

3.8 Education Transport Policy 2015/16

3.8.1 To ensure compliance with its statutory obligations the Council has approved the Mainstream School Education Transport Policy 2015/16 and the Education Transport Policy for Post 16 for 2014/15.

3.8.2 Under government legislation specified groups of children and young people are provided with free transport. However the Council also has discretion to provide assistance to other children and young people who are not statutorily eligible for assistance. These policies set out: the circumstances under which assistance with transport may be given, the types of transport that may be provided, how decisions about transport are made, how decisions can be reviewed and the standards of service that parents and carers can expect.

3.9 SIMS and ONE IT Systems Contract Standing Order Waiver

3.9.1 The Executive has approved Contract Standing Order waivers for the Annual Maintenance contract with Capita for both the ONE and SIMS Management Information Systems for a period of six years.

3.9.2 ONE, a database containing detailed pupil information from schools, and SIMS, a suite of software modules used by schools to support all elements of school administration, are well used and well understood by all schools in the Borough and a wide range of council teams providing support to the Borough's schools. Their highly specialised nature means that there is currently no competitive market and it would be difficult to find alternative software that would provide the same functionality and technology links.

3.9.3 In line with the Council's ICT Category Management Strategy negotiations have taken place with Capita to secure the best price for support and maintenance. Capita have also committed to looking at ways to ensure that schools and the Council are not burdened with substantial increases in the next few years. The current agreements will be reviewed annually to assess any significant changes in the marketplace and whether any competitive technologies have become available.

3.10 Education Capital Programme Delegation of Awards of Contract and The Pines Primary School Expansion Award of Contract

3.10.1 As part of the planned expansion of school places in the Borough, the Council intends to create a new Post 16 Centre at Garth Hill College, increasing the school's capacity by 350 places, expand Owlsmoor Primary School to enable an admission number of 90 in every year group and increase Brakenhale School to enable it to have a published admission number of 210 in all year groups.

- 3.10.2 The timescales needed to deliver the projects are such that there may be insufficient time to go through the full Executive process and deliver the schemes for the start of the relevant academic year. Consequently, the Executive has agreed that decisions relating to the award of contracts for these planned expansions are to be delegated to an Executive Committee nominated by the Leader. The decisions made by the Group will be reported to the Care Portfolio Review Group.
- 3.10.3 Approval has also been given to award the contract for Phase 1 of the expansion at The Pines Primary School which will see the school transformed from a one form entry to a two form entry school. Phase 1 works include returning part of the vacant Professional Centre offices back to school use to provide five additional classrooms will be completed in time for the start of the new academic year in September 2014. Phase 2 of the works will enable the expansion of the school to two forms across every year group and will be completed prior to September 2018.

3.11 Recruitment and Retention: Children's Social Care

- 3.11.1 Recruitment and retention of social workers is a challenge, both regionally and nationally. This allied to increased pressure from Agencies and recruitment initiatives in neighbouring authorities has contributed to an increasing difficulty for the Council to recruit to children's social care posts at all levels.
- 3.11.2 To ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties in relation to children's social care it is vital that a high quality team of staff is recruited and retained and the Executive has agreed that the implementation of a Key Staff Retention Payment Scheme should be introduced. The Employment Committee has also agreed to the plan.

4 APPOINTMENTS AND DELEGATIONS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

- 4.1 The Leader has delegated authority to approve a decision to dedicate Council land as public highway if required as part of the regeneration of Bracknell town centre to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities.

5 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 5.1 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

- 5.2 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

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

Strategic Risk Management Issues

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

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 20 May 2014

Executive Agenda – 24 June 2014

Contact for further information

Katharine Simpson, Corporate Services - 01344 352308

katharine.simpson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk