

TO: COUNCIL
25 FEBRUARY 2015

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 21 January 2015, the Executive has met twice, on 27 January 2015 and 10 February 2015. This report summarises decisions taken at these 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

- 2.1 The recommendations at paragraph 5.7.7 and 5.12.2 of the report are recommended to Council by the Executive.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The reasons for recommendation are set out in the supporting information and in the reports considered by the Executive.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None at this time.

4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Council Strategy and Community Cohesion

5.1 Residents Survey 2014

- 5.1.1 The Executive have noted the results of the Residents' Survey 2014 which was undertaken by an independent company, QA Research who undertook a sample telephone survey of 1800 residents from 24 September to 4 November. The quota of calls was set on ward, age, gender and ethnicity to ensure the final sample reflected the demographic profile of the borough.
- 5.1.2 The results are extremely positive. Residents continue to feel that Bracknell Forest is a good place to live and is getting better with 87% responding to this effect, a slight increase since 2012. Residents agreed that there was strong community cohesion in their local area with 94% agreeing that people from different backgrounds get on well together. Around two-thirds of respondents expressed satisfaction with the Council and the majority considered it provides value for money. Encouragingly, there was improvement in both measures since 2012, which in a period of austerity is a notable achievement. Most services provided or supported by the Council generate high levels of satisfaction, although there is always the potential to improve some areas. A majority of residents continue to feel they are at least fairly well informed about Council services.

Transformation and Finance

5.2 General Revenue Budget 2015/16 and Capital Budget 2015/16

- 5.2.1 The Executive has approved recommendations on the Council's budget and capital programme proposals for the coming year. The recommendations and background to them are detailed separately on this agenda.

5.3 Casualty Insurance and Claims Handling Service Tender

- 5.3.1 The Executive has approved the awarding of the contract for Casualty Insurance and Claims Handling Services which is due to commence on the 1 April 2015. In doing so, it agreed that the deductible for casualty insurance be increased from £25,000 to £50,000, and the annual budget provision for insurance deductible payments be increased to £196,000.

Culture, Corporate Services & Public Protection

5.4 South Hill Park Annual Revenue Grant 2015-2016

- 5.4.1 South Hill Park Arts Centre is the Council's main partner in providing an arts venue for the local community. To support the continued development of a successful and effective programme of arts, the Council has included in its budget proposals a grant of £432,640 to South Hill Park Trust. This represents a significant commitment to providing a flagship facility of regional importance within the Borough.

Children, Young People and Learning

5.5 Binfield Learning Village – Delegation of Award of Contract

- 5.5.1 Following the approval in 2014 of the delivery strategy for the new Learning Village and Community Facilities in Binfield, the Executive has considered the process for awarding the contracts for pre-construction services and the main works for the planned Binfield Learning Village. The new Learning Village is due to open in September 2017, which means that the current timetable has limited contingency and the decision on which contractor to appoint using the IESE framework for the pre-construction services is required in April 2015.
- 5.5.2 To ensure momentum is maintained whilst retaining transparency, the Executive has delegated the decision for the award of the contracts for pre-construction services and the main contract (including enabling works) to an Executive Committee which will meet in April.

5.6 The Eastern Road SEN Facility Award of Contract

- 5.6.1 The Executive has approved the awarding of the contract for the construction works to convert the former BROCC (Adult Learning Centre) at Eastern Road into a Special Educational Needs (SEN) facility. The new Eastern Road SEN facility will form part of the Garth Hill School and will provide seven teaching rooms for Years 7 to 13, four living skills fitted out kitchens, Art & Design Technology rooms together with several small rooms for therapy, assembly hall, gym, restaurant and external play and allotment areas. Works are due to start this month to be completed in time for the September 2015 academic year.

Planning and Transport

5.7 Approval of the Bracknell Forest Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule 2015, the CIL Instalment Policy and CIL Regulation 123 Infrastructure List and adoption of the Bracknell Forest Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

5.7.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy will become an important mechanism for creating and improving infrastructure to support growth in the Local Development Plan. It is important that CIL charging is introduced by 6 April 2015 as, after this date, there will be major limitations on the Council's ability to fund major infrastructure through Section 106 contributions.

5.7.2 The Council has followed a lengthy process of consultation, viability assessment and infrastructure planning to devise a set of proposed rates and charging zones. These were set out in a Draft Charging Schedule which was submitted for examination on 8 September 2014. The final examiner's report was received on 16 December 2014 which supported all the Council's proposed rates.

5.7.3 The Executive has approved the Charging Schedule, incorporating the minor modifications required by the Examiner (none of which affect the proposed CIL rates). Full Council decisions are required for the publication of the CIL Charging Schedule and for setting the date for CIL charging to commence.

5.7.4 There are two additional CIL documents that require approval, namely:

- The 'Regulation 123' List of infrastructure projects for which CIL will be charged, and for which it will no longer be possible to seek Section 106 contributions; and,
- The Council's instalments policy which provides for CIL payments to be paid in instalments dated from the commencement of the scheme. The phasing of payments will vary with the size of the CIL liability.

5.7.5 To take account of the introduction of CIL and recent government changes to the operation of Section 106 agreements it is also necessary to adopt a new Planning Obligations SPD. A draft version of the Planning Obligations SPD was consulted on during the summer of 2014 and a number of minor changes are proposed as a result. The new SPD will replace the current 'Limiting the Impact of Development' SPD.

5.7.6 Therefore the Executive has approved:

- the 'Regulation 123' List of Infrastructure Projects for which CIL will be charged at Appendix B for publication on the Council's website;
- the CIL Instalment Policy at Appendix C for publication on the Council's website;
- the adoption of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document at Appendix D with effect from 6th April 2015; and,
- the withdrawal of the Limiting the Impact of Development Supplementary Planning Document (July 2007) with effect from 6th April 2015.

5.7.7 The Executive recommends to Council:

- (i) publication of the Charging Schedule at Appendix A;**

(ii) **the commencement of CIL charging in Bracknell Forest on 6th April 2015;**

5.8 Use of Suitable alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) land at Shepherd Meadows, Sandhurst by Surrey Heath Borough Council

5.8.1 The Executive has authorised the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities to conclude an agreement with Surrey Heath Borough Council for land at Shepherd Meadows to serve as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) for housing development in the Borough of Surrey Heath, setting the SANG contributions at £1,963 per dwelling. The area will provide SANG capacity for 500 dwellings in the west of Surrey Heath Borough.

5.8.2 In light of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) the Council, in agreement with Natural England, has concluded that any net increase in residential dwellings within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of the SPA, either alone or in combination with others falling within 5km of the SPA. To avoid these, a three pronged approach had been agreed as follows:

- Provision of SANG to attract people away from the SPA and hence reduce pressure on it;
- access management and monitoring measures on, and monitoring of, the SPA to reduce the effect of people who visit the SPA; and
- habitat management.

5.8.3 Shepherds Meadows was designated a SANG following the adoption of the Core Strategy Development Plan Document in 2008. The land must be used as SANG in perpetuity and as the land is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) it has no development potential.

5.9 Bus Call Off Contracts Under Framework Agreement

5.9.1 The Executive has agreed the award of 9 call-off contracts for supported bus services. These services are funded by the Council and are provided through contracts with bus operators. These local bus services provide communities with access to their daily needs and seek to reinforce the existing pattern of support.

5.10 Local Government Ombudsman Decision – Code for Sustainable Homes

5.10.1 The Executive has been informed of a decision from the Local Government Ombudsman that there was maladministration in the delivery of a consultancy service for a Code for Sustainable Homes Assessment and approved its response to the report. The response is, essentially, to take no further action as the consultancy service is no longer provided.

Adult Services, Health and Housing

5.11 Joint Commissioning Strategy for Adults with Autism

5.11.1 The Executive has endorsed the Joint Commission Strategy for Adults with Autism 2013-2020 and the development of an Action Plan by the Autism Partnership board. The Strategy will set out how support and services for people with autism will be developed in the local area.

5.11.2 To inform the Strategy a consultation was undertaken from 1 July to 30 September 2014. People with autism and their families were asked to comment on how important they believed certain issues were over the next 5 years. Also the Government strategy 'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives' list 7 positive outcomes to show whether progress has been made to improve support for people with autism and these will be included in an action plan with the priorities from the consultation.

5.11.3 The information provided by the consultation and Government guidelines has informed the strategy to ensure that people living with autism in Bracknell Forest are enabled and empowered to have choice and control to live as independently as possible.

5.12 Proposal to Purchase a Development Site in Bracknell Town Centre

5.12.1 The Executive has approved a proposal to purchase a development site in the town centre to enable affordable housing development. The Council will enter into a conditional contract with Thames Valley Housing Association (TVHA) to purchase the site. This will allow TVHA to undertake the necessary work, at their cost, to obtain planning permission to develop the site. The Director of Adult Social Care Health and Housing has been authorised in consultation with the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance to conclude the agreement.

5.12.2 The Executive recommends to Council that a 10 % deposit be paid at exchange of contracts for the development site to be funded from virement of under spend in the current years housing capital programme.

Environment

5.13 Results of Trial Recycling Incentive Scheme

5.13.1 In 2012 the Council made a successful bid to DEFRA for Reward and Recognition funding to enable the setup of a Trial Recycling Incentive Scheme. The scheme was launched on 1 April 2013.

5.13.2 The incentives of the scheme were designed to increase the number of households participating in the kerbside recycling service and to reduce the incorrect materials being put into the blue bins. It was accessible to all residents and rewards given were directly related to the services offered or supported by the Council. The scheme used the Council's existing e-plus Smartcard technology and thereby encouraged the development of a further benefit for card holders.

5.13.3 All targets and objectives have been achieved and there are now over 11,000 households on the scheme, which is almost a quarter of the households in the Borough. This number continues to grow as does the uptake of the rewards which, to date, just over 1200 rewards claimed. The Executive has agreed that the Council should continue to develop and promote the scheme as part of its waste management services now that the pilot has ended.

6 Appointments and Delegations by the Leader of the Council

6.1 The Leader has agreed to delegate the decision for the award of the contracts for pre-construction services and the main contract (including enabling works) in relation to Binfield Learning Village at Blue Mountain to be taken by an Executive Committee comprised of Councillors Barnard, Mrs Hayes and Ward.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 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

- 7.2 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

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

Strategic Risk Management Issues

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

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 27 January 2015

Executive Agenda – 10 February 2015

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