

COUNCIL
15 JULY 2015
7.30 - 8.45 PM



Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Dee Hamilton), Councillors Virgo (Deputy Mayor), Mrs Angell, Allen, Angell, Dr Barnard, Bettison, D Birch, Mrs Birch, G Birch, Brossard, Dudley, Finch, Finnie, Ms Gaw, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Hill, Mrs Ingham, King OBE, Leake, McCracken, Mrs McKenzie, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Ms Merry, Ms Miller, Peacey, Phillips, Porter, Skinner, Mrs Temperton, Thompson, Tullett, Turrell, Wade and Worrall

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Brunel-Walker and Mrs McCracken

10. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meetings held on 29 April and 27 May 2015 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

It was noted that Councillor Mrs Temperton had received a full report of Councillor Heydon's activities as Corporate Business Champion as requested in minute 57.

11. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

12. Mayor's Announcements

Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Housing

Councillor Birch was pleased to welcome Dr Lisa McNally, Consultant in Public Health and Kishore Sankla from Solutions4Health to congratulate them on their success in the Public Health Partnerships Award category of the MJ Award. The Award was in recognition of the most successful smoking cessation campaign which Bracknell Forest has run across Berkshire with its health partners Solutions4Health.

Mayor's Charity – Make-A-Wish

The Mayor welcomed Katy Meade, Head of Individual Giving at 'Make-A-Wish', to the meeting to talk to the Members about the work of the charity. The Mayor had chosen the charity because it grants wishes to enrich the lives of families with children fighting life-threatening diseases. She had met a family from Bracknell who had been supported by the charity and been touched by the impact it had. Katy Meade thanked the Mayor and the Council for their support and said that the year-long campaign would make a significant difference to them as over 1,000 children would turn to them for support in the coming year.

Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning

Councillor Dr Barnard was very proud to report that Mrs Antoinette Butler-Willis, Headteacher at Crown Wood Primary School had received a letter from Sir Michael Wilshaw, Chief Inspector of Schools congratulating her on her leadership at the school. The Members present joined him in congratulating her for this recognition.

Councillor Dr Barnard had attended the 'Ten Pieces' Art Exhibition Awards Ceremony at South Hill Park which was an exhibition of artwork inspired by the BBC's ten pieces of classical music. The Council has created a commemorative book of the artwork and the exhibition included art by students from all stages of education in the borough. The Members present joined him in thanking Lynne Beck, Advisory Teacher for Music and South Hill Park for the excellent musically-inspired exhibition.

Executive Member for the Environment

Councillor Mrs Hayes welcomed Claire Pike, Waste Disposal & Recycling Manager and Kim Shaw, Local Manager of SITA UK to the meeting to congratulate them on winning the local authority innovation prize at the National Recycling Awards 2015. They were recognised for the recycling rewards scheme which gives households points every time they recycle correctly. Residents can then use the points they collect to get rewards, ranging from South Hill Park theatre tickets to borrowing a DVD from one of the libraries, or they can donate them to local good causes. It was explained that every quarter three local good causes would receive up to £1,000. The scheme not only encourages residents to recycle but saves the Council money in landfill charges.

Councillor Mrs Hayes congratulated Councillor Birch for completing the Winkfield and Warfield Family Cycle Ride and presented him with his medal and certificate for taking part.

Bracknell and Wokingham College

The Mayor welcomed Campbell Christie CBE, Principal and Chief Executive of Bracknell and Wokingham College to the meeting to provide a strategic overview of how Bracknell and Wokingham College services the Bracknell Forest community. The College's goal was to become outstanding and be the best further education college in the region.

The Mayor thanked him for his presentation.

Mayoral Engagements

The Mayor advised the Members present that since the Annual Meeting she had been busy attending engagements across the borough.

British Drama Festival Finals

The Deputy Mayor advised the meeting that he had been pleased to attend the British Drama Festival Finals which had been held at South Hill Park. The event had been a celebration of One Act plays with the Scottish team, the Kirkintilloch Players winning the competition overall. This event is held in the region once every sixteen years.

Civic Service

The Mayor asked Councillors to save the date of her planned Civic Service which was being held on Sunday 25 October at 9.30am at the Parish Church of St Michael & St Mary Magdalene in Easthampstead.

13. **Executive Report**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison, presented his report on the work of the Executive since that reported at the Council meeting on 29 April 2015.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

- Comprehensive Local Plan
 - One Comprehensive Local Plan would be created to incorporate Gypsy and Traveller and Development Management Local Plans.
 - Four year programme set out the process to adopt a new plan which would include an 'Issues and Options' stage due to the need for transparency and recognised sensitivity around issue.
- Admission to Schools Consultation
 - Although 5000 new school places had been created since 2004 over the next ten years 13 Primary and 9 Secondary schools were needed within the borough
 - The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead were consulting on removing feeder schools as an admission criteria for Charters School which impacted on Bracknell Forest residents
 - A Consultation would cover:
 - changes to the secondary schools admissions in relation to distance versus feeder schools criteria
 - designated areas for both secondary and primary schools in the borough
- Binfield Learning Village
 - A school sponsor appointment plan had been agreed and the Department for Education had informed of the intention to seek Academy sponsor.
- The joint response from the Executive Members to Overview and Scrutiny Working Group on Substance Abuse was noted and the Working Group were thanked for the helpful and well-informed report.
- The Adult Social Services Local Account 2014/15 was published.
- The Strategy and action plan for supporting and reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) was endorsed.

Councillor Mrs Temperton asked how and when residents would be consulted on the changes to admission arrangements and designated areas.

Councillor Dr Barnard replied that residents would be consulted through information being available on the website and meetings planned for the autumn. Over the next few years the Council will also look at redrawing the designated catchment areas for schools in north Bracknell, Sandhurst and Crowthorne to take account of the new housing developments and new schools due for completion in the next few years.

14. **Establishment of an Appointment Committee**

The Council considered a report regarding the establishment of an Appointment Committee to appoint to the position of Chief Officer: Human Resources.

On the proposition of Councillor McCracken, Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection seconded by Councillor McLean it was

RESOLVED that:

- i) a Committee of the Council of five members (4:1), including at least one Member of the Executive (plus up to two substitute members per group) be appointed, with the following terms of reference:

“To interview and appoint on behalf of the Council to the post of Chief Officer: Human Resources”

- ii) Councillors Heydon, Leake, McCracken, McLean and Mrs Temperton be confirmed as the nominated members

- iii) Councillors Allen, D Birch and Virgo be confirmed as the substitute members.

15. **Membership of the Local Plan Working Group**

The Council considered a report setting out the revised position regarding the appointment of Members to serve on the Local Plan Working Group.

On the proposition of Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transportation seconded by Councillor Birch it was

RESOLVED that the Planning Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman be appointed to the Local Plan Working Group.

16. **Standards Committee - Annual Report**

The Council noted the Standards Committee Annual Report which advised Members of the work of the Standards Committee during the last municipal year.

17. **Questions Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10**

(i) Councillor Mrs Temperton asked Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning the following published question:

*The Secretary of State for Education has raised the **floor standards for attainment** in both primary and secondary schools. The target for the number of students getting 5 GCSE Inc English and Maths at secondary level has been raised from the present 40% to 60% and for the pupils getting expected levels at Primary school from 65% to 85%. If schools do not achieve these floor standards then they could well be forced into becoming Academies.*

- (a) *How many schools in Bracknell Forest are expected to fall below the new floor standards bar?*

- (b) *Most of the many new schools to be built will be built as academies. If local authority schools are forced to also become academies, what will the implications be for Bracknell Forest as a Local education Authority?*
- (c) *With such a reduction in LA finances, what would be the implications for those schools that remain with Bracknell Forest, as most have always wanted to do?*

In response Councillor Dr Barnard stated that the Secretary of State for Education had raised the floor standards for attainment in both primary and secondary schools and if schools do not achieve these standards then they could be forced into becoming Academies.

He stated that it was not known if any schools will fall below the new floor standard as the measures have not yet been fully determined and will be based on three years worth of results. Analysis of the 2015 results would be undertaken but it would not be until autumn 2016 when the 2016 data goes live that the schools below the floor standard will be determined or those who are thought to be coasting identified. The Department for Education estimated that several hundred primary and about 100 secondary will fall within this definition in 2016. Those schools would have an opportunity to demonstrate a plan of improvement and would not be forced to convert to an academy if they made the necessary improvements. The objective is to improve educational outcomes and improve those schools that are not performing. A school that performs at or above the floor in any of three years would not be described as coasting.

He added that the Local Authority would retain a responsibility for the performance of state educated pupils in Bracknell Forest regardless of the type of school they attend. Nationally, providing existing schools are performing successfully there is no reason to assume that they will be forced to convert to an academy. He stated that the Council had maintained a good relationship with the existing academy which continue to buy Bracknell Forest services and the Council would invest in developing similar relationships with any other school becoming an academy. He asked the Council to note that the Council receives an annual grant of around £1.5m to provide central services to schools, such as school improvement, statutory duties, including Finance, HR and Health and Safety, asset management and ensuring pupils attend school. This grant reduces as more schools become academies, but so does the need to spend by the Council.

He stated that the Local Authority services were considered to be good and value for money so would continue to be provided for the benefit of the local community of schools. Academy schools like maintained schools have a budget and could purchase support from the Local Authority or other providers.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Mrs Temperton about whether there was a minimum number of maintained schools under which the local Authority would become unviable Councillor Dr Barnard said no. He reiterated that the Secretary of State was clear that the Local Authority would retain a responsibility for the Borough's children and it was the council's responsibility to drive school performance forward.

(ii) Councillor Mrs Temperton asked Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport the following published question:

What will the Council do to protect the bus services for those residents who depend on them now that First Bus is pulling out of Bracknell?

In response Councillor Turrell stated that bus services are financed in two different ways. 'Commercial' services are operated by the local bus operators without any support from the local council. As such the local authority has no control over the routes, timetables or fare structures used on these services. The Courtney services operating on Opladen Way are an example of a commercial service. 'Supported' services on the other hand are part-financed by the local authority because without our support the operators would not run them. The Local Authority can influence routes, timetables and fares on these services.

He continued that the contract for the 'supported' services was due to end this summer. Following a network review and a competitive procurement exercise the council awarded the operation of these new services to Courtney Coaches; this took effect on Monday 13 July. The network review rationalised the services across the borough to maintain and where possible, improve, access to medical, educational and retail facilities, whilst ensuring that no individual communities were left without appropriate access to a bus service.

He added that the majority of commercial services have been operated across the borough by First Beeline and Courtney Coaches. However, First Beeline informed the council on 29 June that with effect from Saturday 29 August 2015 they no longer wish to operate these commercial services and have therefore de-registered the following services with the Traffic Commissioner: services 94, 191, B1, B2, B3 and B5. He added that this notice exceeded the 56 days' notice they were required to provide.

He noted that whilst there has been some duplication between the two operators, it is clear that the withdrawal produced some gaps in the bus service within the borough.

Councillor Turrell noted residents' concerns but explained that there had been some developments since the notice was given:

- The 90 service which operates between Bracknell and Reading is being taken over by Reading Buses who will operate it on a like-for-like basis from 26 July.
- Stagecoach had also applied to the Traffic Commissioner to register a 94 service between Bracknell and Camberley. These would be logical extension to services by other operators, and give passengers the benefit of more modern buses.
- With effect from 29 August Courtney's would also increase their frequencies on the 194 service to half-hourly, with earlier morning journeys and later evening journeys. Double-deckers will be used on this route to address any capacity issues.
- Courtney's had agreed to include an additional loop to their 156 service, to serve Ralphs Ride and Harmanswater Road; this will be provided at no additional cost to the council.
- Following concerns raised by parents regarding the 162 service, Courtney's had also agreed to delay their mid-afternoon journey until 15:45 which would allow pupils from Ranelagh School to board the bus at the bus station.
- Courtney's had also increased the number of journeys on their 171/172 services to create a combined 15 minute frequency; services would also

operate earlier in the morning, later in the evening and they have also reinstated the Sunday service on these routes.

In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Mrs Temperton about the Council's responsibility for medical provision noting that the Greenline to Victoria was causing the most problems. She added that there were no Sunday services to anywhere other than the Meadows, Camberley. She requested that Courtney Coaches be asked to use buses with more space for buggies.

Councillor Turrell acknowledged that journeys to Legoland and King Edward's Hospital were an issue and that they were seeing what could be done to improve the situation. Councillor Turrell explained that discussions were ongoing with local transport providers and neighbouring authorities with regard to the Bracknell to Windsor link, to see what other alternative services will be possible to help residents but the outcome was not finalised.

MAYOR