

**EXECUTIVE  
6 FEBRUARY 2024  
5.30 - 6.30 PM**



**Present:**

Councillors Temperton (Chair), Neil (Vice-Chair), Bailey, Gillbe, Jefferies, Purnell and Wright

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Councillors Bidwell

**64. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**65. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 23 January 2024 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record.

**66. Urgent Items of Business**

There were no Urgent Items of Business.

**Executive Decisions and Decision Records**

The Executive considered the following items. The decisions are recorded in the decision sheets attached to these minutes and summarised below:

**67. Capital Programme 2024/25**

**RECOMMENDED** to Council:

a) General Fund Capital Programme of £13.016m for 2024/25 in respect of those schemes listed in Annexes A – D, of which £8.462m be funded from Council resources.

b) Approves the inclusion of £4.554m of expenditure to be externally funded (including £0.380m of S106 funding) as outlined in paragraph 5.20.

c) That those schemes that attract external grant funding are included within the Capital Programme at the level of funding received.

d) Agrees that capital schemes that require external funding can only proceed once the Council has received confirmation that the grant will be awarded.

e) The inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for Invest to Save schemes.

**68. Revenue Budget 2024/25**

**RECOMMENDED** that the Executive, in recommending to Council a budget and Council Tax level for 2024/25:

- i. Agrees the provision for inflation of £4.507m (section 8.2);
- ii. Approves a further council tax discount funded by Bracknell Forest Council in 2024/25 of £75 for working age households receiving council tax support as summarised in paragraph 8.3.1a);
- iii. Confirms its support for the draft budget proposals as set out in the report presented to the Executive’s meeting in December 2023, subject to the revisions in section 8.3.1b) to 8.3.1k) and those decisions to be taken elsewhere on this agenda on the capital programme;
- iv. Agrees the additional budget proposals as set out in Annexe A and Annexe D and in sections 6.2 (Revenue Support Grant), 6.3 (specific grants), 6.4 (business rates), 7.3 (collection fund) , 8.2 (inflation) and 8.3 (updated pressures & savings);
- v. Agrees that the additional grant funding received in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 5 February 2024 be allocated to social care services (£0.754m in Social Care Grant) and to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities services (£0.268m in Funding Guarantee and £0.010m in Services Grant) with no net budget impact;
- vi. Agrees that the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning approves the detailed budget allocations for High Needs pupils and Early Years provisions, up to the estimated level of available resources;
- vii. Includes a general contingency totalling £4.000m (section 10.7) use of which is to be authorised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Director: Resources in accordance with the delegations included in the Council’s constitution;
- viii. Approves the proposed Net Revenue Budget including the contribution of £1.509m from the Future Funding Reserve (including £0.038m additional interest from the use of balances) to support revenue expenditure, as set out in Annexe G;
- ix. Recommends a 4.99% increase in the Council Tax for the Council’s services and that the Council Tax requirement, excluding Parish and Town Council precepts, be set as £80.312m;
- x. Recommends that the Council Tax for the Council's services and that each Valuation Band is set as follows:

Band	Tax Level Relative to Band D	£
A	6/9	1,077.42
B	7/9	1,256.99
C	8/9	1,436.56
D	9/9	1,616.13
E	11/9	1,975.27
F	13/9	2,334.41

G	15/9	2,693.55
H	18/9	3,232.26

xi. Recommends that the Council approves the following indicators, limits, strategies and policies included in Annexe E:

- The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2024/25 to 2026/27 contained within Annexe E(i);
- The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy contained within Annexe E(ii);
- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, and the Treasury Prudential Indicators contained in Annexe E(iii);
- The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator in Annexe E(iii);
- The Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27 and Treasury Management Limits on Activity contained in Annexe E(iv).

xii. Recommends to Council that the following additional Council Tax premiums be applied from 1 April 2025:

- A 100% premium for properties which have been empty and unfurnished for longer than one year (rather than 2 years as currently) and;
- A 100% premium for second homes.

xiii. Approves the virements relating to the 2023/24 budget as set out in Annexe H and recommends those that are over £0.100m for approval by Council.

#### 69. **Creation of a Joint Committee – Berkshire Prosperity Board**

**RECOMMENDED** to Council that:

- i. the establishment of a fully constituted Joint Committee (to be known as the Berkshire Prosperity Board) from May 2024 to deliver a Berkshire-wide vision for inclusive green and sustainable economic prosperity is approved.
- ii. the proposed constitution for the Joint Committee as set out in Appendix A - Functions and Procedure Rules for a Joint Committee, Appendix B - Responsibilities of the accountable body and Appendix C - Governance structure is recommended to Council for approval subject to the Monitoring Officer being authorised to make minor amendments to the Functions & Procedure Rules in conjunction with the participating authorities.
- iii. the Chief Executive be delegated to reach a legally binding agreement between the member Authorities setting out the supporting arrangements and responsibilities between the Authorities, particularly that between the Lead Authority, known as the Accountable Body and the other member Authorities and go through the relevant democratic process if required.

#### 70. **Youth Services Strategy Public Consultation**

**RESOLVED** that:

- i. the Executive approve the draft strategy and agree that the final consultation plan will be agreed with Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning.
- ii. the Executive to note the invitation to Members to join a dedicated session to provide feedback on the draft strategy.
- iii. the Executive to note the intention to bring back a final strategy for Executive to approve following the consultation which will also include a detailed action plan.

71. **Design and Construction Multi Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract**

**RESOLVED** that

- i. the Executive approves this Strategic Procurement Plan to tender the appointment of a Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract.
- ii. Approval of this Strategic Procurement Plan authorises:
  - (i) a proposed contractual term for a duration of up to ten years with an initial period of five years and further 3 + 2 years based on key performance indicators of optional extensions with a contract value of £12m for 10-year contract.
  - (ii) Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract to be procured from a single provider.
- iii. the Executive delegate authority to the Executive Director, Delivery and the Executive Member for Finance and Business Change to award the contract to the provider meeting the requirements of this contract.

**CHAIRMAN**

## Bracknell Forest Council Record of Decision

<b>Work Programme Reference</b>	<b>I115786</b>
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1. **TITLE:** Capital Programme 2024/25

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Resources

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To recommend to Council the annual budget.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

**RECOMMENDED** to Council:

a) General Fund Capital Programme of £13.016m for 2024/25 in respect of those schemes listed in Annexes A – D, of which £8.462m be funded from Council resources.

b) Approves the inclusion of £4.554m of expenditure to be externally funded (including £0.380m of S106 funding) as outlined in paragraph 5.20.

c) That those schemes that attract external grant funding are included within the Capital Programme at the level of funding received.

d) Agrees that capital schemes that require external funding can only proceed once the Council has received confirmation that the grant will be awarded.

e) The inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for Invest to Save schemes.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: Resources

10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

<b>Date Decision Made</b>	<b>Final Day of Call-in Period</b>
6 February 2024	14 February 2024

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**Bracknell Forest Council  
Record of Decision**

<b>Work Programme Reference</b>	<b>I115474</b>
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1. **TITLE:** Revenue Budget 2024/25

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Resources

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To recommend to Council the annual budget

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

**RECOMMENDED** that the Executive, in recommending to Council a budget and Council Tax level for 2024/25:

- i. Agrees the provision for inflation of £4.507m (section 8.2);
- ii. Approves a further council tax discount funded by Bracknell Forest Council in 2024/25 of £75 for working age households receiving council tax support as summarised in paragraph 8.3.1a);
- iii. Confirms its support for the draft budget proposals as set out in the report presented to the Executive's meeting in December 2023, subject to the revisions in section 8.3.1b) to 8.3.1k) and those decisions to be taken elsewhere on this agenda on the capital programme;
- iv. Agrees the additional budget proposals as set out in Annexe A and Annexe D and in sections 6.2 (Revenue Support Grant), 6.3 (specific grants), 6.4 (business rates), 7.3 (collection fund) , 8.2 (inflation) and 8.3 (updated pressures & savings);
- v. Agrees that the additional grant funding received in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 5 February 2024 be allocated to social care services (£0.754m in Social Care Grant) and to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities services (£0.268m in Funding Guarantee and £0.010m in Services Grant) with no net budget impact;
- vi. Agrees that the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning approves the detailed budget allocations for High Needs pupils and Early Years provisions, up to the estimated level of available resources;
- vii. Includes a general contingency totalling £4.000m (section 10.7) use of which is to be authorised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Director: Resources in accordance with the delegations included in the Council's constitution;
- viii. Approves the proposed Net Revenue Budget including the contribution of

£1.509m from the Future Funding Reserve (including £0.038m additional interest from the use of balances) to support revenue expenditure, as set out in Annexe G;

ix. Recommends a 4.99% increase in the Council Tax for the Council's services and that the Council Tax requirement, excluding Parish and Town Council precepts, be set as £80.312m;

x. Recommends that the Council Tax for the Council's services and that each Valuation Band is set as follows:

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xii. Recommends to Council that the following additional Council Tax premiums be applied from 1 April 2025:

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- A 100% premium for second homes.

xiii. Approves the virements relating to the 2023/24 budget as set out in Annexe H and recommends those that are over £0.100m for approval by Council.

## 7. REASON FOR DECISION

The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

## 8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

## 9. DOCUMENT CONSIDERED: Report of the Executive Director: Resources



10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

<b>Date Decision Made</b>	<b>Final Day of Call-in Period</b>
6 February 2024	14 February 2024

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**Bracknell Forest Council  
Record of Decision**

<b>Work Programme Reference</b>	<b>I119146</b>
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1. **TITLE:** Creation of a Joint Committee – Berkshire Prosperity Board

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Place, Planning & Regeneration

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To agree the creation of a Joint Committee with the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities, for the purposes of driving Economic Prosperity

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

**RECOMMENDED** to Council that:

- i. the establishment of a fully constituted Joint Committee (to be known as the Berkshire Prosperity Board) from May 2024 to deliver a Berkshire-wide vision for inclusive green and sustainable economic prosperity is approved.
- ii. the proposed constitution for the Joint Committee as set out in Appendix A - Functions and Procedure Rules for a Joint Committee, Appendix B - Responsibilities of the accountable body and Appendix C - Governance structure is recommended to Council for approval subject to the Monitoring Officer being authorised to make minor amendments to the Functions & Procedure Rules in conjunction with the participating authorities.
- iii. the Chief Executive be delegated to reach a legally binding agreement between the member Authorities setting out the supporting arrangements and responsibilities between the Authorities, particularly that between the Lead Authority, known as the Accountable Body and the other member Authorities and go through the relevant democratic process if required.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

i. Developing a Joint Committee and sharing common goals across a functional economic area will provide Berkshire Authorities with exciting new opportunities for collaboration on economic development. Providing more flexibility and influence than a single council would have on its own. Helping local authorities speak with one voice to secure more funding from Government and other agencies and sources to help get key projects and initiatives off the ground.

ii. In particular, Berkshire Authorities, through collaboration, will benefit from:

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- Working together to a shared vision of inclusive and sustainable economic prosperity through working together to address challenges and meet opportunities whilst retaining the sovereignty of each Local authority.

- Having a strengthened case to Government and private investors for funding And greater investment for strategic projects across Berkshire.
- Acting as a vehicle to commission the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and others in response to the Government’s review of Local Economic Partnerships.
- Having a stronger, collective voice in lobbying Government and other agencies. Taking a collaborative mindset in targeting external bodies effectively for the benefit of Berkshire
- Advantageously positioning Berkshire in readiness for potential devolution proposals to benefit from additional responsibilities and funding opportunities. Setting up a Berkshire that is better able to efficiently, seize future opportunities and adapt to challenges.

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- Working on six shared themes: health and inequalities, education and skills, affordable housing, sector development, strategic infrastructure and net zero.
- Transform Berkshire’s productivity through, responsive, agile collaboration.

iii. The first official board would take place in April following the decision making for each of the six Unitary Council’s to establish the Board. The Board would meet four times a year. Each Council would lead on one of the six themes, with Bracknell Forest leading on Climate Change, and assisting on the Affordable Housing theme.

**8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- i. The main alternative approach is to continue to work on economic development in each unitary area as exists at the moment. This no change approach does not resolve matters relating to the functions passing to Local Authorities with the end of government LEP funding which takes place in April 2024. It also does not build a stronger voice for Berkshire and does not enable streamlined collective decision making.
- ii. the other main alternative option considered was to develop a Combined Authority/Mayoral Combined Authority, and seek a formal Devolution Deal. Berkshire Leaders have agreed not to pursue a directly elected Mayor.

9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration

10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
6 February 2024	14 February 2024

**Bracknell Forest Council  
Record of Decision**

<b>Work Programme Reference</b>	<b>I119033</b>
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1. **TITLE:** Youth Services Strategy Public Consultation

2. **SERVICE AREA:** People

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Approval to go out to public consultation on the Youth Services Strategy 2024 – 2027.

Bracknell Forest Council and its partners recognise the need for a clear strategic vision to drive and shape our youth service provision. It is vital that we undertake a public consultation to provide opportunities for feedback to those who will benefit from or who have a stake in youth services in Bracknell Forest. This will ensure that the strategy is supported by our young people, partners and the wider community. The Youth Service is a priority for the Labour Executive as outlined in their 2023 manifesto.

In addition, Bracknell Forest Council has a duty to secure sufficient youth services in the borough. Statutory guidance for local authorities on providing youth services, related to Section 507B of the Education Act (1996), as amended by the Education and Inspections Act (2006), places a duty on local authorities to 'so far as reasonably practicable,' secure for qualifying young persons in the authority's area access to sufficient educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities, and, efficient recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

**RESOLVED** that:

- i. the Executive approve the draft strategy and agree that the final consultation plan will be agreed with Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning.
- ii. the Executive to note the invitation to Members to join a dedicated session to provide feedback on the draft strategy.
- iii. the Executive to note the intention to bring back a final strategy for Executive to approve following the consultation which will also include a detailed action plan.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

- i. The proposed Youth Services Strategy 2024 – 2027 policy has been created following a comprehensive data analysis, consultation and feedback on the proposed draft and priorities included.

- ii. The proposed strategy supports the Council’s plan to ensure engaged and healthy communities. Youth services is a political priority of the labour executive as outlined within their manifesto for the local elections in 2023.
- iii. Stakeholder consultation is an important part of the development of the youth strategy, enabling young people, families, members, key stakeholders, and wider residents to understand and comment on the proposed strategy.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

An alternative option would be not to develop a youth strategy. However, given that there is not currently a strategic document identifying and driving the shape of youth services locally, this is not an option.

9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: People

10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

<b>Date Decision Made</b>	<b>Final Day of Call-in Period</b>
6 February 2024	14 February 2024

**Bracknell Forest Council  
Record of Decision**

<b>Work Programme Reference</b>	<b>I118017</b>
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1. **TITLE:** Design and Construction Multi Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Delivery

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To approve the strategy procurement plan to tender the appointment of an organisation to provide multi disciplinary consultancy services

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED that

- i. the Executive approves this Strategic Procurement Plan to tender the appointment of a Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract.
- ii. Approval of this Strategic Procurement Plan authorises:
  - (i) a proposed contractual term for a duration of up to ten years with an initial period of five years and further 3 + 2 years based on key performance indicators of optional extensions with a contract value of £12m for 10-year contract.
  - (ii) Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract to be procured from a single provider.
- iii. the Executive delegate authority to the Executive Director, Delivery and the Executive Member for Finance and Business Change to award the contract to the provider meeting the requirements of this contract.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

- i. It is a requirement of the contract standing orders, that the Executive approve any strategic procurement plan with a value more than £1m. This decision seeks approval for the procurement strategy.
- ii. The current Managing Partner framework expires on the 30 June 2025, therefore there is a requirement to commission an external organisation to provide Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract to implement and manage the delivery of construction projects.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- i. Consideration has been given to seeking consultants on an individual project basis,

however when Bracknell Forest Council have undertaken this in the past, it has proven to be a lengthy process. Involving numerous organisations into our practice allows room for error, as the continuity and the knowledge of the Councils stock is lost. However, having a Design & Construction Support team commissioned on a fixed term contract, ensures information on procedures and condition of our buildings are kept up to date.

- ii. After consulting with other Berkshire Councils, we were informed that 3 of the Councils have inhouse consultancy staff and procure specialist support as and when required through a framework.
  - iii. One Council had a professional services framework for Consultants on architectural and design services which ran for 4 years and covered Housing, Education and Corporate. This was procured through the Portal 'shortlisted' 6 consultant firms to be on 4 year Framework for which mini competitions were ran when projects came to fruition. Some projects were procured as design and build, some were separated and procured separately. These are then overseen by a large internal Construction Project Management team. However, we also use a Framework such as CCS/Fusion 21 for specific projects. This option would not be suitable for BFC due to there not being a large in-house team, holding the knowledge required.
  - iv. One of the authorities has recently procured a contract, with 2 different organisations, with 1 providing pre-contract services and the other providing post-contract services. Due to a number of recent issues, this Authority is looking at alternative options. Team members moving from other authorities have tried this model, however it has caused conflict and contractual issues between consultants and would require significant resources to manage the contracts. There could also be issues regarding where negligence claims lay.
  - v. An option is to create an inhouse multi-disciplinary consultancy team to recruit a number of individuals, to design and manage projects lower than £0.5m, which would equate to approx. salary costs of £630k per annum, as shown in the table below. However, there would still need to be some input from an external organisation, to provide additional technical input, ie project management, public health engineers etc. as and when required for each of the projects.
  - vi. Furthermore, the ongoing difficulties in recruiting and retaining specialist engineers and surveyors, within the construction industry would undoubtedly result in a number of these roles remaining vacant and incur additional costs using agency staff. In practice, some specialisms listed would not warrant full-time roles and this would further exacerbate the challenges and reduce value for money. Therefore, internalisation of this service would not be a viable solution.
9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: Delivery
10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
6 February 2024	14 February 2024