

COUNCIL
22 JULY 2020
7.30 - 9.00 PM



Present:

Councillors Ms Merry (Mayor), Gbadebo (Deputy Mayor), Allen, Bhandari, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, Brown, Brunel-Walker, Dudley, Finch, Ms Gaw, Mrs L Gibson, MJ Gibson, Green, Mrs Hamilton, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Kirke, Leake, Mrs McKenzie, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Neil, Parker, Porter, Skinner, Temperton, Tullett, Turrell, Virgo and Wade

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Angell, Atkinson, Brossard and Mossom

11. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20 May 2020 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

12. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13. Mayor's Announcements

Mayor's Charity

The Mayor advised the meeting that she was delighted to be working with two organisations who were supporting the Armed Forces and their families through their active service and beyond. SSAFA – Soldiers Sailors and Airmen Families Association and the British Forces Foundation. She added that presentations on the work of the charities and examples of how they were helping local residents would be provided at a future Council meeting.

Open for Business Initiative

The Mayor reported that the borough was actively supporting and promoting the retail sector in its "Open for Business" initiative and the civic team was visiting shops across the Borough to say 'thank you', and recognise all the efforts of retailers during challenging times. The Council was encouraging residents to think local, shop local and support local.

Virtual engagements

The Mayor had attended the Home Start AGM virtually and hoped that this would be the first of many similar engagements. In this uncertain period she would be organising a programme of 'Virtually anything is possible' events to appeal to a wide audience and help raise funds for her selected charities.

Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport

Councillor Turrell reported that the Downshire Way dualling scheme had been completed, within budget and on time. He thanked the Highways officers and the contractors Ringway for their work. He explained that there were additional benefits to the scheme such as improving the landscape alongside the road, using a quieter surface and installation of noise attenuation fencing on some sections.

Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing

Councillor Birch asked the meeting to recognise and thank the actions of Bracknell Forest residents who had kept infection rates down by acting responsibly which in turn kept them and their families safe.

Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning

Councillor Dr Barnard asked the meeting to join him in recognising and recording the work of staff in schools and those working within children's social care. Schools invited children of keyworkers and vulnerable children into schools and showed a commitment, dedication to education and hard work through safeguarding for those children, virtual support to students and providing support to families. Schools are now looking to September and welcoming the children back. He reported how colleagues in Children's social care had provided support to the most vulnerable families, adapting how they worked to keep people safe and making sure that throughout the voice of children were not forgotten.

Councillor Brunel-Walker, Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration

Councillor Brunel-Walker passed on his thanks to retailers, those in the hospitality sector, pubs, hairdressers and other premises that had opened in last few weeks. He recognised the hard work involved to make premises covid secure and respond to changing guidance. He thanked the team that worked to co-ordinate with the Lexicon. He reiterated the message to Act Local, Think Local and Shop Local.

14. **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 26 February 2020. The Executive had met five times on 10 March 2020, 28 April 2020, 15 June 2020, 30 June 2020 and 14 July 2020.

The report contained recommendations that the Council was asked to resolve in respect of the following matters:

- **Community Safety Plan 2020-23:** This was a Partnership plan drawing together Bracknell Forest Council Police and Crime Commissioner and Thames Valley Police priorities and issues. The consultation had received 497 responses with 93% of respondents agreeing with priorities
- **Central and East Berks Joint Minerals and Waste Plan:** This had been prepared with Wokingham, Reading and Windsor & Maidenhead to cover the Central Berkshire area and would run until 2036. There were no new sites within Bracknell Forest. Six week statutory consultation period would run from 3 September to 15 October
- **Revenue Outturn 2019/20:** The planned spend was £74.969m and the actual spend was £74.323 so this was the 22nd year of spending within budget

- **Selection of Joint Venture Partner:** The Preferred bidder had been appointed and was an important step in facilitating the development of major town centre sites including: Market Street, Coopers Hill and Jubilee Gardens

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

Other Major Decisions [Non Covid]

- Highways' and Transport capital programme agreed
- Service Plans 2020/21 agreed
- Emergency Duty Service Contract agreed which was covered essential pan Berkshire out of hours services and had been hosted by Bracknell Forest Council since 1998
- Relocation of EDS/Forestcare to Waterside Park

Other Major Decisions [Covid related]

- Support for Everyone Active as part of overall strategy to ensure there was capacity to re-open services
- Outbreak Management Plan had been signed off by Department for Public Health and CEO and endorsed by Executive. This formed part of East Berkshire Health Protection Board arrangements. The new Local Outbreak Engagement Board would be chaired by Councillor Brunel-Walker.
- Residents Covid-19 Impact Survey was agreed as a telephone survey
- Greening Waste Collection implementation of weekly food and three weekly general waste collection delayed until 1 March 2021 and Autumn 2021 for Houses of multiple occupation and flats. This would allow for further post covid-19 engagement with residents.

Major National Issues and the Bracknell Forest Response

- Personal Protection Equipment: to respond to major national shortage in first few weeks a local team was established to manage supplies with more than 30 providers assisted so far
- Shielding: Of the 4,137 total number of residents advised to shield 2,528 had contacted the national helpline.
- Support to Businesses: Three different national grant schemes were being administered locally and more than £10m had been paid out in approximately 800 grants
- First 2: Common criteria: £25k or £10k
- Businesses which as at 11 March 2020 were paying NNDR
- Retail, hospitality and leisure grant
- Discretionary Grants
- focussing on smaller businesses not paying NNDR
- Test and trace – links to Outbreak Control Plans
- Care home resilience plans had appeared in national good practice guides

No questions were raised on the report.

Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2020-23

On the proposition of Councillor Harrison, Executive Member for Culture, Delivery and Public Protection, seconded by Councillor Virgo it was

RESOLVED that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2020-23 be approved and adopted.

Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan

On the proposition of Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport, seconded by Councillor Mrs Hayes OBE it was

RESOLVED that the Proposed Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan, the Policies Map and all supporting documents be approved to be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination and that the appointed Inspector be requested to recommend main modifications to the submitted Plan, in the event that the Inspector considers that such modifications are necessary to make the Plan sound.

Revenue Expenditure Outturn 2019/20

On the proposition of Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance seconded by Councillor Allen it was

RESOLVED that

- i) the virements over £0.100m as detailed in Annexe E, within the attached Appendix 2 of the supplementary report, be approved; and
- ii) the Treasury Management performance in 2019/20 as set out in Annexe B, within the attached Appendix 2 of the supplementary report, be noted.

Contract Award of a Joint Venture Partner for the Development of Multiple Sites in Bracknell Forest

On the proposition of Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance seconded by Councillor Brunel-Walker it was

RESOLVED that funding be made available as required to support the Council's 50% investment in the joint venture, with requirements for individual site development to be agreed as part of the Executive and Council's consideration of the initial Joint Venture business plan later this year.

15. **Use of Emergency Decision-making Powers**

The Council noted the report advising them of the Chief Executive's use of emergency decision making powers.

16. **Standards Annual Report**

The Council noted the Annual Report which advised them of activity within its Standards framework from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

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

Councillor Mrs Temperton asked Councillor Brunel-Walker, Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration the following published question:

The government has initiated the 'Kickstart' Scheme to create 6-month work placements for 16-24 year olds who are on Universal Credit and may be at risk of

long term unemployment, a scheme to fund high quality traineeships for 16-25 year olds and new apprenticeship schemes. Obviously these need to be in place, as soon as possible. What is the Council doing to encourage all our businesses and partners to participate in these schemes?

In response Councillor Brunel-Walker replied that the new scheme would state-funded jobs created for 16-to-24-year-olds who were currently claiming Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. The Kickstart scheme would see Government funding cover 100 per cent of the minimum wage for 25 hours a week in the scheme, with employers also able to top up the wage and receive a contribution towards overhead costs.

He reported that applications for the scheme were expected to open during the following month, with more information to follow in due course. He explained that companies who took part in the scheme would have to prove that the jobs they are making available to applicants were new.

He reported that the Council was starting to have conversations with the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Economic Skills Development Partnership to begin considering how to promote the scheme and ensure that as many as possible benefit from the scheme. Councillor Brunel-Walker committed to updating members when more information was available.

In response to a supplementary question he stated although the final guidance from Central Government on the exact details was outstanding that he anticipated that the scheme would require companies to apply and he was uncertain whether local authorities would be able to participate as employers. Councillor Brunel-Walker concluded that monitoring the scheme was key and once the methods of receiving updates was confirmed he would update Members.

18. Motion Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 11

Motion 01/2020 was moved and seconded by Councillors Temperton and Neil respectively as follows:

“We congratulate and thank all schools for enabling Bracknell Forest children to return to school in September, keeping all as safe as possible.

This is a very exciting time for some, but very stressful for others. For some parents, with greatly reduced finances resulting from the Covid-19 lockdown, the need to buy new uniform is a huge problem. They too want the best for their child but have no available funds.

I therefore ask the Council to call upon the Executive to set up a School Uniform Grant to support those parents throughout Bracknell Forest, who have a proven need for such assistance.

On being put to the vote the motion fell.

CHAIRMAN