

**COUNCIL**  
**25 NOVEMBER 2020**  
**7.30 - 9.00 PM**



**Present:**

The Mayor (Councillor Ms Ash Merry), Councillors Gbadebo (Deputy Mayor), Allen, Angell, Atkinson, Bhandari, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, Brossard, 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, Mossom, Neil, Parker, Porter, Temperton, Tullett, Turrell, Virgo and Wade

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Councillors Skinner

**29. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 September 2020 be approved, and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**30. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

Councillors Brunel-Walker and Heydon declared that due to their involvement on the Partnership Board of the Joint Venture neither of them would participate in either the debate or vote relating to Agenda item 5.

**31. Mayor's Announcements**

Remembrance Sunday

The Mayor reflected on how Remembrance Sunday events had taken place in a very different way this year. The Mayor thanked Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE and her team of volunteers for installing poppies across the Borough.

Bracknell Forest Council had collaborated with Sandhurst Town Council and supported by the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst produced a pre-recorded short Remembrance Sunday Service and wreath laying.

Bracknell Town Council had also produced a pre-recorded video and the Mayor thanked Councillor Mrs Birch and the Bracknell Town Council's community events working group as well as the video producer/editor for their hard work.

The Mayor had participated in a Zoom call with 2nd Great Hollands Brownies who had painted stones to lay across the Borough in remembrance.

Christmas Card Competition

The Mayor was reaching out to the borough's residential care homes to take part in her Christmas Card competition. The Mayor thanked Councillor Ms Gaw, Older Peoples' Champion for her support in this.

#### Charity Quiz

Councillor Bhandari was supporting the Mayor to run some themed online quizzes and more information would follow.

#### Care Leavers fundraising

Councillor Ms Hayes was delighted to announce that £722 had been raised to support the borough's young people in care as part of Bracknell Forest Council's Corporate Parenting Responsibility. She thanked everyone who had made a donation.

#### Spirit of Fire 2020 Awards

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Mrs McKenzie-Boyle for her nomination for the Spirit of Fire 2020 Awards. This was in recognition of her commitment and hard work raising funds for the Fire Fighters Charity during her mayoral year.

#### Return to Lexicon

The Mayor encouraged everyone present that once the national lockdown eased to think local, support local and shop local.

#### Winter Support Financial Package

Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning reported that £221,000 had been allocated to Bracknell Forest for the Winter Support Financial Package by central government. Funding is for families in hardship and the Council was reaching out to schools and professionals to see how best to support the borough's families. He thanked members of the working group who had considered how best to use the fund and the scheme could be developed.

#### Grant funding

Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance advised that the Council had received additional grants to support small and medium size businesses who had not previously received covid-related support. The guidelines for this discretionary scheme had been released during the week and it was hoped that the scheme would be launched within days. He thanked the officers involved in getting the scheme running so quickly.

#### Delivery of food waste trucks

Councillor Mrs Hayes, Executive Member for the Environment announced that the new food waste trucks would be arriving in preparation for the launch of food waste collection in March 2021. She added that a competition to name the trucks was planned.

### 32. **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 9 September 2020. The

Executive had met three times on 22 September, 20 October and 10 November 2020.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

#### COVID Response & Renewal

- Original Response Strategy was based on five core principles:
  - follow Government/Public Health England advice
  - maintain non-contact services where possible
  - close social contact services
  - support suppliers where possible to retain service capabilities
  - prepare for renewal as well as recovery
- Renewal Principles had now been agreed by Executive and were based on seven principles with a longer term view:
  - Protect and promote physical and mental health
  - Support Bracknell town centre, neighbourhood vitality and businesses to protect economic health
  - Short term support to deal with COVID related spikes in demand
  - Integrate services with partners and locate them within the community
  - Involve community and voluntary sector in supporting people/services
  - Whilst containing/reducing expenditure in the long term to achieve financial sustainability
  - Maximising opportunities to address carbon reduction across all activities to achieve environmental stability

#### Residents Survey: Headline Results

- This was a representative telephone survey covering 1,826 respondents and further detailed ward/demographic data was available:
  - 56% of population satisfied with Council Support for community during pandemic
  - 73% who contact Council rated response good or excellent
  - 20% of residents volunteered or helped in community
  - 93% no volunteering experience before pandemic

#### Public Health

- The Pan Berkshire agreement had been in place since 2013 and the outcome of the review commissioned in Autumn 2019 would mean a move to a East/West split across Berkshire. The new model would increase capacity and provide more local access to the Director of Public Health. There would be:
  - One Director Public Health for Bracknell Forest, Windsor & Maidenhead and Slough (hosted by Bracknell Forest)
  - One Director of Public Health for Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire
  - Two core shared teams (East hosted by Bracknell Forest)
  - Local Consultant lead teams retained (and enhanced with government financial support)
  - East Berkshire – Clinical Commissioning Group collaborative co-funding Director of Public Health to increase integration with Health
- Joint Working blue print was agreed with Clinical Commissioning Group with initial plans to develop joint commissioning capability. The roadmap pointed to closer integration in other support service areas and was endorsed by Executive and Clinical Commissioning Group Place Committee.

#### Planning and Transport

- Government Consultation on Planning for Future was made up of two consultations: fundamental changes to system and technical changes to current

system and housing numbers. The Council's response was submitted emphasising need for local democracy and accountability

- Changes to supported bus network agreed (based on pre-COVID passenger data) with Route 299 extended to allow withdrawal of Route 162/162A. This would result in annual saving of around £125,000. The procurement plan had been agreed for new services.

#### Heathlands

- The procurement process had been agreed for care provider for dementia nursing care and 'hotel services' to complete offer for the new 66 bed health and care joint venture. Frimley Health would provide 20 bed Intermediate Care.

#### Joint Venture Business Plan

- Joint Venture with Countryside already agreed to develop key sites around town centre after extensive procurement

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

- Joint Venture Business Plan

Councillor Temperton sought confirmation that with the amalgamation of bus services residents who would no longer have access to bus services would be able to access a dial-a-ride community bus service. In response to Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport explained that the Council's review aimed to tailor services to actual usage and the areas referred to had light usage. The provision of services through community transport providers was being considered with further detail to be resolved.

Councillor Temperton asked whether a central multi-use hall and good size recreation space would be prioritised in Phase Two of the Joint Venture Project. In response Councillor Brunel-Walker, Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration explained that the plans and business case for Phase Two were under development and agreed to work with her separately to see what could be done.

On the proposition of Councillor Bettison OBE, Leader of the Council, seconded by Councillor D Birch it was

#### **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the first proposed JV Business Plan for the Bracknell Forest Limited Liability Partnership joint venture between the Council and Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd as set out in Annex A/A1 and confidential Annex B of the Joint Venture Business Plan report be approved;
- (ii) the proposed Site Development Plan for Coopers Hill for "Bracknell Forest Limited Liability Partnership", including land drawdown where conditions have been met as set out in confidential Annex C of the Joint Venture Business Plan report and the Council's equal share of funding needed to undertake this development of up to £2.25m be approved; and
- (iii) the formal Incorporation of the JV and execution of the associated legal contract documentation for "Bracknell Forest Limited Liability Partnership JV" be noted to take place in December 2020.

The Council considered a report to enable arrangements for the next municipal year's meetings to be put in place and assist councillors to plan their diaries for the year ahead.

On the proposition of Councillor Leake, Chair of Employment Committee, seconded by Councillor D Birch it was

**RESOLVED** that the schedule of meetings 2021/22 as set out in the annex to the report be approved.

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

i) Councillor Brown asked Councillor Brunel-Walker, Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration the following published question:

*What support is the Council giving to local businesses preparing for the January 1st withdrawal from the EU?*

In response Councillor Brunel-Walker stated that the Council continued to provide support to businesses through a number of channels and this would continue into 2021 having regard to any further legislation and guidance issued by the Government. He advised that information published by central government in relation to the EU Exit was available through the council's website on the Business Information pages. He added that the Council was working closely with the Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Hub who managed enquires and provided advice. He explained that the Council was also promoting relevant webinars and events through other partner organisations including Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business and the Bracknell Business Improvement District. He concluded that specific advice and assistance was also being provided by the Public Protection Partnership and information was updated as new guidance became available.

Councillor Brown asked a supplementary question whether as a local business itself the Council had done all it could to maintain a stable workforce including its subcontractors. Councillor Brunel-Walker referred to the work undertaken by the human resources team to identify those impacted by the changes. Councillor Bettison provided an assurance that the Council had made considerable efforts to ensure that the support provided to our own directly employed staff would also be applied to those employed through subcontractors.

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

*It has been reported that Nationally 80% of Young Carers feel isolated. It is said many, who look after a parent or help care for siblings, face the risk of mental health problems.*

*How many known Young Carers are there in Bracknell Forest and what support is being given to them?*

In response Councillor Dr Barnard stated that as of 31 October 2020 there were 131 young carers recorded in Bracknell Forest. He stated the age breakdown of those carers as below asking that it be noted that in the under 10 category it included siblings of young carers.

Age of Young Carer	Total
--------------------	-------

Under 10s	20
10	10
11	11
12	7
13	7
14	9
15	25
16	21
17	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>131</b>

He explained that during the initial lockdown phase the Early Help service made weekly telephone contact young carers and their families to identify their specific support needs and practical help was offered such as securing grocery delivery slots. He added that letters were written to families recorded as having young carers which invited them to contact the Youth Team directly to review their care needs. He stated that this work continued in the current lockdown arrangements through both the young carer's link and Early Help practitioners in the family hubs.

Councillor Dr Barnard explained that a Young Carers Strategy Group had been established with membership comprising of Children's Social Care, Commissioning, Adult Drug and Alcohol Team, public health, school effectiveness service and specialist children's support. He reported that an updated strategy and accompanying action plan were scheduled to be finalised in December and the young carers assessment had been refreshed to ensure that it reflected both the families' and the young carers' needs with additional staff resource allocated to review all young carer assessments.

He concluded that the Getting Help team in Early Help provided a low intensity tier 2 mental health service which, together with the universal provision from both Kooth and Youthline for emotional and well-being support for young people, were accessible to all young carers where assessed need prevailed. Kooth were currently promoting a Live forum taking place on 25<sup>th</sup> November for young carers.

Councillor Temperton asked a supplementary question about whether young people had been consulted on the facilities and availability of the new Youth Hub provision in Braccon Walk. Councillor Dr Barnard responded that it was too early to say what the provision would look like as discussions were ongoing with a range of organisations and groups. The Young Carers Strategy Group had an individualised and tailored approach and looking to integrate young carers into accessing the provision.

**35. Motion Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 11**

An alteration to the published motion 03/2020 was accepted by the mover and seconder to include reference to partner organisations, Bracknell Forest residents and recognition of those who had volunteered and observed government guidance. The altered motion was moved and seconded by Councillors Neil and Brown respectively as follows:

*"This Council puts on record its recognition and thanks for the resilience and commitment being shown by all the Council's workforce, its partner organisations and our residents, many of whom have volunteered, and who have observed the government guidance, all of which has helped to minimise the local effects of this pandemic"*

On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

**MAYOR**