

COUNCIL
26 FEBRUARY 2020
7.30 - 9.30 PM



Present:

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

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Bhandari, Dudley, Kennedy, Parker, Tullett and Virgo

46. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 15 January 2020 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

47. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

48. Question submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 (Public Participation), Mr T Neill, resident of Harmans Water asked the Executive the following published question:

The Council's published 'Financial Plans and Supporting Information 2019/20' shows, in Annex A, in the table entitled 'Commitment Budget - Transformation Savings 2019/20 to 2021/22', a total reduction of £3,600,000 marked 'AdultsTransformation', also a total reduction of £1,914,000 marked 'ChildrensTransformation' through budget years 2018/19 to 2021/2022. May I take the Council's written and itemised breakdown of these figures, showing specifically from which Council departments and external services you have chosen to withdraw support, and how much from each please?

In response Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance explained that it was a complex answer, the Council was committed to providing the support needed to help the most vulnerable children and adults in Bracknell Forest but recognised that the way in which they are supported needed to change. He explained that the Council did this by putting in place social care services that were appropriate to individuals' needs. The Council provided and commissioned those services from a wide variety of organisations, occasionally using block contracts for things like domiciliary care, more often using individual contracts related to a specific person's needs.

Councillor Heydon stated that Transformation savings did not necessarily mean cutting services but instead about doing things differently with an emphasis on quality not quantity. The specific areas of change were identified and the likely potential financial impact of each of these was estimated. However, he explained that it was

recognised that few parts of these complex systems work in isolation, that one change could potentially impact on another and the timing of the financial impact of any change was very difficult to predict. He stated that the Council deliberately did not include in the published budget plans a detailed breakdown of the individual changes.

He explained that the “financial plans and budgets supporting information” document for the 2020/21 financial year included no assumed Transformation savings from either programme beyond 2019/20 and the previous year’s target had therefore been reduced by £1.2m. The Council was working on future areas of focus, but these had not yet been firmed up or accurately quantified.

He concluded that whatever savings were achieved through Transformation would potentially be counteracted by the increasing level of demand for social care services and that in 2020/21 the Council would be spending £6m more on social care services than in 2018/19, when the Transformation programme started.

In response to Mr T Neill’s supplementary questions Councillor Heydon responded that there were multiple interlocking projects within the programme and it would be counterproductive to produce this. Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Housing replied that a strength-based approach was used to identify the positive impacts that could be made. He added that no one that was assessed as having a level of care received anything less than what they are entitled to. Instead the projects found new and better, joined up ways of doing delivering this to improve outcomes for Bracknell Forest residents.

49. **Mayor's Announcements**

Bracknell Forest Staff Awards

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison OBE reported that the Council relied on its staff more than ever and their hard work had been recognised at a recent award ceremony. Members of staff were nominated for showing particular effort which reflected the ethos of the Council e.g. open minded or respectful. The awards also recognised the collective efforts made by teams. He encouraged Members to thank these teams and individuals when working with them.

Coronavirus update

Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning updated the meeting on the support being provided to schools within the borough and that there had been no school closures. A Steering Group was being formed to co-ordinate the Council’s response and schools would have a single point of contact. Regular communications between public health, Public Health England and schools’ teams had been established to disseminate updates. Advice was also available on the front page of the Council’s website.

Family Safeguarding Birthday

Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning was proud to report that the achievements of the Bracknell Forest family safeguarding team had been recognised by the Minister for Children and Families, and the Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, for its success in supporting local families using the family safeguarding model. The project had celebrated two years supporting vulnerable children and families. The Council had seen a 25 % reduction in child protection cases, meaning more children were able to remain safely

at home with a reduced level of intervention from the Council. It had also resulted in a 33 % reduction in social workers 'caseloads'. The project was a finalist at the upcoming IESE Transformation Awards in the category of Transformation in Health and Social Care.

Promoting Local Democracy

The Mayor was pleased to report that one of the pleasures of the civic role was to work with the borough's young people to promote how local democracy works and the role of Mayor. The Members present joined her in thanking Councillor Temperton for her support at recent events to deal with their questions and curiosity.

The Mayor also thanked Councillor Turrell for his participation in supporting a sixth form student to attend the Council Chamber to again understand how democracy works at a local level.

Travel initiatives

Councillor Turrell had been pleased to hear a number of sustainable travel announcements from government. He reported that the Council used additional funding for subsidised services to protect the bus routes at times when patronage was currently relatively low. He added that officers were looking into the detail of welcome announcements on support for walking and cycling.

50. **Executive Report**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison OBE, presented his report on the work of the Executive since that reported at the Council meeting on 15 January 2020. The Executive had met twice on 28 January and 11 February 2020.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

- Revenue Budget and Capital Programme proposals were being considered as a separate item on the agenda
- Greening waste collection changes would be introduced for households from October as part of the Council's response to climate change. Waste collection frequencies would also change to weekly food collection, two-weekly recycling/garden waste and three-weekly for refuse. Help and advice would be available on a case by case basis for large families, nappies and medical waste. The highlighted benefits included prevention of 4,000 tonnes of waste to landfill, anticipated increase in recycling rates from 39% to > 50% and saving for Council Tax payers of £219k over 7 years. This scheme would be phased in from April 2021 for flats supported by an Overview and Scrutiny review.
- £10.95m was included in capital programme for Heathlands Redevelopment of 64-bed EMI Dementia care home. A 50:50 shared ownership company would be created with Frimley Health Foundation Trust to operate the home. Initial arrangements for using ground floor had been agreed and Stepnell Ltd were appointed to undertake construction.
- School Places Plan and Capacity Strategy to 2024 had been agreed.
- Draft consultation document for Joint Central/East Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan had been agreed.
- Agreement was reached on the procurement approach for Microsoft licencing.

In response to a question regarding whether methane capture was currently happening the Leader of the Council, Councillor Bettison OBE replied that residential waste was currently sent to Lakeside where it was incinerated. He reassured Members that the flue was subject to many different processes and cleaning to protect the atmosphere. Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE, Executive Member for Environment added that methane from the London Road site was used to heat a school's swimming pool. She encouraged members to participate in the cross-party steering group developing proposals for food waste. Councillor Bettison OBE concluded that in the future food would be treated by anaerobic digestion with methane used to produce electricity and then residual material being composted.

A question was raised regarding how the logistics of the new waste collection would be programmed with the potential for congested scheduling impacting the number of bins and residential collections. Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE responded that work was ongoing with officers to review the collection programme and reported that there would not be problems with lorries in residential areas.

51. **Financial Plans and Revenue Budgets 2020/2021**

The Council considered the report by the Borough Treasurer which set out the financial plans and revenue budgets for the financial year 2020/21 and the supporting information which presented the Council's spending plans for 2020/21 and detailed budgets for the General Fund and Capital Programme.

Councillor Heydon gave a comprehensive budget speech placing particular focus on the following matters:

- He observed that Climate Change had become a global and local topic and although the Council had decided not to declare an emergency it had agreed to identify a range of actions that would meet the target of eradicating the Council's contribution to climate change by 2050. He stated that significant actions had already been taken such as replacing old street lighting, introducing new food waste collection arrangements and further detailed proposals would be brought forward in the months ahead.
- He reported that the Council had faced its most challenging 12 months since the Council became a unitary authority in 1998.
- He stated that authorities in all parts of the country were facing significant and complex pressures in social care services, both children's and adults. The Council's focus had been on investing in the right services to reach the vulnerable at the right time. In the past year the Council had seen the costs of providing social care services to vulnerable children and adults increase to £6m above the budgeted levels due the rising number of people requiring support and the high costs of providing complex care services to meet individual needs.
- He stated that the Council was facing £8m of pressures. There was £7m pressure for social care services alone which was significantly higher than the additional grant funding for Social Care announced in the September Spending Review. £1m of pressures were from other service areas.
- He explained the Council had pared back capital spending proposals with only the highest priority schemes being included such as vehicles to deliver the new food waste service, improvements to Sandy Lane and Harmans Water schools as well as maintenance works across our property estate. The Council would continue to make full use of the external funding received for Highways schemes for example.
- He reflected that it was becoming increasingly difficult to identify savings that have little or no impact on service users. Savings of almost £5m had been sought to help balance the budget and the Council would work closely with

- the small number of service users potentially affected by the proposals, to ensure any impact on them was minimised.
- The budget consultation had received 19 responses and though higher than previous years was still disappointing. Councillor Heydon thanked those that had, including colleagues in the Labour and Liberal Democrat parties, and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.
 - He explained that the local government finance settlement had included one further year of the New Homes Bonus grant which was an incentive for housing growth in 2020/21. As a consequence, the Council would receive an additional £1m of grant above what was expected.
 - Bracknell Forest Schools were set to receive almost £5m of additional mainstream funding plus £1.5m for high needs pupils. Set against the increased costs being faced this would mean a deficit budget for schools in 2020/21.
 - Council Tax increase of 3.99% was proposed at the maximum permitted level. This would equate to an additional £1 per week for an average Band D property, and would raise an additional £2.4m. Bracknell Forest residents would continue to have one of the lowest tax levels of any unitary authority in the country.
 - In conclusion even with an increase to Council Tax, savings of £5m and the additional one-off Government grant, the Council would still need to use £0.4m from the Council's reserves to balance the budget and maintain services.

On the proposition of Councillor Heydon, Executive Member for Transformation and Finance, seconded by Councillor Bettison OBE the recommendation as set out in the agenda was moved.

As required by legislation a recorded vote was taken on the motion and the voting was as follows:

FOR (33): Councillors Allen, Angell, Atkinson, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, Brossard, Brunel-Walker, Finch, Ms Gaw, Gbadebo, Mrs Gibson, M J Gibson, Green, Mrs Hamilton, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Mrs Ingham, Kirke, Leake, Mrs Mattick, Mrs McKenzie, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Ms Merry, Mossom, Porter, Skinner, Turrell, Wade

ABSTAIN (3): Brown, Neil and Temperton

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that:

2.1 Capital Programme 2020/21 - 2022/23

- i) General Fund capital funding of £19.225m for 2020/21 in respect of those schemes listed on pages 150 to 152 be agreed;
- ii) The inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for 'Invest to Save' schemes be agreed;
- iii) The inclusion of £3.970m of expenditure to be funded from S106 and SANGS as outlined in the summary report for Council (page 147) and included on pages 150 to 152 be agreed;
- iv) That those schemes that attract external grant funding be agreed for inclusion within the 2020/21 capital programme at the level of funding received.

2.2 Revenue Budget 2020/21

- i) The budget proposals set out in Table 1 (page 3) of the summary report for Council, subject to the changes identified in sections 3.2 (page 4), 3.3 (pages 5 to 6), 3.5 (page 7), 3.8 (pages 8 to 9), 4.3 (pages 11 to 13), 7.2 (page 19) and 7.3 (page 19) of the report, be agreed;
- ii) Fees and charges as set out in Annexe G (pages 101 to 135) be approved;
- iii) A provision for inflation of £1.998m be approved;
- iv) The commitment budget as set out in Annexe A be approved (pages 21 to 22);
- v) That the Council should make additional funding available for distribution to schools through the local funding formula at the level set out in section 4.1 (pages 10 to 11) of the summary report for Council subject to any minor amendments made by the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning following the receipt of definitive funding allocations for Early Years and High Needs;
- vi) A contingency of £2.250m be included, use of which is authorised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Director: Finance in accordance with the delegations included in the Council's constitution;
- vii) Subject to the above, the revised draft budget proposals be agreed;
- viii) A contribution of £0.379m (after allowing for additional interest from the use of balances of £0.004m) be made from revenue balances to support revenue expenditure;
- ix) Total net expenditure (after use of balances) of £90.828m, be approved;
- x) The Council's Council Tax requirement, excluding Parish Council precepts, be set at £63.475m;
- xi) The Council Tax for the Council's services for each Valuation Band be set as follows:

| Band | Tax Level Relative to Band D | £ |
|------|------------------------------|----------|
| A | 6/9 | 903.90 |
| B | 7/9 | 1,054.55 |
| C | 8/9 | 1,205.20 |
| D | 9/9 | 1,355.85 |
| E | 11/9 | 1,657.15 |
| F | 13/9 | 1,958.45 |
| G | 15/9 | 2,259.75 |
| H | 18/9 | 2,711.70 |

At the meeting on 11 February 2020 the Executive recommended the 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and noted that strategy together with the Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement were matters which the Council approved.

- xii) The Council approves the following indicators, limits, strategies and policies included in Annexe E (pages 67 to 92):
 - The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2020/21 to 2022/23 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 2020/21 to 2022/23 and Treasury Management Limits on Activity contained in Annexe E(iv);

xiii) The formal Council Tax Resolution contained in section 3 be approved.

3 COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

3.1 That the recommendations of the Executive outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2 be agreed.

3.2 That it be noted that the amounts calculated for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 are:

(a) **46,816 TAX BASE FOR THE WHOLE COUNCIL AREA**

being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, as its council tax base for the year

(b) **TAX BASE FOR PART OF THE COUNCIL'S AREA
EACH PARISH AREA**

| | |
|------------|--------|
| Binfield | 4,190 |
| Bracknell | 19,846 |
| Crowthorne | 2,916 |
| Sandhurst | 7,932 |
| Warfield | 5,051 |
| Winkfield | 6,881 |

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as amended, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate

3.3 That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2020/21 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act):

(a) £295,729,909 **TOTAL EXPENDITURE INCLUDING GENERAL FUND, PARISH PRECEPTS AND THE COUNCIL'S SHARE OF ANY DEFICIT ON THE COLLECTION FUND**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act

(b) £228,682,173 **TOTAL INCOME INCLUDING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND THE COUNCIL'S SHARE OF ANY SURPLUS ON THE COLLECTION FUND**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act

(c) £67,047,736 **BOROUGH AND PARISH PRECEPTS NET EXPENDITURE TO BE FINANCED FROM COUNCIL TAX**

being the amount by which the aggregate at 3.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3.3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year

(d) £1,432.15 **AVERAGE BAND "D" COUNCIL TAX FOR WHOLE BOROUGH**

being the amount at 3.3(c) above, divided by the amount at 3.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (including Parish precepts)

(e) £3,572,262 **PARISH PRECEPTS**

being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act

(f) £1,355.85 **BOROUGH COUNCIL TAX FOR BAND "D" PROPERTIES**

being the amount at 3.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3.3(e) above by the amount at 3.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year if there were an area of the Borough to which no special item relates

| (g) Part of the Council's area | BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH PARISH FOR BAND "D" |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Binfield | £1,409.18 |
| Bracknell | £1,444.51 |
| Crowthorne | £1,436.30 |
| Sandhurst | £1,430.61 |
| Warfield | £1,397.95 |
| Winkfield | £1,435.63 |

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3.3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 3.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate

(h) Part of the Council's area **BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL TAX IN EACH PARISH FOR EACH VALUATION BAND**

| Parish | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|---------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Binfield | 939.45 | 1,096.03 | 1,252.60 | 1,409.18 | 1,722.33 | 2,035.48 | 2,348.63 | 2,818.36 |
| Bracknell | 963.01 | 1,123.51 | 1,284.01 | 1,444.51 | 1,765.51 | 2,086.51 | 2,407.52 | 2,889.02 |
| Crowthorne | 957.53 | 1,117.12 | 1,276.71 | 1,436.30 | 1,755.48 | 2,074.66 | 2,393.83 | 2,872.60 |
| Sandhurst | 953.74 | 1,112.70 | 1,271.65 | 1,430.61 | 1,748.52 | 2,066.44 | 2,384.35 | 2,861.22 |
| Warfield | 931.97 | 1,087.29 | 1,242.62 | 1,397.95 | 1,708.61 | 2,019.26 | 2,329.92 | 2,795.90 |
| Winkfield | 957.09 | 1,116.60 | 1,276.12 | 1,435.63 | 1,754.66 | 2,073.69 | 2,392.72 | 2,871.26 |

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3.3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands

- 3.4 That it be noted that for the year 2020/21 the Police and Crime Panel have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council regarding the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley | 144.19 | 168.22 | 192.25 | 216.28 | 264.34 | 312.40 | 360.47 | 432.56 |

- 3.5 That it be noted that for the year 2020/21 the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, subject to confirmation by the Fire Authority on 25 February, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Royal Berkshire Fire Authority | 45.07 | 52.58 | 60.09 | 67.60 | 82.62 | 97.64 | 112.67 | 135.20 |

3.6 That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3.3(h), 3.4 and 3.5 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2020/21 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

| (a) Part of the Council's area | TOTAL COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH VALUATION BAND | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| | Parish | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Binfield | 1,128.71 | 1,316.83 | 1,504.94 | 1,693.06 | 2,069.29 | 2,445.52 | 2,821.77 | 3,386.12 | |
| Bracknell | 1,152.27 | 1,344.31 | 1,536.35 | 1,728.39 | 2,112.47 | 2,496.55 | 2,880.66 | 3,456.78 | |
| Crowthorne | 1,146.79 | 1,337.92 | 1,529.05 | 1,720.18 | 2,102.44 | 2,484.70 | 2,866.97 | 3,440.36 | |
| Sandhurst | 1,143.00 | 1,333.50 | 1,523.99 | 1,714.49 | 2,095.48 | 2,476.48 | 2,857.49 | 3,428.98 | |
| Warfield | 1,121.23 | 1,308.09 | 1,494.96 | 1,681.83 | 2,055.57 | 2,429.30 | 2,803.06 | 3,363.66 | |
| Winkfield | 1,146.35 | 1,337.40 | 1,528.46 | 1,719.51 | 2,101.62 | 2,483.73 | 2,865.86 | 3,439.02 | |

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

Councillors Dr Barnard, Mrs Ingham and McLean asked Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport the following published question:

Having campaigned consistently, over many years, for safer crossing points on Harvest Ride, we are delighted with the new Puffin crossing [connecting Quelm Park with Sopwith Road]. This will help keep our residents safe. However, given the speed of traffic on Harvest Ride, a further crossing is desperately needed to allow pedestrians to get from the southside of Harvest Ride to Whitegrove School and Westmorland Park safely. Can you confirm to us and our residents that money for this infrastructure project will be found from the capital budget, given the extra burden of new housing that has been place on Harvest Ride?

Councillor Turrell replied that across Bracknell Forest significant improvements had been achieved in road safety. He stated that reductions in numbers of deaths and injury accidents had been sustained over a number of years. This had been achieved by putting in many road safety measures, including traffic lights, crossings and improvements to paths and cycleways. He added that highways were regularly inspected and safety provision was reviewed in the light of evidence coming from recorded incidents. He explained that provision of appropriate highway infrastructure was sought at the planning stage.

Councillor Turrell was pleased that the recently installed crossing was welcomed and was making a difference to residents. He noted the views of the community and local Members that pedestrians wished to cross Harvest Ride in the location referred to in the question. He advised the meeting that officers had already been considering the future opportunity to provide a traffic light crossing in this location but that improvements of this type needed to be designed, planned and budgeted for. The draft 2021/22 transport capital programme would be developed and he hoped that this scheme would be part of the proposed programme, subject to no unforeseen

budget pressures or emerging issues which take greater priority. He concluded that he was pleased to confirm that currently this location had a good safety record.

In response to Councillor Ingham's supplementary questions he confirmed that he would be happy to meet with residents to hear their concerns and he advised that care should be taken in crossing the road in that location before an additional crossing was installed.

Councillor Temperton asked the Leader of the Council the following published question:

In July 2019, seven months ago, the Council unanimously agree to meet the government's target of eradicating its net contribution to climate change by 2050. On 6 February 2020, a Freedom of Information request asked if the Council had calculated the carbon footprint across the Bracknell Forest area. The response was 'No'. Is this calculation being done now?

Councillor Bettison OBE replied that officers were working with the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) to establish a set of baseline figures for the council's own current carbon footprint. It is anticipated that this work would be completed during March 2020. APSE's methodology follows the principles of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol and the carbon conversion factors used are taken from the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategies' GHG Conversion Reporting publication. This will allow for a consistent approach to comparing emissions and using recognised techniques for future reporting.

Councillor Bettison OBE displayed a slide showing DEFRA statistics for carbon dioxide emissions for local authority areas which showed that the per capita emissions was 6.7 per person in 2005 but reduced to 3.7 tons per person in 2017. He concluded that he believed the Council would be able to achieve carbon neutrality and acknowledged it was the borough's residents who would make this reduction possible.

CHAIRMAN

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