

To: **COUNCIL**
25 November 2020

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Since the Council meeting on 9 September 2020, the Executive has met on the 22 September 2020, 20 October 2020 and the 10 November 2020. This report summarises decisions taken by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Updated Forward Plans are published every Friday and can be viewed online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk. Full details on the decisions taken by individual portfolio holders can also be accessed online through the Council's website.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Council is asked to consider the recommendations set out at paragraph 5.12.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The reasons for recommendations are set out in the supporting information and in the reports considered by the Executive.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Alternative options are discussed in the relevant individual reports considered by the Executive.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Culture, Delivery and Public Protection

5.1 Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23

- 5.1.1 The Executive approved and adopted the Bracknell Forest Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23.
- 5.1.2 Section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 and its revisions places a duty on specified authorities to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" in the exercise of their functions. In addition to the Prevent Duty, the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, introduced a new duty for local authorities to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Fortunately, Bracknell Forest is a very low risk area, but the tragic events in Reading in the summer act as a reminder that we must always be vigilant. The Bracknell Forest Prevent Strategy and Action Plan draws together how it will work with partners to achieve these objectives.

Council Strategy & Community Cohesion

5.2 Recovery and Renewal Place-based Strategy –Covid-19

5.2.1 The Executive approved the Post-Covid Place Based Renewal Strategy principles.

5.2.2 The Council has been responding to the Covid-19 pandemic since early March 2020 and worked to a set of five key principles in making decisions during and after Lockdown. As the Council moves forward and begins to recover and eventually renew service delivery it is important to do so in a consistent and planned way. A set of principles for this period of the response to the pandemic have been agreed to provide a coherent framework for the next phases of recovery and renewal. These are:

- *Work with partners and communities to protect and promote the physical and mental health of our population*
- *Support town and neighbourhood centre vitality and look to support our local economy by retaining businesses in Borough*
- *Provide short term support and refocus some activities to deal with post COVID-19 spikes in demand*
- *Integrate services with partners and locate them wherever possible within the community that use them*
- *Look to involve the community and voluntary sector in supporting people and services wherever possible*

Whilst

- *Containing/reducing expenditure in the long term (including refocusing/delivering differently/stopping some services)*

And

- *Maximising the opportunities to address carbon reduction across all of our activities.*

5.3 Residents' Survey Results 2020

5.3.1 The Executive noted the Covid-19 Impact Survey 2020 results report and endorsed the communications plan. It was also noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Commission had been asked to review the survey and identify any actions that needed to be taken to prepare the Council for the second wave of Covid-19.

5.3.2 The council has produced a Community Impact Assessment to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted on the borough's communities and residents' behaviours. The residents' survey results will inform an updated version of this and links into the recovery and renewal strategy. The survey was carried out by the council's consultation contractor Public Perspectives Ltd using a sample-based telephone survey which profiled a representative sample of 1,826 respondents across the borough.

5.3.3 The aims of the survey were:

Key findings about the Council, community and digital access were:

- **Contacting the Council:** 73% of residents who contacted the Council during the pandemic rated contact as good or excellent.
- **Satisfaction with the Council's support to the local community:** 56% of residents are satisfied with the way the Council is supporting the local community during the pandemic. (This is broadly similar to the Local Government Association's national result and reflects the obvious prominence of national Government decisions in response to the crisis).
- **Volunteered or helped in community during the pandemic:** 20% of residents volunteered or helped in the community during the pandemic, 93% of whom were not volunteering prior to the pandemic. 83% of these intend to continue volunteering in the future.
- **Accessing services online:** 51% of residents said they used the internet in general more during the pandemic. 88% of residents said they are confident to access services online, with younger residents (99% of those aged 18 – 34) more confident than older residents.

5.4 Council Plan Overview Report

- 5.4.1 The Executive noted the performance of the council over the period from April – June 2020 highlighted in the Overview Report.
- 5.4.2 The Executive noted the performance of the Council over the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year (April - June 2020). At the end of the quarter, 97 actions (86%) were rated as “green” (9 complete, 57 in progress, 7 not started or deferred) and 15 actions (13%) were “amber” (11 in progress 7 not started or deferred)). 1 action was red.
- 5.4.3 Progress against key performance indicators across the Council was also very positive, with 28 (72%) “green”, 1 (3%) was “amber” and 10 (26%) were “red”.

Adult Services, Health and Housing

5.5 Future Public Health arrangements for East Berkshire

- 5.5.1 The Executive agreed new East Berkshire arrangements for Public Health delivery, including the appointment of a Joint Director of Public Health for East Berkshire with the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Slough, and the Frimley CCG Collaborative.
- 5.5.2 Since 2013 the Berkshire Public Health System has operated on a hub and spoke model with Public Health teams within in each of the six unitary authorities supported by a Shared Strategic Director of Public Health and a Shared Team hosted by Bracknell Forest Council. However, these pan Berkshire arrangements were coming under pressure due to the demands on the service and in 2019 a review was undertaken to consider the effectiveness of the current model, the changing context and opportunities for public health, current costs, and alternate models. The review recommended dissolving the current arrangement and moving to two hub and spoke arrangements across East and West Berkshire aligning with the health arrangements in these two distinct areas. The East Berkshire DPH and shared team will be hosted by Bracknell Forest on behalf of the other partners but will work equally across the full East Berkshire geography.

5.6 Joint Working with Health

- 5.6.1 The Executive also agreed a blueprint for enhanced joint working between the Council and East Berkshire CCG which proposed potential next steps. This included the option to explore the creation of a joint commissioning team and to undertake an appraisal of opportunities to create other shared teams. The blueprint has subsequently been endorsed by the CCG's Place Committee.

Planning and Transport

5.7 Council's response to the Government's consultation on 'Planning for the future' White Paper (August 2020)

- 5.7.1 The Executive agreed the Council's response to the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future'.
- 5.7.2 The Government published two significant consultations on planning matters on 6 August 2020. The Planning White Paper 'Planning for the Future' set out plans to undertake a fundamental reform of the planning system. Responses were required to be submitted by 29 October 2020 whilst the closing date for responses on the consultation on technical changes to the current planning system was 1 October 2020. Due to the more technical nature of this consultation on the current system, its potential impact on housing numbers in the Borough and the shorter timescale for responding, the Council's response was agreed by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport.
- 5.7.3 The White Paper itself included fundamental proposed changes to the planning system including such matters as:
- The content, format and process for Local Plans
 - The centralisation of development management policies
 - Changes to planning decision making.

The Council's response made clear its opposition to the loss of local democratic control that the proposals would mean.

5.8 Supported Bus Service Changes and Procurement Plan for new Framework for Road Based Passenger Transport Framework

- 5.8.1 The Council needs to secure the ongoing viability of supported bus services whilst pursuing value for money. The Executive therefore agreed changes to the supported bus services and noted the supporting information.
- 5.8.2 The Executive also approved the methodology for advertising the Framework opportunity, evaluating supplier submissions, and appointing suppliers to the new Framework agreement and that the new Framework Agreement is implemented using a Dynamic Procurement System (DPS) so that suppliers may join the Framework at any point during its lifetime.

Transformation and Finance

5.10 Re-procurement of a Neutral Vendor for Agency Staff

- 5.10.1 The Executive approved the proposed re-procurement of a neutral vendor contract for provision of agency staff, together with procurement of key specialist agencies, following the approach detailed in strategic procurement plan.

5.11 Heathlands - Strategic Procurement Plan

- 5.11.1 The Executive approved the Strategic Procurement Plan for procuring a provider for dementia nursing care services in Heathlands and noted the joint approach for working with the East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Frimley Health Foundation Trust who would jointly deliver intermediate care services in Heathlands. The decision in respect of commissioning of hotel service provision was delegated to the Heathlands Joint Project Board which is chaired by the Director: Resources in consultation with the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance. The Executive also agreed to delegate the decision relating to the arrangement between the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group and, if applicable, Frimley Health Foundation Trust for the sharing of the costs of the hotel services and any other pooling of funds in relation to the arrangement under a Section 75 agreement pursuant to the NHS Act 2006.
- 5.11.2 Heathlands Care Home is a major new health and care joint venture based on the aspiration to deliver integrated care to meet growing dementia and nursing need in Bracknell Forest. Heathlands will provide 66 single rooms over 3 floors in a modern, purpose-built setting, due to open at the end of 2021.
- 5.11.3 The Council seeks to procure a care provider to deliver dementia nursing care for complex needs and to flex the service depending on acuity of need and demand flow working closely with the local NHS provided intermediate care service. The intentions are to appoint an innovative, partnership-driven, high quality provider delivering value for money, as outlined in the Strategic Procurement Plan.

5.12 Joint Venture Business Plan

- 5.12.1 **The Executive accepted the proposals set out in the report and in doing so made the following recommendations to Council:**
- i. To approve 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.**
 - ii. To approve 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;**
 - iii. Subject to recommendations i and ii being approved by Council, to note that the formal Incorporation of the JV and execution of the associated legal contract documentation for “Bracknell Forest Limited Liability Partnership JV” will take place in December 2020.**
- 5.12.2 The JV Business Plan determines the areas of focus for the Partnership for the next three years and sets out broad proposals and development timescales for the Category 1 sites, together with indicative land values, profits and funding requirements. The JV Business Plan will be reviewed annually, and its approval must be granted by the Council and Countryside as partner.
- 5.12.3 The Site Development Plan for Cooper’s Hill provides more detail of the specific proposals for this site, which are well advanced and will be further refined by detailed design work prior to a planning application being submitted early in 2021.

Children, Young People and Learning

5.13 Care Leavers Overview and Scrutiny Review Report

5.13.1 The Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel was commissioned to undertake a review into Care Leavers as part of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme. As Corporate Parents it is the duty of the local authority to ensure care leavers in the Borough benefit from accommodation, education and life skills that ensure they have the best possible chance in life.

5.13.2 The Executive agreed the following:

- Review the Housing Allocation Policy 2015 to include consideration of priority being awarded to care leavers where the authority has a Corporate Parenting role, particularly those who opt to 'stay put' with their foster family.
- Review life skills and money management information to ensure consistency of provision; information available on the Local Offer Care Leavers website and consider frequency of visits to prepare care leavers for independence.
- Revise the Staying Put Policy using plain English; develop an easy-read version with foster carers and care leavers and consider extending the three-month time limit when a care leaver can return to their foster family.
- Review the joint protocol between Children's Social Care (CSC) and Housing Team for assessing and meeting the needs of homeless young people.
- Enable care leavers' achievements to be acknowledged and give them the opportunity to participate by replicating the offer to Children Looked After which would be reviewed, and any policy changes implemented within agreed timeframes with the housing team.
- That the timescales for implementing the recommendations were agreed as per the report.
- That the Overview & Scrutiny Commission would review the implementation of the recommendations within six months and host a focus group of care leavers to understand the impact of the pandemic.

6 NOTIFICATION OF APPOINTMENTS MADE BY THE LEADER

6.1 The Leader confirmed the membership of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board had been extended to include himself.

6.2 The Leader established an Equalities Working Group and confirmed the following membership:

Councillor Atkinson
Councillor Bhandari
Councillor Bettison OBE
Councillor Gbadebo
Councillor Harrison
Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE
Councillor Kirke
Councillor Mrs McKenzie
Councillor Mrs Mattick
Councillor Ms Merry
Councillor Parker
Councillor Temperton

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 7.1 The Borough Solicitor's comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Director: Resources

- 7.2 The Director: Resources' comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.3 Equalities issues, where appropriate, have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.4 Any strategic risks have been identified in the reports to the Executive.

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 22 September 2020
20 October 2020
10 November 2020.

Contact for further information

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