

**COUNCIL – ADVISORY MEETING
14 JULY 2021
7.30 - 8.50 PM**



Present:

Councillors Ms Merry (Mayor), Gbadebo (Deputy Mayor), Allen, Angell, Bhandari, Dr Barnard, Bettison OBE, D Birch, Mrs Birch, Brossard, Brown, Dudley, Finch, Ms Gaw, Mrs L Gibson, MJ Gibson, Mrs Hamilton, Harrison, Heydon, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Kirke, Leake, Mrs McKenzie, McLean, Mrs Mattick, Mossom, Neil, Porter, Skinner, Temperton, Turrell and Wade

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Atkinson, Brunel-Walker, Green, Mrs Hayes MBE, Ms Hayes, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, Parker, Tullett and Virgo

7. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meetings held on 21 and 28 April 2021 be approved, and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

8. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

9. Question submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9 (Public Participation), a question was submitted by Ms P Mitchener, resident of Binfield with Warfield as set out below:

“Can the recycling facility at Chiltern View be relocated to a more appropriate and non-residential area due to the issues that it causes with fly tipping and litter in the area?”

In speaking to the meeting Ms Mitchener shared photographs of the issues she was concerned about around the recycling facility site.

In response Councillor Turrell, Executive Member for Planning and Transport explained that the issues raised crossed a number of portfolios including his own. He advised that the need and location of the recycling facility at Chiltern View had been identified during the detailed planning process for the Amen Corner North housing development and had been put in place before any homes were purchased. He explained that the Council seeks to provide opportunities for recycling in convenient locations so that residents have easy access to recycle materials which are not collected as part of the kerb side waste collections. He added that sites were generally within walking distance from new homes and placed alongside other community-based facilities on the site, such as the school in this particular location. He asked that it was noted that in addition to recycling bins, the area served as a drop-off and pick-up point for the Oakwood Primary School opposite, and parking for the nearby green space at Piglittle Field and Keephatch Meadows.

He acknowledged that the Council had received a few complaints regarding excess waste around the site, most of which was clothing, during lockdown periods. The excess waste was cleared by the Council Grounds Maintenance team following each complaint. He advised that the Council had also taken action following a complaint about noise late at night in June 2020. Since that time, he had been advised that the Council had received no further complaints about the site.

He concluded that he was unable to support the request to relocate the facility as the provision and parking were well used in a number of ways, and the Council had been responsive to complaints raised regarding the site. He was receptive to introducing some management measures as and where practicable.

Ms Mitchener asked that given there were acknowledged ongoing issues would consideration ever be given for things to change. Councillor Turrell replied that action would be taken in terms of management of deposits of waste and occurrences of fly tipping. He was confident that Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE, Executive Member for the Environment and her team would be familiar with the measures required to resolve this. He confirmed that he had taken note of the points raised and would pass on the pictures that had been shared.

10. **Mayor's Announcements**

Heathlands Topping Out Ceremony

The Mayor was pleased to report that she had attended the topping out ceremony at Heathlands Integrated Health and Care Centre. Heathlands would provide a 66-bed specialist care facility for dementia patients or patients transitioning from hospital to home.

Councillor Birch, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing added that this was a unique project as it brought together NHS partners with the Council to deliver the facility for local residents. The facility would also provide re-ablement services to support people to get back into the community and he was looking forward to it opening early in 2022. He thanked everyone involved in getting the project to this point.

Visit to Foxhill Primary School

The Mayor visited Foxhill Primary School to meet pupils from the school council and was impressed by the thoughtful and inciteful questions about the Mayor's role in the community.

The Body Shop Refill Station

The Mayor had been pleased to attend the opening of the new refill station at the Lexicon Body Shop which allowed customers to restock a number of their favourite hair care, shower gel or hand wash products by refilling a re-usable aluminium container. This simple switch was another example of how to reduce plastic.

Armed Forces Week

The Mayor reported that Armed Forces Week had been celebrated by a Flag raising ceremony at Sandhurst Memorial Park on 24th June 2021. The socially distanced event was organised by Sandhurst Town Council and was attended by distinguished guests and armed forces personnel. Times Square was also lit up in red, white and blue.

Mayoral Charity events

The Mayor thanked everyone who participated and donated to her online auction in support of SSAFA Berkshire and the British Forces Foundation which raised over £2,000. Nearly £500 was raised at the SSAFA Berkshire stand in the foyer of Tesco Martins Heron. The Mayor thanked Councillors Bhandari, Gbadebo, Mrs Hayes MBE, Mrs Mattick and Turrell as well as the team at Tesco for their support.

Virtual events

The Mayor advised the meeting that she had attended the following events remotely: Keep Mobile; an Eid Celebration Party; Royal County of Surrey and Berkshire Armed Forces Briefing; Berkshire Archaeological Society 150 years Celebration Interfaith Forum as well as 22 Citizenship Ceremonies.

Councillor Bettison, OBE, Leader of the Council

The Leader thanked the many volunteers who had worked through the pandemic as well as those who had supported the surge testing in the south of the Borough. Volunteers manned the site, guided people and also assisted by going house to house to deliver leaflets. The Leader thanked the Council's partners at the Ark for co-ordinating covid volunteers. This is a real example of residents being generous people with their time and talent to achieve positive impact within the borough.

The meeting supported the Leader's formal vote of thanks to those that had volunteered.

Councillor Kirke, Ward member for Bullbrook

Councillor Kirke was pleased to report that he and Councillor Harrison had attended Lily Hill Park where a new picnic table had been constructed from a tree which had to be felled for safety reasons. The extraordinarily long picnic table was believed to be the longest in the United Kingdom and possibly Europe which would be affirmed by the Guinness book of records.

Councillor Allen, Ward member for College Town on behalf of Councillor Mrs Hayes MBE, Executive Member for the Environment

Councillor Allen advised the meeting that RE3 had just started a six month trial at their recycling centre to recycle rigid plastic items such as plastic bins, garden furniture, children's plastic toys and plant pots. 700 tonnes of such waste go to landfill sites each year. The rigid plastic collected would be converted to plastic pellets to be reused in products such as drain pipes and plastic railway sleepers.

11. **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 21 April 2021. The Executive had met once on 1 June 2021.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

- Bracknell Forest Council equality, diversity strategy committed to eliminating discrimination and hatred to all communities. The International Holocaust

Remembrance Alliance – Definition of Antisemitism was recommended for adoption.

- Phase 1 works had been agreed to transform the ground floor of Time Square for the Collaboration Space/Community Hub. The changes would create a vibrant community hub which would be more accessible to public, including;
 - Ground floor café/collaboration space
 - New Ceremony Room
 - Re-imagined Reception/Customer meeting area
- Strategic procurement plan to re-develop Depot site had been agreed by Executive Member. This would deliver a new depot facility plus surplus land for disposal with works due to commence in April 2022.
- Leisure facilities' income had inevitably been hit by Covid restrictions. Financial support packages for Everyone Active, who operate the council's primary leisure facilities (BSLC, Downshire Golf Course, Coral Reef), had been agreed in April and July 2020 and March 2021. This would ensure that activities were able to re-open as the income generated underpinned the £1.3m management fee paid to the Council. Members agreed that the level of Quarter 2 support would be agreed when usage and income data became available.
- The request from South Hill Park to guarantee pension liability had been declined by Executive Members as there was no legal connection between Bracknell Forest Council and South Hill Park and there were concerns about equitable treatment of other charitable organisations. The ongoing £194K revenue support grant to South Hill Park was unaffected by this decision and there was no threat to the premises or grounds.
- £180k of S106 provision for affordable housing had been agreed for the provision of a wheelchair accessible modular building at Tenterden Lodge to offer temporary emergency affordable accommodation.
- Continued membership of Children's Residential Care Consortia Framework 2021 – 2024 had been endorsed.
- Crowthorne Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018 – 2036 had been endorsed by May referendum and supported by 85% of voters. The Plan had been formally 'made' so became part of Bracknell Forest Development Plan and 25% of relevant local CIL levy receipts were now payable to Crowthorne Parish Council.

The report contained matters for the Council to consider and recommend to the Chief Executive to resolve in respect of:

- adopting the working definition on antisemitism
- adding the costs for Phase 1 of the Time Square works to the 2021/2022 capital programme

Councillor Mrs Temperton reflected that the support provided to the private company Everyone Active exceeded that provided to the South Hill Park charity. Provision of grounds and premises did not equate to arts provision, another provider was unlikely to be found and that the emotional wellbeing of Bracknell Forest's residents was as important as their physical wellbeing.

In response the Leader stated that there was no comparison to be made between the two situations. He stated that the financial support to Everyone Active would protect the £1.3m income from management fees paid to the council and issues were as a direct result of the pandemic. The Council paid £194k to South Hill Park annually in grant funding plus the costs of maintenance of the site and the use of the building. He noted that the contributions required to Trust's pension fund had been accruing for many years.

On the proposition of Councillor Kirke, Chair of the Equalities Working Group, seconded by Councillor Mrs McKenzie it was

RECOMMENDED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE that the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition on antisemitism be adopted.

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

RECOMMENDED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE that a supplementary capital approval of £604k to fund the costs for Phase 1 of the Time Square works be added to the 2021/2022 capital programme.

12. **Revised proportionality calculations and membership**

Council considered the report which set out the position regarding the overall allocation of seats on committees following the reduction in the number of councillors in the Conservative Group by one and requested consideration of the consequential membership changes. Conservative Group nominations were tabled as Annex A to these minutes.

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

RECOMMENDED TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE that:

- i) the revised proportionality calculations be agreed;
- ii) changes to the membership of overview and scrutiny, committees and other groups tabled at the meeting were agreed, in accordance with political group wishes; and;
- iii) any changes to the Leader's appointments tabled at the meeting be noted.

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

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

In the last two budgets, money has been allocated to develop a school of 50 places in Bracknell Forest to support our children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health issues. When will this project be realised and the school opened?

Councillor Dr Barnard replied that a feasibility study has been undertaken for the provision of a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) hub that the council is seeking to put forward. The emerging evidence is that there is a need for both primary and secondary school provision. He advised that this changed the shape and

nature of the project to be taken forward. He confirmed the report containing all the options being considered would be shared with Councillor Mrs Temperton following the meeting.

Consultation work with schools would continue in the autumn term as part of the wider reshaping of the high need and SEND funding provision which would include all schools and College Hall, Kennel Lane School and Manor Green School as links closely with provision for Bracknell Forest residents. He added that the next stage of the process was to look at local provision and service level agreements, see what resources and facilities were available and bring forward capital proposals for 2022-23. He understood that the earliest date the facility could be open would be September 2023. Considerable work was ongoing with commissioning of SEND provision following the updating of SEND propels and plans. He acknowledged that this project was taking longer than expected but this was due to the changing requirements from 50 place primary provision to all through provision for 70 – 120 places. He concluded that this change had consequences on the building which could be used or converted to provide this.

Councillor Temperton thanked Councillor Dr Barnard for sharing the options report, noted the reasons for the delay but also that this proposal was necessary to reduce the high needs budget so it would be better for residents to have a local provision in place as soon as possible.

Councillor Dr Barnard agreed that this would be good for residents and that the Council would continue to support families to ensure that the best use of high needs block funding was made.

Councillor L Gibson asked Councillor Dr Barnard, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning the following published question:

What schemes does this council currently have in place to support levelling up the life chances of Children looked after, and Young carers registered with the borough?

Councillor Dr Barnard replied that young carers were not recognised in the same way that children looked after were but additional support was offered through schools to help with school / home life balance due to their caring responsibilities at home. He explained that youth work and youth clubs which were being built up again following the pandemic which aimed to help build resilience as well as signpost young carers to socially enriching activities.

Councillor Dr Barnard stated that in relation to Children Looked After the Council was committed to deliver the best outcomes it could with processes like 'team around a child' to look at education progress, life skills and life chances to focus on building resilience, understanding the consequences of neglect as investing early in children was evidenced to work well. He described the 'All about me' project in which social workers engaged with young people to update a record of what they had achieved and this was not just about school experiences. He added that as well as working with the Virtual school on education provision the Council worked with external providers such as Power of Parenting (POP) Charity pay for programme of tuition and catch up sessions and Champion Higher, a project working with those aspiring to go to university.

He concluded that it was about widening participation and raising aspirations for Bracknell Forest's Children Looked After to have the same opportunities and life

experiences of other young people and support the transition into adulthood. The Council works closely with its foster carers and adopters, residential and others that provide support to give them those opportunities.

Councillor L Gibson asked whether he would support the addition of a cycle scheme for our Children Looked After and Young Carers to support them to learn the basics of cycling so they can access BikeAbility training with their peers during Year 5 or catch up and do this training later if they are already past year 5 as well as provision of a bike bank for young carers and children looked after to borrow safe and correctly sized bicycles for as long as they need them and be taught how to repair and maintain the bicycles appropriate to their age.

Councillor Dr Barnard replied that he thought this was a good idea as children quickly outgrow bicycles and the skills learnt through BikeAbility would give children the skills to safely go out and meet up with their friends. He noted that in particular teenagers / young people make use of cycling as they transition into adulthood. He suggested that the Corporate Parenting Panel could take up this issue and, if supported, work with foster carers and other representatives to see what was possible to further support life chances. He concluded that he hoped it would be for a minority as his understanding was that this was already provided by foster carers but recognised that it was worth exploring the issue to ensure cycling was accessible for those that needed additional support.

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

Motion 01/2021 was moved by Councillor Temperton and seconded by Councillor Brown as follows:

That this Council opposes any moves by the government to abolish the Frimley ICS.

On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

CHAIR