

To: **COUNCIL**
20 April 2022

EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COUNCIL
The Leader

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Since the Council agenda for the 23 February 2022 was published, the Executive met on the 15 March 2022. This report summarises decisions taken by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall. The meeting was conducted remotely and as such was acting in an advisory capacity, making recommendations to the individual executive members who are empowered to make the formal decisions. This approach was in line with the decisions taken by Council on 28 April 2021 to reduce, as far as possible the need for face-to-face meetings whilst the risk of COVID-19 infection remains a threat to the lives of members and officers.
- 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 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Council is asked to note the report.**

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

Planning & Transport

5.1 Bus Operator Enhanced Partnership– National Bus Strategy

- 5.1.1 The Executive agreed that the proposed Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme would be adopted, and that authority would be delegated to the Executive Director for Place, Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, to amend and implement the Enhanced Partnership Scheme to accord with future Government funding allocations.

- 5.1.2 The National Bus Strategy was published in March 2021 and sets out a number of requirements to improve bus services and aid operator recovery from the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. A key obligation for Local Traffic Authorities is to enter into an Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan with local bus operators, including an accompany EP Scheme which identifies the supportive actions which future Government funding allocations could deliver.

5.2 Capital Programme 2022/23 - Highways and Transport

- 5.2.1 The Executive approved the overall Highways and Transport Capital Programme for 2022/23.
- 5.2.2 The overall Highways and Transport Capital Programme for 2022/23 totals £4.013m, of which over 85% of funding is derived from external sources. Alongside the annual DfT grants for Transport and Highway Maintenance, the programme includes further DfT funding for electric vehicle charging provision following a successful bid. Developer contributions via S106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) supplements the programme along with a local contribution from Borough Capital of £200k to support road maintenance and a further £400k toward the essential lamp column replacement programme to address highway risk.

5.3 Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan 2022

- 5.3.1 The Executive agreed the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan 2022.
- 5.3.2 The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan sets out the Council's strategic approach to managing the long-term maintenance of its highway assets and supports key objectives within the adopted Local Transport Plan (LTP3). The Department for Transport (DfT) and leading highway industry bodies consider Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan's to be the benchmark for demonstrating an efficient and responsible approach to managing planned highway maintenance.
- 5.3.3 Against this background the Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan sets out an approach to deliver responsible management of highway assets for the benefit of residents and highway users. The presence of a plan is also key to eligibility for additional highway maintenance funding from the DfT.
- 5.3.4 The Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan addresses long-term maintenance needs and considerations for highway assets including carriageways (460km), footways and cycleways (534km), highway structures (193), drainage networks (inc. 21,598 gullies), lighting/electrical equipment and street furniture (inc. 14,138 lamp columns and 20km of railing). It does not address short-term 'day to day' reactive maintenance functions as these are covered by the Highway Management and Maintenance Plan.

Council Strategy and Community Cohesion

5.4 Peer Challenge Report and Action Plan

- 5.4.1 The Executive agreed to publish the Peer Challenge report on the Council's website and also agreed to endorse and publish the action plan.
- 5.4.2 In November 2021, a team made up of five peers visited Bracknell Forest to undertake a peer challenge. During the visit they explored how the council operates, focusing on five themes, as recommended by the LGA.

- 5.4.3 Overall the review team found many strengths in the council's approach. This included Councillors having a clear focus on good services, effective managerial leadership and positive relationships between Members and Officers. The team also reflected on major achievements such as the successful regeneration of the Bracknell Town Centre, the collective response to the pandemic, and the overall quality of services. The team recognised that most residents are happy with the council's work and the support they receive.
- 5.4.4 Whilst the feedback from the peer team was overwhelmingly positive, there are a small number of recommendations and suggestions for the council to reflect on. The action plan contains eight recommendations, three of which relate to the forthcoming appointment of a new Chief Executive and five relate to the Council's approach to emerging from Covid.

5.5 Council Plan Overview Report

- 5.5.1 The Executive noted the performance of the council over the period from October-December 2021 as highlighted in the Overview Report.
- 5.5.2 At the end of the quarter, 102 actions (89%) were rated as "green" (8 complete, 94 in progress) and 9 actions (9%) were "amber" and 1 action was red.
- 5.5.3 Progress against key performance indicators across the Council was also very positive, particularly in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic with 18 (86%) "green", 1 (5%) was "amber" and 2 (9%) were "red". 32 further indicators have no set target or data is currently unavailable.

Culture, Delivery and Public Protection

5.6 Procurement Plan for Environmental Monitoring

- 5.6.1 That the Executive approved the Strategic Procurement Plan for Environmental Monitoring services and delegated authority for the contract award decision to the Executive Director, Delivery and Executive Member for the Environment. The Executive also delegated authority for enacting the permitted contract extension to the Executive Director, Delivery. Adult Services, Health and Housing.

Health and Housing

5.7 BFC Approval of the Strategic Procurement Plan for Domestic Abuse Refuge & Outreach Services

- 5.7.1 That Executive approved the Council's plan for procuring Domestic Abuse Refuge and Outreach Services under the "Social and other Specific Provisions" of the Public Contracts Regulations (also known as the "Light Touch Regime").
- 5.7.2 The procurement of the Domestic Abuse Refuge and Outreach Service Contract supports the delivery of our Statutory Duties: Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Children's Act 2004, Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 5.7.3 The COVID-19 pandemic has put additional demand on domestic abuse service providers both nationally and locally. During 2020/2021, there was an increase in Domestic Abuse incidents reported to police in Bracknell Forest. The re-tendering of

this contract enables domestic abuse victims and their children to continue to access refuge and outreach services.

5.8 Section 75 Agreement (NHS Act 2006) between Bracknell Forest Council and Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group – Arrangements for 2021/22- 2022/23 and beyond

- 5.8.1** The Executive agreed that the S75 for 2021/22 would be extended by a further 12 months (1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023), while a new S75 is developed for 2023/24, between BFC and Frimley CCG and to delegate authority to the Executive Director for People to agree he extended S75 with an estimated expenditure for the required services. The Executive also approved that the extension to the S75 would cover any changes to the legal footing of Frimley CCG, as a new statutory corporate body – an NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) would likely replace Frimley CCG in 2022.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

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

Executive Director: Resources

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

Equalities Impact Assessment

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

Strategic Risk Management Issues

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

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – 15 March 2022

Contact for further information

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