

To: Council
12 July 2023

Executive Report to Council The Leader

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Since the Council agenda for the meeting on the 19 April 2023 was published, the Executive met on the 20 June 2023. This report summarises decisions taken by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.
- 1.2 Updated Forward Plans for the Executive and other Council meetings 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 recommendation set out at paragraph 5.2.1.

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. The relevant reports that the Executive considered can be found [here](#).

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Alternative options are discussed in the relevant individual reports considered by the Executive. The relevant reports that the Executive considered can be found [here](#).

5 Supporting Information

Culture, Delivery and Public Protection

5.1 [Part Refurbishment of Bracknell Leisure Centre](#)

- 5.1.1 The Executive agreed to support additional investment into Bracknell Leisure Centre through a combination of borrowing and the release of section 106 funding allocated to the provision of built sports and recreation that is outlined in Option 2 of the paper. This investment meets the invest to save threshold through an increased management fee payment to the Council and will significantly enhance the facility to the benefit of the local community.
- 5.1.2 **RECOMENDED that Council approves a Supplementary Capital Approval with the associated borrowing costs already accounted for within the Option 2 figures.**

- 5.1.3 Bracknell Leisure Centre is at the core of providing sporting and leisure opportunities for the Borough's residents and visitors and remains a strategic Council asset following the outsourcing of the day-to-day management of leisure facilities to Everyone Active (EA) in 2018. Investment into the service offer was critical if it is to remain relevant, up to date and attractive to existing and potential visitors. The opportunity to invest has been bought forward which would enhance the leisure offer while offering a positive financial return to the Council

Children, Young People & Learning

5.2 [SEND Strategy 2023-2025](#)

- 5.2.1 The Executive noted progress made on implementing the SEND written statement of action to improve services to children and families and the feedback received from the Department for Education and NHS England relating to the end of January 2023. It was also noted by the Executive that the Council had secured £1m through the Government's Delivering Better Value in SEND programme and in its bid to build a new specialist Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) special school in the Borough, to improve further inclusive, local services for children and young people with SEND.
- 5.2.2 The Executive also approved the release of £350,000 from the Council's corporate contingency included in the 2023/24 budget to fund additional short term staffing capacity within the SEND team to ensure momentum is maintained to deliver the identified service improvements and the SEND Strategy 2023 – 2025, that had been developed through close working with professionals, parents, carers and young people to provide a clear direction for the service in the years ahead.
- 5.2.3 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) had inspected the local area's effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The inspection had raised significant concerns about the effectiveness of the area and as a result, Bracknell Forest partners – the council and the then clinical commissioning group (CCPG) were required to produce and submit a written statement of action (WSOA) to Ofsted that explains how it would tackle nine areas of significant weakness.
- 5.2.4 When the WSOA was produced it had been agreed that the Executive would be provided with quarterly updates on progress made towards implementation of the plan, following each of the DfE and NHS England reviews.
- 5.2.5 The Council's WSOA included an action to develop a refreshed strategy for SEND in Bracknell Forest. The strategy had been co-produced with a wide range of stakeholders including early years, school, and college leaders; professionals from education, health, SEND and care; as well as parents, carers, young people, and children.

Council Strategy and Climate Change

5.3 [Financial Hardship Action Plan Update](#)

- 5.3.1 The Executive endorsed the planned and accelerated initiatives to address the local cost of living challenges to be delivered within the next three months and committed to reviewing the existing Financial Hardship Action Plan with a report back to Executive in autumn ahead of Winter 2023.

- 5.3.2 There continues to be significant financial pressures facing many households in the borough, addressing this is a priority for the new lead administration. The recommendations would provide continued and enhanced support to those most in need with these actions focusing on where the council could help reduce the impact of financial hardship and encourage the financial resilience of residents.

5.4 Council Plan Overview Report

- 5.4.1 The Executive noted the performance of the council over the period from January - March 2023 as highlighted in the Overview Report.
- 5.4.2 At the end of the quarter, 98 actions (83%) were rated as “green” (68 complete, 30 in progress) and 17 actions (14%) were “amber” and 3 actions (3%) were “red”.
- 5.4.3 Progress against key performance indicators across the Council was also very positive with 29 (45%) “green”, 4 (6%) was “amber” and 10 (15%) were “red”. 21 (32%) further indicators had no set target or data is currently unavailable and 1 indicator had been removed as this data was not recorded as part of the Children’s Social Care scorecard.

Adult Services, Health and Housing

5.5 Strategic Procurement Plan Opladen Way Development

- 5.5.1 The Executive approved the Strategic Procurement Plan for the Opladen Way Development to tender the appointment of a main contractor under a traditional building contract to create up to seven new temporary homes. The Executive also agreed to delegate the award of the works contract to the Executive Member for Finance & Business Change in consultation with Executive Director Delivery.
- 5.5.2 In February 2023 the Executive approved the capital expenditure for the implementation of a temporary homes facility. This would be a council-led development to provide up to seven new temporary homes for homeless households and would include a mix of single person and family homes which would be provided at affordable rents.
- 5.5.3 The council had access to a small stock of temporary accommodation to meet the needs of homeless households however there was currently a lack of one-bedroom units within this stock for temporary placement of single homeless people and increasing pressure on the available 3-bedroom properties for larger households. It was anticipated that because of the ongoing cost of living crisis, homelessness demand and temporary accommodation demand would likely increase.

6 Advice Received from Statutory and Other Officers

Legal Advice

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

Financial Advice

- 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.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.5 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO₂.

The reason the Council believes that this will have no impact on emissions is that the report is providing an update on decisions taken rather than proposing any action. The impact or not of each of the individual decisions was set out in the respective reports.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.6 There are no considerations.

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – [20 June 2023](#)

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