

# Buckinghamshire Council March Report

Provided by Cllr Anne Wight

18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## Don't Pay Twice

Residents in the local area who notice highway property being damaged by vehicles or individuals are reminded that they can report this directly to Buckinghamshire Council. This allows the Council to claim against the person causing the damage. More details as to how to do this safely can be found on our "Don't Pay Twice" weblink below.

<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/transport-and-roads/report-a-highways-problem/dont-pay-twice/>

## Electoral Boundary Review Update

At a meeting of the Council's Standards and General Purposes Committee on 25th February it was agreed that a submission will be made to the Boundary Commission about the future number of councillors for Buckinghamshire.

The Boundary Commission are undertaking an Electoral Review of Buckinghamshire Council. The first phase of that Review is to determine what should be the appropriate size of the Council in terms of the number of Councillors.

A Working Group was set up by the Standards Committee to look at the Council's governance arrangements and structures and information regarding the electorate, housing growth etc.

Other key considerations were the future agenda for the Council, its ambitions concerning the involvement of Members in the strategic direction of the Council, the Scrutiny and Regulatory functions, and the role and workload of Members as leaders in their localities.

Evidence from previous reports, submissions and benchmarking was considered alongside new information and analysis including the challenges of a post Covid world. Having considered all this, the Working Group have recommended a figure of 120 Members.

This information will now be shared with the Boundary Commission who will take this into account in their own deliberations.

It is anticipated that the Commission will consider their decision and make it known after the elections in May 2021.

Councillor Jonathan Waters, Chairman of the Standards and General Purposes Committee said: "The decision of the Commission will clearly impact the democratic decision-making of the Council and the role of all elected Members. With this proposal for 120 Councillors, the Unitary Authority will have halved the Councillor numbers from those in the legacy councils. This number balances the need to deliver an efficient and effective Council, while ensuring that the bond and partnership between Councillors and residents, Parish/Town Councils, Residents Societies and Community Groups continues to be strong.

The Committee also wanted to ensure Councillor representation from those who are employed, have families or are in a caring role, and from all ages and backgrounds to ensure a truly diverse

Council to represent our communities without excessive Councillor hours becoming a barrier to entry."

## **Bucks Business First Vacancy Posting and Skills Hub**

You can now post your job vacancies on the Buckinghamshire Business First website for free - and they will automatically be added to the soon-to-launch Bucks Skills Hub website for free too.

We are supporting local businesses, people and the economy by making it easy to advertise job opportunities, whether you are preparing to reopen and #BuildBackBetter, growing and creating new jobs, or looking to help young people take their first steps in employment.

You simply create your vacancy and edit it on the Buckinghamshire Business First website and any changes you make to it automatically apply to the Bucks Skills Hub listing too, so there's no need to manage vacancies in two places.

As well as your **full and part-time roles**, this is also a great way to **promote your work experience and internship opportunities** as the Bucks Skills Hub works closely with all schools in Buckinghamshire and can help you engage with the next generation of your team.

Simply log in and post it for free and our intuitive website will do the rest!

For more information visit the Bucks Business First website or use the link below.

<https://bbf.uk.com/news/post-your-job-vacancies-for-free-on-our-website>

## **Bucks Skills Hub**

The new Bucks Skills Hub website will be the main careers and skills-focused website for Buckinghamshire and we will be providing information, resources and live opportunities for students, graduates, those looking to make a career change, those going through redundancy and those with special educational needs and disabilities.

Talk to our team if you have any questions about the process. Call 01494 927130 or email [membership@bbf.uk.com](mailto:membership@bbf.uk.com).

## **New joined-up TRO website**

There is now a new, single point of contact for residents regarding the legal orders that control traffic and roads in Buckinghamshire.

There is a legal order, known as a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), behind every speed limit, double yellow line, council owned car park, parking bay, one way system and anything else that controls traffic or pedestrians. Over the last year, all the legal orders from the former county council and district councils have been merged into one new system, which can be found on the Buckinghamshire Traffic Web Website and is now one single point of contact for residents.

As well as being able to view the legal orders in one place, residents will also be able to view any proposed changes to the parking controls, speed limits, weight limits and other regulations, which will also be displayed. Residents will also be able to use the website to directly comment on any changes being proposed.

As a result of this new website, Buckinghamshire Council's legal orders are now some of the most organised anywhere in the country. This has meant that the council is able to aid the Department for Transport in Project Alpha, a digitisation project for smart highways and improvement to legal orders.

Buckinghamshire Council Acting Cabinet Member for Transport Steve Bowles said:

"I am very pleased with this new website that allows residents easy access to a lot of useful information regarding legal orders and traffic controls. When it comes to the roads, there is a lot of information out there. It's important to make sure it's accessible to residents, easy to find and easy to understand. This new point of contact ticks all those boxes and I hope that residents will make use of it and find it helpful."

The new weblink for the website is: <https://www.buckinghamshiretraffweb.uk/>

## **Freight Strategy Update**

While we had hoped to have been able to go to public consultation for the Freight Strategy proposals by the end of February, unfortunately this has not been possible as we are still awaiting the necessary legal authority from Hertfordshire County Council to undertake the statutory consultation including the posting of the orders. The proposal recommends the introduction of a Traffic Regulation Order that provides the proposed weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes with an exception for local access across a defined area. Additionally, due to the forthcoming purdah period—during which time it is not appropriate to run a public consultation— it is now hoped that the public consultation can take place just after the election. We are working hard to minimise the delays.