



CLlr Jilly Jordan & Cllr Caroline Cornell

Newton Longville Parish Council Meeting, Monday 16th Feb 2026

Buckinghamshire's first 'Net Zero Carbon in Operation' school on schedule for completion

The 'topping out' ceremony at Orchard View Primary Academy has taken place, marking a significant milestone in the development of Buckinghamshire's first Net Zero Carbon in Operation school.

The school complex, which sits within the Kingsbrook housing development in Aylesbury, will be open to pupils in September this year (the school opened in September 2025 initially based on the Kingsbrook View Primary Academy site). The school which will be run by the Inspiring Futures Partnership Trust will offer 420 primary places with 60 nursery places and a 12-place SEND facility for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The design of the school has been planned so that it can be expanded from a two to a three-form entry in the future, should there be sufficient demand.

A 'Net Zero Carbon in Operation' school is one where no fossil fuels are used to operate the building for functions including heating, cooling and lighting.

The building will incorporate energy efficiency measures within its design. Structural Insulated Panels (SIPs) have been used externally which improve the building's ability to retain heat and boosts its efficiency levels. Heating will be provided by air source heat pumps, which will also be used to generate most of the hot water within the kitchen. A photovoltaic panel array is proposed to be mounted on the building roofs, to generate electricity. Additionally green roofs will provide vegetation for insulation, cooling, and direct carbon absorption, significantly cutting energy needed for heating/cooling, while also managing stormwater and boosting biodiversity.

The school is being built by Morgan Sindall Construction who were appointed by the Council following a competitive tender process. Morgan Sindall also constructed the two other schools on the site, Kingsbrook View Primary Academy which opened in September 2021 and The Kingsbrook School which opened in September 2022.

Carl Jackson, Cabinet Member for Education & Children's Services said: "Orchard View Primary Academy will be the third new educational establishment on the thriving Kingsbrook development, providing school places for local families now and into the future. Pupils will benefit from superb facilities in a modern and welcoming environment which also makes brilliant use of new technology to be very energy efficient."

Emma Curtis, Area Director for Morgan Sindall Construction in the Northern Home Counties, said: “We were delighted to celebrate this milestone moment in the Orchard View Academy’s construction with Buckinghamshire Council and the Inspiring Futures Partnership Trust as well as with the teachers and pupils who will make this school their home. This project revolves around creating an inspiring, supportive, and sustainable learning environment that’s tailored to the local community, making it something the whole team is incredibly proud of.”

Jon Mason is Chief Executive Officer of the Inspiring Futures Partnership Trust, he said: “Inspiring Futures Partnership Trust is incredibly proud and excited to be working in partnership with both Buckinghamshire Council and Morgan Sindall in designing, constructing and equipping a brand new, state of art primary academy to serve the expanding Kingsbrook population. This impressive building will provide an aspirational learning environment where children will flourish socially and academically for generations to come.”

Buckinghamshire businesses invited to join Fostering Friendly initiative

Foster with Bucks is inviting local businesses and employers of all sizes to sign up to the Fostering Friendly scheme and help make a real difference to the lives of children looked after in Buckinghamshire, and the foster carers who support them.

With more than 500 children in Buckinghamshire in need of loving homes, and nearly 40% of foster carers balancing fostering with other employment, effective workplace and community support is essential to inspiring and enabling more people to foster.

Buckinghamshire's Fostering Friendly scheme invites local businesses to play their part in supporting the fostering community, showing that even the smallest organisations can make a big difference by creating a welcoming environment, sharing messages through their networks, and finding simple ways to show support.

Businesses which join Buckinghamshire's Fostering Friendly scheme can demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility while gaining access to valuable resources such as a welcome pack, newsletters, a digital toolkit with social media templates, posters and more – as well as a mention on the Foster with Bucks' Fostering Friendly webpage.

Supporting foster carers through flexible workplace policies or offering perks can make it easier for foster carers to balance work and fostering responsibilities. When carers feel supported, they can focus on giving the children in their care the best possible environment to grow and thrive. Fostering Friendly businesses can also boost foster carer recruitment and retention by offering perks or flexible employment options, ensuring more families in Buckinghamshire feel valued and appreciated, and feel more able to offer stable, loving homes for the more than 500 children in care.

As Foster with Bucks is working together with the national Fostering Friendly scheme by The Fostering Network, their team can guide organisations through The Fostering Network's sign-up process and help employers find ways to support the fostering community, from sharing information or hosting events to offering discounts, experiences, and opportunities for care leavers.

Foster with Bucks is currently inviting businesses to join their Fostering Friendly launch brunch on 29 January, where businesses can find out more about the scheme, network and have brunch together. [Sign up here for the business brunch in Aylesbury, Thursday 29 January 11:30am to 1pm.](#)

Find out more about fostering in Buckinghamshire at [Foster with Bucks webpage.](#)

Buckinghamshire Council proposes balanced budget plan

Buckinghamshire Council's Cabinet have agreed its updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) setting out budget proposals for the coming financial year. The council has once again put forward a balanced budget, as it is legally required to do, but warns that it is doing so under increasingly difficult national funding conditions, including the recent 'Fair Funding Review', which diverts vital resources away from Buckinghamshire.

Central government's 'Fair Funding Review' has resulted in Buckinghamshire losing out by £44.4 million, placing even further strain on the local council's finances at a time when demand for statutory services continues to grow. Also, government formulas explicitly include in their calculations an increase of 4.99% per year in Council Tax. Even with this rise in local tax, the overall 'core spending power' - the total funding available to Buckinghamshire Council - rises by only 8.1% in the coming three-year period, barely above expected inflation and well below the national average increase of 15.1%. Without the 'baked in' 4.99% Council Tax rise, Buckinghamshire would face a further £30m budget gap.

Ultimately, due to the government's approach, less money is available to Buckinghamshire and money as funds are instead being sent to other areas of the country.

Additionally central government has withdrawn funding from key local services and infrastructure, further shifting costs and responsibility onto local taxation. In recent weeks this has included the cancellation of a new Special Educational Needs (SEN) school which would have provided 152 new SEN places, leaving Buckinghamshire Council to fill the gaps.

Despite these changes the MTFP outlines in more detail the significant investment in services and priorities that residents outlined during the budget consultation last year.

These include:

- **£120 million** for strategic highways maintenance and a **further £98 million** invested in other transport priorities including bridge maintenance, footways, drainage, streetlighting and bus infrastructure improvements, meaning a total investment of nearly **£220 million**
- **£49.7 million** on Special Educational Needs provision and a **further £107.7 million** on Primary and Secondary schools, and school improvement projects
- **£108.2 million** on strategic infrastructure in Aylesbury via the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)
- **£46.8 million** investment in waste, including a new household recycling centre and vehicle replacement
- **£28.1 million** to support housing and homelessness including affordable housing to reduce temporary accommodation costs, and disabled facilities grants
- **£11.6 million** on climate change and flood management

Buckinghamshire Council Leader Steven Broadbent said:

"This is an extremely challenging national context in which we have put forward our budget proposals. That said, I am proud that we are still able to focus investment into the priority areas our residents want their local tax to be spent on – roads, community facilities and services to help people who need extra support.

"Overall, however, this is simply an unfair funding system for Buckinghamshire residents.

"Not only are we losing out to the tune of £44.4 million as a result of the so-called 'Fair Funding Review' – which is anything but fair – but our residents are also being let down by central government cutting other budgets and investments too.

"More and more is falling to the council and ultimately to local taxpayers to shoulder the burden. That said, because of our strong financial record, the millions of pounds worth of savings we have made and our finances being in a pressured but stable position, we can still prioritise what matters most to Buckinghamshire residents.

"We are continuing to protect essential services, invest in our communities and maintain our focus on efficiency, value for money and delivering for local people. I urge people to examine in full the details of the budget plans we are putting forward."

The proposed budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) will now go forward for scrutiny before final consideration at Full Council in February.

For full details of the MTFP, visit: [Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 202627 to 202829 and Capital Programme 202627 to 202930.pdf](#)

Buckinghamshire Council welcomes positive findings from LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

Buckinghamshire Council has welcomed the findings of an independent review of its organisation carried out by peers in the local government sector. The Local Government Association's (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge took a week-long look at the council in early Autumn this year.

The Corporate Peer Challenge is a respected improvement and assurance tool used across the local government sector. It provides councils with rigorous, strategic, and credible external challenge and support. A team of highly experienced senior councillors and officers from other local authorities carried out the review, spending four days with the council's leadership, staff, members, and partners.

The review report has now been published with the peer team finding that Buckinghamshire Council has made "a great start as a unitary council". Their headline message was clear:

"Buckinghamshire Council has built strong foundations since becoming a unitary council in 2020, establishing a clear and unified organisational identity. The council should feel immensely proud and confident in what they have achieved in a relatively short time."

It reported that the organisation is well-placed for a strong future, supported by a new Leader and a clear vision for delivering for residents.

The report highlighted the council's sound financial management and strong leadership culture in a number of ways. It noted that: "Buckinghamshire Council has developed a credible and structured approach to financial planning... The council has sound financial systems and processes to manage its financial position both for the current year and over the medium term... It has a good track record of savings delivery and is currently on target to achieve the savings set for 2025/26."

Buckinghamshire Council's commitment to continuous improvement was also recognised throughout the report. In particular, reviewers commended the council's digital innovation and the use of AI to enhance service delivery, as well as creative initiatives such as the "Year of Creativity" and Creativity Camps, which support staff-led problem-solving and innovation.

Despite the financial pressures affecting councils nationally and particularly those in the South East, the peer team highlighted Buckinghamshire's "strong, collaborative economic growth plan supported by a well-established Growth Board, strategic partnerships, and active regional engagement to boost investment and connectivity."

They noted that the economic growth plan focuses on accelerating development, supporting microbusinesses, and developing high-growth sectors to secure future-ready jobs and retain local talent.

The report also recognised Buckinghamshire's "consistently strong" partnerships—particularly with health providers and the voluntary and community sector. The council's focus on early intervention and prevention was described as placing Buckinghamshire "ahead of many other councils still working to embed this approach."

At the council's request, the peer team also reviewed Buckinghamshire's approach to regeneration and offered constructive recommendations to strengthen and expand the benefits of regeneration across more communities.

Steven Broadbent, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council, said:

"I am very pleased with the positive and constructive feedback from the LGA's Corporate Peer Challenge. It confirms that Buckinghamshire Council is in a strong position, with solid leadership, sound financial management in the light of growing budget pressure, and an ambitious and clear vision for the future.

"It gives external validation to the rationale for many of our key policies and priorities, particularly where growing our local economy and improving employment and skills prospects are concerned. I have made it a real priority to drive forward a dynamic and positive approach since becoming Leader and I'm really pleased the report reflects the gains we are making as an authority and the county.

"I'm especially proud of the recognition for our staff and partners, whose hard work and commitment continue to drive improvements for our residents.

"We welcome the recommendations made and will consider how to use them to help us strengthen our organisation further. Our focus now is on building on these foundations as we continue delivering for Buckinghamshire."

Buckinghamshire Council is now developing an action plan that will set out how it will respond to the peer team's findings. This will be published in early March 2026.

The Corporate Peer Challenge report can be viewed here:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/your-council/about-the-council/corporate-peer-challenge>

Supporting children and young people in care to thrive

Buckinghamshire Council has unveiled an ambitious plan to prioritise support for children and young people in its care.

At the Cabinet meeting on the 8th January, councillors approved the 'My Home, My Future: 2026-2030 Placement & Homes Strategy for Children & Young People'.

The strategy sets out the council's plan to ensure children in its care are supported through high-quality, stable and local placements which meet their individual needs.

Support for children in care has always been a priority for Buckinghamshire Council. In recent years, the council has focused on recruiting more in-house foster carers and creating more local children's home placements in Buckinghamshire to reduce reliance on expensive external residential placements outside of the county and to help children to stay closer to their local community.

To build on this progress, the strategy has five key aims:

- **Increase local residential capacity** – continuing the programme to develop 10 new children's homes in Buckinghamshire.
 - **Grow and enhance our family of foster carers** – supporting existing carers and recruiting new foster carers.
 - **Improve supported accommodation for those aged 16+** - providing young people approaching adulthood with suitable accommodation which promotes independence, while continuing to provide emotional support and ensuring safety.
 - **Extend family-based options as alternatives to care** – helping keep families together where it is safe to do so.
 - **Ensuring best practice and efficiency through data** – planning services more effectively now and in the future
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Community Boards Newsletter

In late December we published the first edition of our new look Community Board Newsletter. This newsletter details the local priorities for each of our 8 Community Boards, by Buckinghamshire Council Ward area, along with updates and highlights of our collaborative work so far.

The newsletter demonstrates Community Boards are now rooted in collaboration, not transactions—bringing partners, residents, and Members together to solve shared local issues. The scale of engagement in just six months is impressive and shows that communities want to work together and with us.

The priorities being delivered reflect genuine local need, and many successes so far have been driven through collaboration and knowledge sharing and have required little or no funding - such as encouraging responsible dog ownership and looking at the setup of Street Associations.

[Community Board Newsletter](#)

Fix My Street Updates

We've upgraded FixMyStreet so residents can report problems such as damaged gates, broken bridges, missing signposts or overgrown paths using the new Public Rights of Way category.

Photos and exact map locations can be added, and reports are automatically passed to our Rights of Way team through an improved, integrated system. This **means faster routing, fewer duplicates and clearer updates.**

Report an issue here: <https://fixmystreet.buckinghamshire.gov.uk>



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