

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 21 July 2016.

PRESENT

Cllr D Bowater (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs C F Chapman MBE (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Mrs A Barker
R D Berry
M C Blair
A D Brown
J Chatterley
Mrs S Clark
K M Collins
I Dalgarno
S Dixon
Mrs A L Dodwell
P A Duckett
F Firth
Mrs J Freeman
C C Gomm

Cllrs Mrs S A Goodchild
Ms A M W Graham
Mrs C Hegley
P Hollick
K Janes
R W Johnstone
M R Jones
J Kane
K C Matthews
Ms C Maudlin
R Morris
T Nicols
G Perham
A Ryan

Cllrs B Saunders
D Shelvey
I Shingler
P Smith
B J Spurr
R C Stay
Mrs T Stock
G Tubb
A M Turner
M A G Versallion
N Warren
B Wells
R D Wenham
A Zerny

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs L Birt
N B Costin
P Downing
K Ferguson
E Ghent

Cllrs Mrs D B Gurney
J G Jamieson
D J Lawrence
Mrs J G Lawrence
D McVicar

Cllrs J A G Saunders
T Swain
B Walker
T Woodward
J N Young

Officers: Mr R Carr
Mrs M Clampitt
Mr M Coiffait
Mrs S Harrison
Mr J Longhurst
Mrs J Ogley
Ms M Peaston
Mr C Warboys

- Chief Executive
- Committee Services Officer
- Director of Community Services
- Director of Children's Services
- Director of Regeneration and Business
- Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
- Committee Services Manager
- Chief Finance Officer

C/16/11. **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 19 May 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

C/16/12. **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

Name	Item	Nature of Interest	Present or Absent
Cllr D Bowater	9	Knows one of the Independent Persons candidates	Present
Cllr Mrs C F Chapman MBE	9	Knows one of the Independent Persons candidates	Present

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

None were declared.

C/16/13. **Questions, Statements and Deputations**

No questions, statements or deputations were made.

C/16/14. **Petitions**

No petitions were received.

C/16/15. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman informed the Council that he had presented cheques to two charities following fund raising events as follows:

Diabetes UK - £12,500
MS Bedfordshire - £1,250

The Chairman thanked Cllr Maudlin for her assistance with the fund raising.

In addition, the Chairman had been invited to the Leighton Buzzard Scouts Annual General Meeting to receive a certificate marking the support provided by Central Bedfordshire Council together with the Rotary Club.

C/16/16. **Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications**

The Deputy Leader of the Council reported on the following:

- Ampthill Tidy Tip had reopened; and
- The opening of an extended nature reserve at Rushmere Park.

C/16/17. **Executive Member Presentations**

Councillor Mrs Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care and Housing reported on the work within Social Care and Housing, including:

- Priory View has been nominated by Inside Housing for Development of the Year
- there would be a Member briefing in November on Housing and Garage site development
- progress with Greenfields, Crescent Court and Croft Green
- the transformation plan for Children's Services
- a Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Nomination

Councillor Hegley thanked her Deputy Executive Members for their work.

Councillor Spurr, Executive Member for Community Services reported on the work within Community Services, including:

- the emergency response to the recent flooding in Dunstable;
- the work of Trading Standards including to tackle the illegal sale of tobacco and alcohol;
- licensing activity;
- 5,589 pupils across Central Bedfordshire receive transport to school;
- Grass cutting – the new contract had started and had experienced some difficulties compounded by unusual weather conditions;
- Biggleswade Tidy Tip had reopened but in view of unexpected but repeated accidents by users, would have a modification made to the curbs.

Councillor Spurr responded to questions.

Councillor Spurr thanked his Deputy Executive Members for their work.

C/16/18. **Extension of appointment of Independent Persons**

The Council received a report from the Executive Member for Corporate Resources requesting a six-month extension of the appointment of the Independent Persons for Central Bedfordshire Council.

RESOLVED

1. **that a temporary extension of the appointments of the existing Independent Persons for six months on the current terms and conditions, pending discussions with neighbouring authorities to explore the potential for the continuance and expansion of the Panel arrangement, be approved.**

2. that the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, be authorised to negotiate the terms of the Independent Persons Panel with neighbouring authorities with a view to bringing a proposal back to Council for approval.

C/16/19. **Recommendations from the Executive**

(i) Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021

The Council considered recommendations from the Executive concerning the proposed Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021.

RESOLVED:-

1. that the Central Bedfordshire Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021, attached at Appendix 1 to the Executive report, be endorsed;
2. that the Director of Regeneration and Business, in consultation with the Executive Member for Regeneration, be granted delegated authority to make any future minor amendments that may be required to the Housing Strategy 2016 – 2021.

(ii) 2015/16 Capital Financial Outturn Report

The Council considered a recommendation from the Executive concerning the 2015/16 Capital Financial Outturn.

RESOLVED

1. that the net overspend on the Stratton Street Railway Bridge scheme of £1.3m be approved.

(iii) Maintaining a Sustainable Land Holding

The Council considered a recommendation from the Executive designed to enable the authority to maintain a sustainable land holding.

RESOLVED

1. that a new item be added to the Capital Programme to cover land purchases up to a maximum combined total of £8m for the financial year 2016/17, subject to the revenue impact being containable within the existing budget and the completion and sign off of a suitable business case.

C/16/20. **Recommendations from the Audit Committee**

- (i) Appointment of the Council's External Auditors following the Expiry of the Current Contract

The Council considered recommendations from the Audit Committee concerning the appointment of external auditors following the closure of the Audit Commission.

RESOLVED

1. that the Audit Committee's preferred approach of opting in to a procurement of external audit services through a Sector Led Body be approved;
2. to note that the officers will notify the Local Government Association of the decision taken;
3. to note that any recommendation on the final approach to be taken on this matter will be submitted to Council for approval at a later date.

C/16/21. **Recommendations from the General Purposes Committee**

- (i) **Amendments to the Constitution**

The Council considered recommendations from the General Purposes Committee concerning changes to the Constitution and the Procurement Procedure Rules.

RESOLVED

1. that the changes to the Constitution set out at Appendix A to the submitted report be adopted and approved;
2. that the ordering and formatting of the Constitution in the standard form be approved;
3. that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to implement the changes and take any steps consequential, incidental or necessary to bring them into effect;
4. that the proposed amendments to the Procurement Procedure Rules set out at Appendix B to the report be noted.

(ii) Proposed Revisions to Terms of Reference and Standing Orders for the Wixams Joint Development Control Committee

The Council considered recommendations from the General Purposes Committee concerning amendments to the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders relating to the Wixams Joint Development Control Committee, and their inclusion in this Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the proposed revisions to Part J2 of the Council's Constitution, comprising the Terms of Reference of the Wixams Joint Development Control Committee, as reproduced at Appendix A to the submitted report, be approved;**
- 2. that the full Standing Orders of the Wixams Joint Development Control Committee, including the Scheme of Public Participation, be set out in the Council's Constitution, as shown at Appendix A to the submitted report.**

C/16/22. Audit Committee Activity – 2015/16 Annual Report

The Council received the annual report from the Audit Committee for 2015/16 which presented a summary of the Committee's activities during the last twelve months.

The Council noted that every 5 years the Audit service was itself externally audited. Central Bedfordshire's Audit service had been audited by CIPFA recently.

The Chairman of the Audit Committee thanked the Officers for their work and also the new members of the Audit Committee who had demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm.

RESOLVED

that the Audit Committee Annual Report 2015/16 be endorsed.

C/16/23. Report of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

The Council received and considered a report of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority following its meetings held on 19 April 2016 and 26 May 2016.

RESOLVED

that the report of the Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Authority be noted.

C/16/24. Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel Activity Report 2015-16

The Council received and considered a report on the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel Activity 2015-16.

RESOLVED

that the report on the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel Activity 2015-16 be noted.

C/16/25. Motions

Notice had been received from Councillor Stock of a Motion under Procedure Rule No 17 as follows:

“We at Central Bedfordshire believe that building strong local communities is crucial for all. Such communities bring together people of all ages, backgrounds and ethnicities. This diversity creates resilience, with people supporting each other and working together to make Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work. Hate crimes have no place here, and our Council has been and will continue to be active in tackling such incidents across our patch.”

In introducing the motion, Councillor Stock explained that hate crimes had increased following the recent EU referendum vote. It was noted that people of all backgrounds may be affected by hate crimes.

The motion was duly seconded by representatives of both of the other political groups on the Council, the Independent Group and the Labour Group and the single Liberal Democrat representative too, all of whom spoke endorsing the importance of the motion.

An amendment to the motion to include the word “Council” after the words “Central Bedfordshire” at the beginning of the motion was seconded and approved.

RESOLVED

“We at Central Bedfordshire Council believe that building strong local communities is crucial for all. Such communities bring together people of all ages, backgrounds and ethnicities. This diversity creates resilience, with people supporting each other and working together to make Central Bedfordshire a great place to live and work. Hate crimes have no place here, and our Council has been and will continue to be active in tackling such incidents across our patch.”

C/16/26. Written Questions

No written questions were received.

C/16/27. **Open Questions**

The Chairman invited the Independent Group Leader to ask a question prior to consideration of questions that had been placed in the Open Questions receptacle.

1. Councillor Zerny asked for an update on the delivery of Broadband in Central Bedfordshire.

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources advised that 90% of Central Bedfordshire households received Broadband. It was anticipated that by 2018/19 the number of households would increase to 97%. A further update would be provided in the third quarter of the year advising how Broadband would be delivered to the final 3%.

2. Councillor Chapman asked a question seeking information on the Council's policy on ragweed.

The Deputy Executive Member for Community Services undertook to provide a written answer.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 7.47 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated