

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE SHADOW COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE SHADOW EXECUTIVE** held in the Committee Room 2, The District Offices, High Street North, Dunstable on Tuesday, 28 October 2008.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs P E Turner MBE (Chairman)
Cllr P Penman (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Mrs R J Drinkwater
M R Jones
P Rawcliffe

Cllrs P Snelling
R Stay
J Street

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs M R Chapman
N B Costin
K C Matthews
D Ross

Officers in Attendance:

Mr G Alderson	– Director of Sustainable Communities, CBC
Mr J Armstrong	– Communications and Knowledge Manager, CBC
Mr J Dean	– Strategic Director, SBDC
Mr C Heaphy	– Director of Corporate Resources, CBC
Miss S Hobbs	– Committee Administrator, SBDC
Mrs K John	– Democratic Services Manager, MBDC
Mr C Jones	– Head of Customer Services and Business Transformation, CBC
Mr R Mills	– Scrutiny and Committees Manager, SBDC
Mrs B Morris	– Interim Monitoring Officer, CBC and Head of Legal and Democratic, CBC
Mr S Redmore	– Deputy Chief Executive, MBDC
Mr M Reeves	– Interim Chief Executive, BCC
Mr J Ruddick	– Chief Executive, SBDC/Interim Deputy Chief Executive, CBC
Mrs J Salisbury	– Chief Executive, MBDC/Interim Chief Executive CBC
Mr M Williams	– Head of Organisational Development, SBDC
Mr R Wood	– Head of Strategic ICT, CBC

SE/08/38 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Shadow Executive held on 30 September 2008 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SE/08/39 **MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

None.

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

None.

SE/08/40 **PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS IN CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE**

The Shadow Executive received and considered the report of the Director of Business Transformation. The report considered the Partnership arrangements and Community Network Model and sought delegated authority to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement. The report advised Members about the Community Area Network and included the terms of reference for the:

- LSP Board, including its membership
- Strategic Implementation Group and Thematic Partnerships
- Growth Sub-Committee

Members agreed that the recommendations for the proposed Community Network Model should be supported in principle to enable the Model to evolve.

Members discussed the membership of the LSP Board as there were still organisations such as Aragon Housing, Learning and Skills Council and the Federation of Small Businesses that had shown an interest in becoming a representative on the Board. It was stated that the LSP Board would act as the strategic decision making body whereas the Thematic Partnerships would bring together key service providers and service users for a particular theme.

It was suggested that the membership of the LSP Board could comprise of 12 members by excluding the rural communities representative, as this would be covered by the Parish Councils' representative, and only have one member from the voluntary sector. The LSP Board would need members who had authority to make commitments on behalf of their organisation. To enable the LSP Board to focus on strategic issues Members agreed that the Board should have a maximum of 14 members. The final decision on who should be members of the LSP Board would be taken by the LSP, but the Shadow Executive's views would be fed back to them.

Reason for decision: To ensure that Central Bedfordshire Council had the appropriate partnership framework in place so that it was in a position to discharge its statutory responsibilities to the Central Bedfordshire LSP in relation to the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement.

RESOLVED

- 1. to agree to discharge Central Bedfordshire's statutory responsibilities in relation to the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement to the Central Bedfordshire Local Strategic Partnership.**
- 2. to endorse the proposed Community Network Model, in principle, and in particular:-**
 - (a) the terms of reference for the LSP Board and its membership, to be a maximum of 14 members;**
 - (b) the terms of reference for the Strategic Implementation Group and Thematic Partnerships;**
 - (c) the terms of reference for the Growth Sub-Committee;**
 - (d) the principles for the Community Area Networks and to delegate the further development of these to the LSP in consultation with communities.**
- 3. to discharge the responsibility for acceptance of the Community Network Model to the Central Bedfordshire LSP once 2 (d) is completed.**
- 4. to note the timetable and process for the review and refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.**

SE/08/41

SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS AND TRANSFERS

The Shadow Executive considered the report of the Interim Director of Children, Families and Learning which advised Members of the Shadow Authority's statutory duty and powers in relation to schools admissions and transfers. The report also invited Members to make decisions in relation to admission processes during the transition period and beyond April 2009, including the formulation of an admission policy and coordinated schemes for 2010 and the establishment of a Central Bedfordshire Admissions Forum and appeals process.

Members were advised that discussions were taking place with Bedford Borough Council with regard to the proposed transitional arrangements for Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Council. Arrangements had been agreed in principle, subject to a Service Level Agreement between the two authorities being drawn up.

Reason for decision: to ensure a safe and seamless transition on Vesting Day and beyond and to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligation to ensure fair access to educational opportunity. Importantly, to avoid potential service failure and non-compliance with determined arrangements.

RESOLVED

- 1. to approve the transitional arrangements for Schools Admissions with continuing service delivery by the current Bedfordshire County Council Admissions Team to ensure seamless delivery of current admission process relating to September 2009 intake and the current determined admissions policy and coordinated scheme.**
- 2. that the proposed transitional arrangements for Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Council be put into place for five months from 1 April 2009 to 1 September 2009 so that both new unitary authorities have robust arrangements in place to ensure delivery of the statutory duties and that it further be noted that this has been agreed in principle, subject to confirmation through a Service Level Agreement with Bedford Borough Council.**
- 3. to approve the setting up of a Central Bedfordshire Admissions Forum by December 2008 to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of local admissions arrangements and compliance with the Admissions Code by December 2008.**
- 4. to note the requirement to have in place Independent Appeals Panels as part of the Admission process and that a separate report on this will be submitted to a future meeting of the Shadow Executive.**

5. ***that consultation on the 2010 admission arrangements commence in January 2009 until March 2009 so that they can be determined by 15 April 2009.***
6. ***that the Shadow Executive be the decision makers for the 2010 policy in line with the Department for Communities and Local Government proposed Transitional Regulations.***

SE/08/42

APPOINTMENTS TO THE BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY

The Shadow Executive considered the report of the Interim Monitoring Officer inviting Members to consider further the appointment of representatives of Central Bedfordshire to serve upon the Bedfordshire Police Authority. Bedford Borough Council's Implementation Executive agreed on 7 October 2008, not to support the position adopted by Central Bedfordshire's Shadow Executive on 30 September 2008 and Luton Borough Council on 9 September 2008 that the apportionment of the 9 local authority seats on the Bedfordshire Police Authority as between Bedford, Central Bedfordshire and Luton should be in proportion to their respective populations.

Members agreed to support the recommendation that the Leader would write to the Home Secretary to endorse the Shadow Executive's view of 30 September 2008 and for requesting her to determine the composition of the Joint Selection Committee.

Reason for decision: In order to comply with the provision of The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Membership of Public Bodies in Bedfordshire, Cheshire and Wiltshire) Order 2008 when enacted, to progress the arrangements for establishing a Joint Committee with Bedford and Luton Borough Councils to select Members to represent Central Bedfordshire on the Bedfordshire Police Authority.

RESOLVED

1. ***to note the decision of Bedford Borough Council's Implementation Executive, at its meeting held on 7 October 2008, not to support the allocation of seats in proportion to the respective populations of Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council.***
2. ***to endorse the proposal for the Leader of the Shadow Council to write formally to the Home Secretary:-***
 - (a) ***requesting that in the absence of agreement between authorities, she determine the composition of the Joint Selection Committee;***

- (b) requesting that seats be allocated in proportion to the respective populations of Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council, as formally agreed by both Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils;**
 - (c) advising her of Central Bedfordshire's proposed appointees, as agreed at the Shadow Executive meeting on 30 September 2008, pending determination of the allocation of seats; and**
- 3. to delegate authority to the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, to confirm Central Bedfordshire's proposed appointments to the Joint Selection Committee/Police Authority once the final allocation of seats has been determined.**

SE/08/43

PAY AND JOB EVALUATION IN CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

The Shadow Executive considered the report of the Human Resources Lead Officer considering a proposed structure for pay and job evaluation in Central Bedfordshire.

A letter from Unison (County, Mid and South Bedfordshire Branches) dated 26 October 2008 was tabled at the meeting. Members were advised that the letter was representing the three legacy councils, although it focused on the Mid Bedfordshire branch. It was stated to Members that the Trade Unions had been consulted and that there would be plenty of opportunities for further consultation in the future. Members agreed that the Leader would write in response to their letter to provide assurance that all Trade Unions would be involved in future discussions.

Members were informed that Bedfordshire County Council had just completed its Single Status Project and Equal Pay review, and as the majority of Central Bedfordshire employees would be those who were transferring from the County Council, the best option appeared to be to adopt the County pay and grading structure. A copy of the report of the independent consultants "Project HR Reward Specialists" had been included in the agenda, but it was made clear that Appendix D 'Job Family Matrix' was only an example.

The Corporate Resources TTF had discussed pay and job evaluation at their meeting on 22 October 2008. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources advised Members of the comments made at this meeting and the concerns (a) that the extent of people to be employed by Central Bedfordshire was not known as yet and (b) that the Council should have regard to aspirations within the bid document with respect to costs.

Reason for decision: The Council had a responsibility in law to ensure that its pay and remuneration policy accorded with the legal requirements of Equal Pay legislation. The resolution puts in place the required systems and structures.

RESOLVED

- 1. to adopt Bedfordshire County Council's Pay and Job Evaluation framework subject to possible amendments.**
- 2. to endorse the use of external consultants for this project.**
- 3. that the Leader writes to Unison in response to the points raised in their letter dated 26 October 2008 and provides an assurance that all Trade Unions will be involved in future discussions.**

SE/08/44

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE UNITARY COUNCIL'S SEVERANCE / EARLY RETIREMENT POLICY

The Leader advised Members that this item was deferred to the Shadow Executive meeting on 16 December 2008 to allow further information to be received.

SE/08/45

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN MONITORING REPORT / ICT TRANSITION ISSUES

The Shadow Executive considered the report of the Officer Programme Board which reported the overall progress following the adoption of the Implementation Plan by the Shadow Executive on 10 June 2008. A supplementary report had been circulated on the ICT transition issues.

Members were advised of the current position relating to the key milestones as follows:-

- Line 24 - the second draft of the business plans had all been received.
- Line 39 - the Director of Business Transformation was taking the staff sounding board forward to enable a mechanism for employees to be involved.
- Line 42 - all internal interviews would be completed by 31 October 2008, but due to the delay in the appointment of the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing external interviews for Heads of Service in that Directorate had been held back.
- Line 45 - Bedfordshire County Council's Interim Chief Executive confirmed that the second phase of the disaggregation of County Council employees would be delivered by the deadline of 31 October 2008.

The supplementary report on ICT transition issues detailed the issues emerging from an independent review, by Deloitte, of the ICT transition programme of works, the management of that programme, any factors which may jeopardise the implementation of that programme and hence cause operational problems after 1 April 2008. The report by Deloitte made five recommendations, all of which had been accepted by the Officer Programme Board at its meeting on 22 October 2008, who were receiving a further report at their meeting 29 October 2008 to make sure the focus was on the systems needed for Vesting Day.

Members requested that as part of the Implementation Plan Monitoring Report they receive detailed information on the action plan and timescales for the ICT workstreams.

Reason for decision: So that the Shadow Executive can monitor progress and comply with the requirement of the Implementation Order regarding the need to maintain an implementation plan to deliver the new unitary authority.

RESOLVED

- 1. to note the report and request Officers to provide an Implementation Plan Monitoring Report to the next meeting of the Shadow Executive.***
- 2. to note the recommendations contained in paragraph 1.3 of the report by Deloitte in relation to ICT Strategy and confirm acceptance of all five recommendations by the Officer Programme Board.***

SE/08/46

AWARD OF TENDER FOR ICT STORAGE AREA NETWORK

The Shadow Executive considered the report of the Director of Corporate Resources which sought authority to award a tender for the provision of a Storage Area Network in support of the creation of the new ICT infrastructure for Central Bedfordshire Council.

Members were advised that the figures detailed in the report were within the ICT approved budget, but had to be approved by the Shadow Executive, as the Interim Chief Executive's delegated authority did not allow for her to award tenders over £500,000.

Reason for decision: The procurement of a new Storage Area Network necessary to implement the ICT infrastructure for Central Bedfordshire Council was in line with the approved ICT Programme PID which stated: 'whilst ensuring that stability in operations remains throughout and risk is suitably contained, the concept behind ICT for Central Bedfordshire would be to create a new fit for purpose infrastructure'.

RESOLVED

to approve the award of the tender to procure the Storage Area Network to Supplier 1 at a whole life (5 year) cost of £627,969.

SE/08/47

AWARD OF TENDER FOR ICT SERVER INFRASTRUCTURE

The Shadow Executive considered the report of the Director of Corporate Resources which sought authority to award a tender for the provision of server hardware in support of the creation of the new ICT infrastructure for Central Bedfordshire Council.

A query was made regarding disaster recovery and Members were advised that the Storage Area Networks would be located at South Bedfordshire District Council and Bedfordshire County Council and would back up the same information.

Reason for decision: The procurement of new servers necessary to implement the ICT infrastructure for Central Bedfordshire Council was in line with the approved ICT Programme PID which stated: 'whilst ensuring that stability in operations remains throughout and risk is suitably contained, the concept behind ICT for Central Bedfordshire would be to create a new fit for purpose infrastructure'.

RESOLVED

to approve the award of the tender to procure the servers to Supplier 2 at a whole life (5 year) cost of £752,643.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 4.00 p.m. and concluded at 5.15 p.m.)