

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, High Street North, Dunstable, LU6 1LF on Thursday, 7 January 2010.

PRESENT

Cllr B J Spurr (Chairman)
Cllr P Hollick (Vice-Chairman)

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|-------|---------------------|-------|------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Cllrs | P N Aldis | Cllrs | Mrs C Hegley | Cllrs | A Northwood |
| | R A Baker | | D J Hopkin | | Ms J Nunn |
| | A R Bastable | | J G Jamieson | | A A J Rogers |
| | L Birt | | K Janes | | J A G Saunders |
| | P A Blaine | | R W Johnstone | | A Shadbolt |
| | D Bowater | | D Jones | | P Snelling |
| | Mrs C F Chapman MBE | | M R Jones | | R C Stay |
| | J A E Clarke | | J Kane | | J Street |
| | I Dalgarno | | D J Lawrence | | G Summerfield |
| | Mrs R J Drinkwater | | Mrs J G Lawrence | | A M Turner |
| | P A Duckett | | H J Lockey | | Mrs C Turner |
| | Dr R Egan | | S F Male | | Mrs P E Turner MBE |
| | Mrs J Freeman | | K C Matthews | | P F Vickers |
| | P Freeman | | Ms C Maudlin | | B Wells |
| | M Gibson | | D McVicar | | P Williams |
| | Mrs S A Goodchild | | J Murray | | J N Young |
| | Ms A M W Graham | | Mrs M Mustoe | | |
| | T Green | | T Nicols | | |

Apologies for Absence

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|-------|--------------|-------|-----------------|-------|----------------|
| Cllrs | Mrs A Barker | Cllrs | A Fahn | Cllrs | Mrs A M Lewis |
| | R D Berry | | D J Gale | | P Rawcliffe |
| | A D Brown | | Mrs R B Gammons | | K Sharer |
| | N B Costin | | Mrs D B Gurney | | Miss A Sparrow |

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|-------------------------|---------------|---|---|
| Officers in Attendance: | Mr G Alderson | – | Director of Sustainable Communities |
| | Mr R Carr | – | Chief Executive |
| | Mr B Dunleavy | – | Electoral Services Project Officer |
| | Mr R Ellis | – | Director of Business Transformation |
| | Mrs E Grant | – | Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children, Families and Learning |
| | Mr C Heaphy | – | Director of Corporate Resources |
| | Mrs S Hobbs | – | Democratic Services Officer |
| | Mrs K John | – | Head of Democratic Services |
| | Mrs B Morris | – | Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer |
| | Mrs J Ogley | – | Director of Social Care, Health and Housing |

Prayers

Prayers were taken by Councillor John Street.

C/09/52 Minutes

Members considered the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 November 2009. On a point of clarification, it was confirmed that the request mentioned in minute no. C/09/46 (c) 'LDF (North): Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document' that a letter from Shillington Parish Council be included in the consideration when the relevant Strategy and Plans were prepared, had in fact been agreed.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 19 November 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the above amendment.

C/09/53 Members' Interests

(a) Personal Interests:-

Councillor Mrs Goodchild declared a personal interest in Agenda Item No. 14 'Oral Questions', as she was a School Governor and was asking a question about attendance figures in schools.

(b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-

None.

C/09/54 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman allowed Councillor Stay to speak on this item and to thank Officers, utilities, voluntary organisations and other agencies for their help and support to the residents of Caddington who had experienced a loss of power and gas during part of December 2009.

The Chairman announced that Richard Barker, Caretaker at the Dunstable Council Offices would be retiring on Friday 8 January 2010. He thanked Richard for his long service and hard work and wished him a happy and long retirement.

C/09/55 Questions, Statements or Deputations

No questions, statements or deputations had been received under Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

C/09/56 **Petitions**

No petitions had been received in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

C/09/57 **LDF (North): Site Allocations Development Plan Document**

The Council received a report on the draft Local Development Framework (LDF) (North): Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). Further correspondence had been circulated to Members relating to sites in Ampthill (Swaffield Close) and Langford (Station Road). A letter from Potton Town Council about the proposals for development in Potton, which was not in keeping with the Potton Town Plan, was tabled at the meeting.

In accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in paragraph 2 of Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution, the Chairman then invited those members of the public who had registered to speak on this item to address the Council. Each speaker was permitted a maximum of three minutes. Statements were received from seven speakers on the following areas:-

- land at Swaffield Close, Ampthill - a request was made that this site be included for residential development in the DPD;
- land in Wrestlingworth (H090) – to seek confirmation that the site would not be included as an allocation;
- land in Shillington (H006) and the parish plan – a request was made that this site be removed from the DPD and that consideration should be given to the Parish Plan;
- land at Station Road, Langford – a request was made that this site be included in the DPD; and
- land at High Street, Clophill (H042) – to support the inclusion of this site in the DPD.

The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development thanked the speakers for their comments and responded to their questions. He commented on the extensive review carried out by the Development Strategy Task Force. They had taken all comments on board before recommending the document through to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive. He explained that if the Site Allocation DPD was agreed then a period of public consultation would be carried out. Following the consultation the DPD would be submitted to the Secretary of State, together with any proposed changes. There would then be an Independent Examination by the Planning Inspectorate to consider the “soundness” of the plan and the objections received during the consultation period.

The Leader of the Council made reference to the letter from Pottton Town Council and their comments about the parish and town plans. The Council recognised the value of the local detail contained within the Plans as it represented the local communities views.

Members also commented on the land in Shillington (H006), Stondon (H079), Pottton Road, Biggleswade (HA1) and land at Swaffield Close, Ampthill. There was a request that part of the land at Roecroft Lower School remain as a playing field for the school.

The Chairman of the Development Management Task Force gave an explanation as to how these proposals for these sites had come about. In particular, reference was made to land in Cranfield (Site Reference H322) where a new lower school was proposed as part of the development. There was some concern that if the new lower school was not developed on this land then it would be used for residential housing. The Chairman of the Development Management Task Force assured the meeting that 160 residential properties would be a maximum for Cranfield. The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development confirmed that the land at H322 would not provide an opportunity for additional residential development in the village. The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development advised that any further comments could be passed to him for consideration.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Site Allocations Development Plan Document be approved for public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State for examination***
- 2. that delegated authority be given to the Director of Sustainable Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, to make minor amendments to the Site Allocations Development Plan Document prior to submission to the Secretary of State, and during examination.***

C/09/58

Recommendation from the General Purposes Committee

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 17 December 2009 to approve the Submission to the Boundary Committee for England covering the number and location of electoral wards for Central Bedfordshire. The town and parish responses to the consultation had been updated with the latest comments and were tabled at the meeting.

The following amendment was proposed and seconded:-

“To amend recommendation 1 contained within the agenda, by the addition of the following words at the end of the recommendation:-

subject to the proposed two member ward for Aspley Guise and Westoning being split into two single member wards, comprising:-

- a) one ward for Flitton and Greenfield, Pulloxhill, Westoning and Tingrith Parishes; and
- b) one ward for Aspley Guise, Aspley Heath, Husborne Crawley, Battlesden, Eversholt, Milton Bryan, Potsgrove and Woburn Parishes”.

This amendment was **carried**.

A further amendment was proposed and seconded as follows:-

- “1. to endorse an alternative proposed pattern of wards;
2. to note the responses received from the Town and Parish Councils;
3. to approve the supporting script for submission to the Boundary Committee for England on the number and location of electoral wards for Central Bedfordshire; and
4. to authorise the Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Group, to respond to questions raised by the Boundary Committee regarding the submission.”

Members discussed this amendment and in particular, the sizing of the wards as some members preferred to see 1 or 2 member wards and not 3 member wards.

A motion was then proposed and seconded to put the amendment to the vote. This was **lost**.

A vote was taken on the amendment and was **lost**.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote and it was:-

RESOLVED

- 1. to endorse the proposed pattern of wards set out in Appendix A of the submitted report subject to the proposed two member wards for Aspley Guise and Westoning being split into two single member wards, comprising:-**
 - a) one ward for Flitton and Greenfield, Pulloxhill, Westoning and Tingrith parishes; and**
 - b) one ward for Aspley Guise, Aspley Heath, Husborne Crawley, Battlesden, Eversholt, Milton Bryan, Potsgrove and Woburn parishes.**
- 2. to note the responses received from the Town and Parish Councils**

3. ***to approve the Submission to the Boundary Committee for England on the number and location of electoral wards for Central Bedfordshire***
4. ***to authorise the Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Review Working Group, to respond to questions raised by the Boundary Committee regarding the Submission.***

C/09/59 **Decisions Taken by the Leader of the Council**

Members noted the in-year changes to delegations made by the Leader of the Council in accordance with paragraph 1.4 of Part C4 of the Constitution.

C/09/60 **Report of the Chairman of the Audit Committee**

Members noted the bi-annual report of the Chairman of the Audit Committee required under item 6.2.2 of the Committee's Terms of Reference.

C/09/61 **Report of the Bedfordshire Police Authority**

A report from the meeting of the Bedfordshire Police Authority held on 11 December 2009 was submitted.

Councillor Hollick, representative of the Police Authority, elaborated on some of the issues in the submitted report.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

C/09/62 **Report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority**

A report from the meeting of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority held on 11 December 2009 was submitted.

Councillor Street, representative of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority, presented the submitted report.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

C/09/63 **Written Questions (if any)**

The Chairman had accepted an urgent question from Councillor Dr Egan as it related to the current weather conditions. A copy of the question had been tabled. The question related to the gritting and snow clearance and the concerns for elderly and vulnerable residents during this period of cold weather.

The Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities advised Members that Officers would be considering the feasibility and affordability of the proposals set out in the question. He agreed to look into the suggestion of employing unemployed people to clear snow and the uncertainty of who would be legally responsible if someone fell over on paths after they had been cleared of snow and ice. He advised Members that the Council did not have any powers to insist that the proprietors of the car parks make arrangements for them to be cleared of snow and ice.

The Department for Transport was now monitoring all salt supplies and would be managing the distribution of deliveries. During this prolonged spell of cold and icy weather, the Council was also manually salting pedestrian areas in town centres and replenishing salt bins wherever possible.

The Portfolio Holder for Social Care, Health and Housing had been corresponding with the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities with regard to helping the vulnerable and elderly during this period of cold weather.

C/09/64 **Oral Questions**

The Chairman presided over oral questions asked of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holders, the Chairman of a Committee or a Member representing the Bedfordshire Police Authority or the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority under Council Procedure Rule 12.7.

- 1) Councillor Mrs Chapman MBE asked a question about the work and achievements of the Marston Vale Trust and the Marston Vale Forest Centre.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Regeneration advised Members that the former Mid Bedfordshire District Councillors would be aware of the Marston Vale Forest Centre. He advised that he would arrange for the Centre to give a presentation to Members.

- 2) Councillor Dr Egan enquired how many care homes the Portfolio Holder for Social Care, Health and Housing had visited and about the quality of the care homes.

The Portfolio Holder for Social Care, Health and Housing responded that she had not yet visited any care homes within Central Bedfordshire under her role as Portfolio Holder since June 2009, however in her professional capacity she represented a company who supplied care workers and had visited around 40-50 care homes in and around the Central Bedfordshire area.

- 3) Councillor Mrs Goodchild asked a question about school attendance figures and the disparity in the number of days that each school was open over the course of the year, including those days where schools were closed due to bad weather.

The Assistant to the Portfolio Holders for Children's Services and Leisure and Culture advised Members that Head teachers, in consultation with the Chair of Governors, decided whether a school should open. Attendance figures were reported on schools in comparison tables and therefore adverse conditions could affect this. The idea of publicising supplementary tables to indicate if the adverse weather had affected the data could be looked into.

- 4) Councillor Aldis asked a question regarding Central Bedfordshire Council's food waste collection and the stickers provided for the waste bags.

The Assistant to the Safer and Stronger Communities Portfolio Holder advised that residents who had their food waste collected should be supplied with these stickers.

- 5) Councillor Aldis asked a question regarding the continuation of the BEaR project.

The Assistant to the Safer and Stronger Communities Portfolio Holder advised Members that the BEaR project would be continuing without the input from Bedford Borough Council and Luton Borough Council. The BEaR project would look at an environmental friendly sustainable solution for disposing of Central Bedfordshire's waste. A report was due to be submitted to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive before March 2010.

C/09/65

Motions (if any)

No motions had been received from Members of the Council under Rule No. 16.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 8.50 p.m.)