

Central Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



please ask for Sandra Hobbs
direct line 0300 300 5257
date 22 December 2009

NOTICE OF MEETING

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Date & Time

Thursday, 7 January 2010 at 6.30 p.m.

Venue at

**Council Chamber, Council Offices, High Street North,
Dunstable, LU6 1LF**

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL:

***MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS
MEETING***

AGENDA

Prayers

Prayers to be taken by Reverend Grant Fellows of All Saints Parish Church, Leighton Buzzard.

1. **Apologies**

The Chairman to ask for any apologies received in advance of the meeting.
The Chairman to ask the meeting if there are any other apologies to be recorded.

2. **Minutes**

To approve the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 November 2009 (enclosed pages 5 to 14).

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members declarations and the **nature** in relation to:-

- (a) personal interests in any agenda item
- (b) personal and prejudicial interests in any agenda item.

4. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman to make any announcements or communications.

5. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements or deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Petitions**

To receive and discuss petitions in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out at Annex 2 of part A4 of the Constitution.

7. **LDF (North): Site Allocations Development Plan Document**

The report considers this draft Development Plan Document (DPD) and recommends that it is subject to public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State.

(Attached pages 15 to 26 –Please note that Appendix 2 the Draft Site Allocations Development Plan Document to this item has been circulated separately to the agenda)

8. **Recommendation from the General Purposes Committee**

To consider the recommendation from the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 17 December 2009 and answer questions asked under Rule No. 12.1

(Attached pages 27 to 72)

9. **Decisions Taken by the Leader of the Council**

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

(Attached pages 73 to 74)

10. **Report of the Chairman of the Audit Committee**

To receive and consider the bi-annual report of the Chairman of the Audit Committee required under Item 6.2.2 of the Committee's Terms of Reference and answer questions asked under Rule No. 12.1.

(Attached pages 75 to 78)

11. **Report of the Bedfordshire Police Authority**

To receive and consider the report of the Bedfordshire Police Authority and answer questions asked under Rule No. 12.1.

(Attached pages 79 to 82)

12. **Report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority**

To receive and consider the report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority and answer questions asked under Rule No. 12.1.

(Attached pages 83 to 86)

13. **Written Questions (if any)**

To answer written questions from members of the Council under Rule No. 12.2.

14. **Oral Questions**

To answer oral questions asked by members of the Council under Rule No. 12.7.

15. **Motions (if any)**

To consider motions by members of the Council under Rule No. 16 in the order received.

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL** held in the Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 19 November 2009.

PRESENT

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

Cllrs	P N Aldis	Cllrs	M Gibson	Cllrs	D McVicar
	R A Baker		Mrs S A Goodchild		J Murray
	Mrs A Barker		Ms A M W Graham		Mrs M Mustoe
	A R Bastable		T Green		A Northwood
	R D Berry		Mrs D B Gurney		Ms J Nunn
	L Birt		Mrs C Hegley		P Rawcliffe
	P A Blaine		D J Hopkin		A A J Rogers
	D Bowater		J G Jamieson		A Shadbolt
	A D Brown		K Janes		K Sharer
	Mrs C F Chapman MBE		R W Johnstone		P Snelling
	J A E Clarke		D Jones		Miss A Sparrow
	N B Costin		M R Jones		R C Stay
	I Dalgarno		J Kane		J Street
	Mrs R J Drinkwater		D J Lawrence		G Summerfield
	P A Duckett		Mrs J G Lawrence		A M Turner
	Dr R Egan		Mrs A M Lewis		Mrs C Turner
	A Fahn		H J Lockey		Mrs P E Turner MBE
	Mrs J Freeman		S F Male		B Wells
	D J Gale		K C Matthews		J N Young
	Mrs R B Gammons		Ms C Maudlin		

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	P Freeman	Cllrs	J A G Saunders	Cllrs	P Williams
	T Nicols		P F Vickers		

Officers in Attendance	Mr G Alderson	Director of Sustainable Communities
	Mr R Carr	Chief Executive
	Mr R Ellis	Director of Business Transformation
	Mr C Heaphy	Director of Corporate Resources
	Mrs S Hobbs	Democratic Services Officer
	Mrs K John	Head of Democratic Services
	Mr D Jones	Interim Assistant Director for Commissioning and Strategy
	Mr R Mills	Committee Services Manager
	Mrs B Morris	Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
	Mr M Pratt	Assistant Director Children's Specialist Services

Prayers

Prayers were taken by Reverend Caren Topley.

Adjournment - Presentation by the Reserve Forces & Cadets Association for East Anglia

Council adjourned for 30 minutes as Members welcomed Colonel Jackson and Major Powell from the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for East Anglia to Central Bedfordshire Council. Colonel Jackson gave an oral presentation on:-

- defence - including the national security review and a comprehensive governance review;
- operations – including Afghanistan, Iraq, Northern Ireland;
- ‘firm base’ – supporting the armed forces and engaging the community; and
- Reserves and Cadets – on 4 July 2010 the cadets would be celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Army Cadets. He also commented on Supporting Britain’s Reservists and Employers (SaBRE).

Colonel Jackson responded to questions put to him by Members.

C/09/41

Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 September 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

C/09/42

Members' Interests

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

None.

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

None.

C/09/43

Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman welcomed the new Chief Executive, Richard Carr to his first Council meeting at Central Bedfordshire Council.

The Chairman advised Members that Central Bedfordshire Council had won an award for the best Traffic Flow Improvement Scheme of the Year for the Leighton Buzzard Traffic Calming Scheme. The Chairman thanked the Officers involved, including Basil Jackson and David Bowie and from Amey, Jon Shortland, Anthony Hood, Alan Trill and Steve Hall and presented them with the award.

C/09/44 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

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

C/09/45 **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/09/46 **Recommendations from the Executive**

Executive – 13 October 2009

(a) Customer Services Strategy

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 13 October 2009 proposing the adoption of the Customer Services Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council.

RESOLVED

that the Customer Services Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council, as set out in Appendix A to the submitted report, be adopted.

(b) Review of Fees and Charges Policy

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 13 October 2009 proposing the adoption of the Fees and Charges Policy.

RESOLVED

that the Fees and Charges Policy, as set out in Appendix A to the submitted report, be adopted.

Executive – 10 November 2009**(c) LDF (North): Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document**

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 10 November 2009 proposing the adoption of the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document.

The Leader of the Council had circulated letters from the Chairman of Potton Town Plan and the Potton Town Clerk about how proposed development in the town was being approached. The letter also mentioned that consideration should be given to the Potton Town Plan as to where development should take place. A request was made that a letter from Shillington Parish Council be included in the consideration.

A Member asked why apparently the former Mid Bedfordshire Planning Department had not responded to a letter sent to them in October 2007. The Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Regeneration advised that he would arrange to provide a written response to the Member.

Members also queried the status of parish plans in relation to site selection. The Leader of the Council referred to a paper which was being produced on this topic and commented on the importance of having a clear development framework in place to avert the prospect of speculative development.

She circulated an additional recommendation as follows:-

“that the Leader, in consultation with the Director of Sustainable Communities, be authorised to make typographical and other inconsequential corrections to the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, prior to publication of the document.”

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, as set out in the Executive report of 10 November 2009, be adopted**
- 2. that the Leader, in consultation with the Director of Sustainable Communities, be authorised to make typographical and other inconsequential corrections to the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, prior to publication of the document.**

(d) LDF (North): Site Allocations Development Plan Document

Members were advised that the LDF (North): Site Allocations Development Plan Document had been withdrawn from the Council meeting to allow time for a fully worked up version of the Development Plan Document to be prepared. The final document would include a number of site specific policies that set out the details of the proposals for each site, any infrastructure requirements and any associated community benefits that might arise.

Due to the short period of time between the Executive meeting on 10 November 2009 and the Council meeting, it had not been possible to complete work on this document. Therefore, this item would not be considered until the Council meeting on 7 January 2010.

(e) Review of Capital Programme

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 10 November 2009 proposing the approval of the revised General Fund Capital Programme for 2009/10 and the Revised Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2009/10.

The Leader of the Council circulated a revised recommendation 3 as follows:-

“That the Council:-

- (a) utilises a further £8.887m of its own resources through the use of unapplied capital receipts and borrowing to fund the 2009/10 Capital Programme
- (b) notes that any borrowing will be undertaken within Central Bedfordshire’s operational boundary under the Prudential Code.”

A Member queried whether any funds for Tithe Farm Lower School, Houghton Regis were likely to be diverted to Roecroft Lower School, Stotfold for improvements and when the improvement work would begin. The Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services advised that she would provide a written response to the Member.

Members also raised questions about capital provision for the Luton Dunstable Guided Busway, which it was noted was due to be discussed shortly by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee and about future support for registered social landlords to provide more affordable housing.

Members were advised that the recommendation set out on page 5 of the Chairman’s briefing note was no longer required.

RESOLVED

1. that the revised General Fund Capital Programme for 2009/10, attached as Appendices B1 to B5 set out in the Chairman's briefing note be approved
2. that the revised Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2009/10, attached at Appendix E to the Executive agenda of 10 November 2009 be approved
3. that the Council:-
 - a. utilises a further £8.887m of its own resources through the use of unapplied capital receipts and borrowing to fund the 2009/10 Capital Programme
 - b. notes that any borrowing will be undertaken within Central Bedfordshire's operational boundary under the Prudential Code.

C/09/47

Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group

Constitution Advisory Group – 9 November 2009

(a) Review of Capital Programme Processes

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Constitution Advisory Group held on 9 November 2009 covering the procedures relating to the Capital Programme.

RESOLVED

1. *that Section 4.9 of the Code of Financial Governance (Part I2) be replaced by a new Section 4.9 as set out in Appendix A to Agenda Item 8 – Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group as set out in the Chairman's briefing note*
2. *that in Part C2, paragraph 1.3.3, the word 'project initiation document' be replaced by 'detailed business case'*
3. *that, as a general principle, future delegations requiring sanction by a Portfolio Holder should be phrased as being to the relevant Portfolio Holder in consultation with the relevant Director, rather than vice versa.*

(b) Key Decisions/Delegations

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Constitution Advisory Group held on 9 November 2009 covering the definition of a key decision and the delegation arrangements.

The Council also noted that the Leader had agreed a general scheme of delegation to the relevant Portfolio Holder in each case to authorise savings or expenditure between £200,001 and £500,000 inclusive (revenue per annum or capital whole life/total contract value), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources, the relevant Director and the Director of Corporate Resources. The delegation was also subject to compliance with Rule 19 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules. Authority for approving savings or expenditure over £500,000 (revenue per annum or capital whole life/total contract value) continued to rest with the full Executive.

RESOLVED

1. ***that Paragraph 1.2 of Part C2 (Key Decisions and the Forward Plan) be amended to read:***

“For the purposes of 1.1.1 above, savings or expenditure are significant if they exceed £200,000 per annum (revenue) or £200,000 whole life cost (capital), or 10% of the budget for the cost centre concerned, whichever is the smaller.”

2. ***that the thresholds in recommendation 1 above and in the Leader’s delegation be applied to the Code of Procurement Governance (Part I3, paragraph 5.1) and Land Acquisitions and Disposals (Part H3 – paragraph 4.6.71).***

(c) NHS Campus Closure Programme

The Council noted that the Leader had agreed a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Social Care, Health and Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources, the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing and the Director of Corporate Resources to approve individual projects, without financial limitation, under the NHS Campus Closure Capital Grant Programme, subject to the criteria set out in paragraph 4 of the report at agenda item 19 to the Executive on 15 September 2009 (i.e. projects signed off by the Learning Disabilities Leadership Group). The delegation would be subject to (a) consideration of the detailed business cases for each project; and (b) compliance with Rule 19 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in respect of any key decision.

(d) Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Confidential Reporting (“Whistleblowing”) Policy

The Council received and considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Constitution Advisory Group held on 9 November 2009 proposing the inclusion of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and the Confidential Reporting (“Whistleblowing”) Policy within the Constitution.

RESOLVED

1. ***that the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy set out in Appendix B to Agenda Item 8 – Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group, as set out in the Chairman’s briefing note, be included in the Constitution under Part I1 – Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters***

2. ***that the Confidential Reporting (“Whistleblowing”) Policy set out in Appendix C to Agenda Item 8 – Recommendations from the Constitution Advisory Group, as set out in the Chairman’s briefing note, be included in the Ethical Framework appended to the Constitution.***

C/09/48 **Report of the Bedfordshire Police Authority**

A report from the meeting of the Bedfordshire Police Authority held on 23 October 2009 was submitted.

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

Members were advised if they had individual questions about policing in their ward these could be emailed to Councillor Hollick for his comments.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

C/09/49 **Written Questions (if any)**

No written questions had been received from Members of the Council under Rule No. 12.2.

C/09/50 **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.

In response to a question from Councillor Birt concerning the condition of the accommodation at Campton Lower School, the Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services advised Members that a survey of all schools was being carried out and once the results of this were known, Officers would be able to prioritise school improvements.

In response to a question from Councillor Aldis on residents' concerns about inappropriate parking in town centres and what the Council could do to ease the problems, the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities explained that the Executive would be considering a policy on parking and traffic congestion, which would reflect the authority's enforcement role.

In response to a question from Councillor Mrs Chapman about Central Bedfordshire Council's response to the motion agreed by Milton Keynes Council proposing the extension of Milton Keynes boundary to include parts of Aspley Guise, the Leader of the Council explained that a press release had been prepared and that she would check if it had been issued. She emphasised that there was no desire for any part of Central Bedfordshire to merge with Milton Keynes. She would shortly be meeting with Members from Milton Keynes Council, Buckinghamshire County Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council to discuss this matter.

In response to a question from Councillor Snelling about the Council's finances and whether (a) residents in the former South Bedfordshire area would see their Council tax equalised with the residents in the former Mid Bedfordshire area from 1 April 2010 and (b) members and residents receive open and honest consultation about possible reductions in services next year, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources explained that it had been a difficult year pulling together a budget for the new authority from the three legacy authorities, but an initial deficit of 5% had been reduced by identifying savings. The Council's ambition was that the Council Tax would be harmonised by the end of year 2. Proposals for further savings in 2010/11 would be coming to the Executive on 8 December 2009 and Members would have an opportunity to consider the budget through the Overview and Scrutiny Committees prior to the Executive submitting final proposals to Council on 25 February 2010.

In response to a question from Councillor Gibson about the Council's official position on the Covanta proposals, the Assistant to the Portfolio Holder for Safer and Stronger Communities advised Members that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be considering the BEaR project on 24 November 2009 before being considered by the Executive on 8 December 2009.

In response to a question from Councillor Stay about the breakdown of the transition budget, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources advised that he would organise a meeting to provide these details.

In response to a question from Councillor Shadbolt about Bedford Borough Council's decision to adopt a two-tier education system, the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services advised that there were no current plans to do the same in Central Bedfordshire. Central Bedfordshire Council was working on the transforming teaching and learning agenda in partnership with schools and governing bodies. Officers had prepared a letter for schools which bordered Bedford Borough to send out to parents to reassure them that the implications of the change in Bedford were being examined. A copy of this letter would be circulated to all Members.

In response to a question from Councillor Aldis on the steps being taken to bring empty homes within Central Bedfordshire back into occupation, including houses within the ownership of Aragon Housing Association, the Portfolio Holder for Housing advised Members that the Council was working with landlords in this issue. She also explained that the Council worked in partnership with Aragon Housing Association to keep their properties occupied.

C/09/51

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 8.37 p.m.)

Meeting: Council
Date: 7 January 2010
Subject: LDF (North): Site Allocations Development Plan Document
Report of: Cllr T. Nicols, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development
Summary: The report considers this draft Development Plan Document (DPD) and recommends that it is subject to public consultation and submission to the Secretary of State.

Advising Officer: Gary Alderson, Director of Sustainable Communities
Contact Officer: Simon Andrews, LDF Team Leader (North Team)
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** Not applicable

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Submission of this DPD is an important part of the Council's priority of managing growth effectively. Providing for well-located sites for new homes and jobs and ensuring this development is accompanied by the full range of supporting infrastructure is crucial to securing the sustainability of both new development and the existing communities in Central Bedfordshire.

Financial:

The revenue cost for work in the current year (principally employee time) is included in the Central Bedfordshire Approved Revenue Budget for 2009/10 (26 February 2009). The additional costs of Public Examination, likely to be in the next financial year can be paid for from equalised reserves earmarked for this specific purpose. Timely progress on DPDs is linked to financial incentives for the Council through the Government's Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG). Submission of this DPD will not occur until May 2010 so any enhanced award will not be paid until 2011. The amount received will be dependant on adhering to the published timetable for LDF documents set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Legal:

This is a statutory document, part of the Local Development Framework and will form part of the Development Plan. It is a statutory requirement to produce an Local Development Framework (LDF) under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The LDF process is regulated by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and subsequent amendments. The determination and consideration of Development Plan Documents is a function of Council under the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations.

Risk Management:

The most significant risk to this process is that the document may be found “unsound” through the Examination process and that work would need to begin again. This would have implications in terms of resources but would also leave a policy vacuum while additional work is undertaken. In order to avoid this, a number of methods are available to test “soundness” prior to Examination and a self-assessment toolkit will be used on the draft submission DPD.

There is also a risk that the process may be delayed, either through a change in Government guidance or through other unforeseen circumstances.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

The draft submission DPD will need to be screened for Equality and Diversity Issues. Arrangements have been put in place for this to be done.

Community Safety:

The location and design of new development can have an impact on community safety. The list of sites and the draft policies will therefore be subject to consultation with community safety teams, both internally and externally.

Sustainability:

The draft DPD has been assessed under the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements as set out in the Government’s Planning Policy Statement 12 (see Background Paper). The selection of sites and the criteria used are aimed at identifying the most sustainable of the sites put forward.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Council approves the Site Allocations Development Plan Document for public consultation and Submission to the Secretary of State for Examination.**
- 2. That delegated authority is given to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development, in consultation with the Director of Sustainable Communities, to make minor amendments to the Site Allocations Development Plan Document prior to Submission to the Secretary of State, and during Examination.**

<i>Reason for Recommendation(s):</i>	<i>To ensure the Council complies with the statutory requirement to produce a Development Plan through the production of the Local Development Framework (North).</i>
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Background

1. The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a series of documents which collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for Central Bedfordshire. The LDF (North Area) covers the former Mid Bedfordshire Area and the LDF (South Area) is prepared jointly with Luton Borough under the Joint Committee. The system differs from the Local Plan Process in that the Core Strategy, which is the key plan within the LDF has a wider remit than purely land use planning with a strong link to the Sustainable Communities Strategy and an emphasis on delivery.
2. Development Plan Documents (DPD), a component part of the LDF, make up the statutory Development Plan, together with the East of England Plan. The statutory process of preparing a DPD is set out in the Planning Regulations and comprises many stages and types of consultation which have been to date considered by the former Mid Beds LDF Members Task Force and in some instances direct Councillor Briefings. Under the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations, agreeing a document for submission to the Secretary of State of the DPD is a function of the Council.

The Site Allocations DPD.

3. This document is part of the LDF (North Area) and commenced in early 2007. It is based on the broad spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy and applies it at the site-specific level, identifying specific sites for a variety of uses. The Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD has recently been through a Public Examination and was formally adopted by Council on 19 November.
4. The Core Strategy provides for a total of 17,950 new homes and 17,000 new jobs between 2001 and 2026. Of these, a large number have already been completed or have planning permission. The residual requirement to be provided for in the Site Allocations DPD is 5,000 new homes and 77 hectares of land for employment purposes.
5. The approach in the Core Strategy was to focus on the larger settlements in the former Mid Bedfordshire area (known as “Major Service Centres” and “Minor Service Centres”), with less emphasis on the Large and Small Villages. This approach has been carried through into the Site Allocations.

6. To meet the requirements of the Core Strategy the Council invited submissions of suitable land from landowners, developers and other interested parties. Around 440 potential sites were submitted and these were subject to large-scale public consultation through the “Talk to Mid Beds” campaign during 2008. This consultation included around 20 local exhibitions in village and community halls, a leaflet posted to every household and a dedicated website where comments could be posted. The result was nearly 11,000 comments, which were summarised and the results used as part of the process of defining the final list of sites.
7. There has been significant Member involvement in the process to date. Prior to April this year the former Mid Beds LDF Member Task Force oversaw the work, receiving reports on the site submissions, the arrangements for public consultation and the broad scope of the criteria to be used to determine sites. Regular progress updates were reported to the Scrutiny Committee. Specific Member briefing sessions were held prior to the Talk to Mid Beds consultation where details of all site submissions, together Ordnance Survey plans were distributed to Members. Also before the Talk to Mid Beds consultation a bus tour took Members around a large number of the potential sites and workshops were held with local Members to raise awareness and seek initial views on the suitability of sites.
8. With around 440 potential sites to choose from and only a small percentage of these actually required, a criteria-based approach was agreed by the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 29 September 2009 in order to select the most sustainable and the most suitable of the sites. The priorities and relative importance of aspects of this criteria were subject to informal consultation prior to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s consideration.
9. The agreed criteria were applied and the results considered through a series of meetings of the Development Strategy Task Force. The Task Force heard evidence from representatives of relevant Town and Parish Councils prior to concluding its recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendation from Task Force on 27 October 2009 and, with the exception of deleting a site in Wrestlingworth, recommended the list of sites to Executive. On 10 November 2009 Executive agreed the list of sites recommended by the Task Force and Overview and Scrutiny committee as the basis for the Site Allocations DPD.
10. Since that time, detailed work has been going on developing policies for each of the sites, setting out the Council’s expectations for development of the sites and potential infrastructure provision and particular developer contributions. These policies will then set the context and framework for considering future planning applications on these sites. Appendix 2 sets out the draft Development Plan Document with policies for each of the sites proposed for allocation.

11. Further work has also been undertaken to ensure the list of sites fully reflects the requirements of the Core Strategy. In some instances the list of sites agreed by Executive contained more sites than were required in order to allow for further investigations and discussions with service providers and others. These investigations have now taken place and the list of sites can be reduced or the development required from some sites reduced. Additional sites have also had to be included in some instances to ensure the requirements of the Core Strategy are fully met. A schedule setting out any proposed changes from the list considered by Executive is included as Appendix 1.

Conclusion and Next Steps

12. Once agreed the draft DPD must be subject to pre-submission consultation. This consultation will be widespread and will include all those who previously made comments on the sites during 2008. Following this consultation the DPD will be submitted to the Secretary of State, together with any proposed changes. This is expected to be around May 2010. A Public Examination will then be held before the Inspector writes a report (expected towards the end of next year).
13. Prior to Submission to the Secretary of State and during the examination process, some minor, relatively inconsequential changes to the submitted DPD may be required, many of them in relation to changing circumstances, or arising from the examination process or simply to make the text clearer. It is important to note that any “suggested changes” must be minor in nature and not affect the direction of the Plan. The Council is able to suggest minor changes which the Inspector, in his report, is able to agree. The Inspector is also able to recommend minor changes which will be discussed at the hearings. It is possible, despite the minor nature of the changes, for the Inspector to consider the DPD unsound either in part or as a whole unless certain changes are proposed. This is mostly due to the complex requirements of the LDF system.
14. Changes that would alter the overall thrust of the document or “go to the heart of the Plan” would not fall into this category. These would have to be consulted upon and subject to the process of Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Members would be fully involved in any such strategic decisions.
15. Selecting sites for allocation in this way is an important part of the Council's work to manage growth effectively. It is important that provision is made for new homes and jobs within Central Bedfordshire, not simply to meet Government targets but to provide for those people needing housing or employment. By providing sufficient well-located sites in advance the Council can plan positively for new development, bring certainty to local communities and ensure appropriate supporting infrastructure is in place. Without a supply of allocated sites the Council would be open to challenge and would find it much more difficult to resist opportunistic development in countryside locations.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Schedule of proposed changes from list of sites considered by Executive on 10 November 2009

Appendix 2 – Draft Submission Site Allocations Development Plan Document –
Circulated separately to the agenda

Background Papers: Report of “Talk to Mid Beds” consultation – September 2008
Details of individual site submissions
Site assessments and site scoring sheets
Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment
Report

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands (consultation report and site
submissions also available on website: www.talktocentralbedfordshire.co.uk)

Schedule of proposals supported by Executive and any changes proposed (18/12/09)

Name of area	Supported Site(s)	Detail of Proposal supported by Executive (10/11/09)	Changes
Amphthill	H052	Development of 150+ dwellings	None
	H203	Development of 40 dwellings and long stay car park	None
	H083	Development of approximately 270-360 dwellings	Slight reduction to 260 dwellings
	E64	B1 Business use (1ha)	None
	E68	B1 Business use	5.2ha identified
	H293/E12a (incorporates H048, H156, H165 and E12)	Mixed use development of 1000+ dwellings, community facilities and 10ha of employment. The task force also commented that support of this site related to the development of a new relief road.	None
Biggleswade	H210	Development of between 60 dwellings	These two sites are suggested to be deleted. They are not required to meet the Core Strategy figures and the employment importance of the site can now be maintained.
	H098	Development of 65 dwellings	
	H347	Development of 330 dwellings. The task force noted that this development would occur at the end of the plan period, after the relief road associated with the development on land to the east of Biggleswade was in place.	
	E67	Development of 15ha of employment	None

	New site	Former Council Offices on London Road	Proposed new site with 43 dwellings. Planning permission has been granted.
Blunham	H091	Development of 36 dwellings	None
Brogborough	E15	Development of 8ha of employment. The task force also commented that support for this site was provided with the caveat that no development took place in the northern tip of the site due to its proximity to the housing development.	None
Clifton	H206	Development of 50 dwellings. The task force also commented that access issues related to this site needed to be addressed in development.	These two sites are now considered one proposal with a reduction from 100 to 80 dwellings in total to help alleviate concerns over the site of development in this village.
	H261	Development of 50 dwellings	
Clophill	H042	Development of 12-15 dwellings	Following further discussions with Ward Members and the Parish Council site H353 is suggested as an alternative to site H042.
	H353	N/A (Development of 12 dwellings)	
	H157	Development of 10 dwellings	
Cranfield	H322	Part of combined site with H040 and H133	Site H322 is a new site next to H040 and 133. A enlarged/replacement lower school may be needed in Cranfield. The addition of H322 would maintain the possibility of a
	H040	Development of 100 dwellings and doctors surgery	
	H133	Development of 25-35 dwellings. The task force supported allocation of a total of approximately 160 dwellings in Cranfield.	

				school as part of a single allocation, including 135 dwellings.
	H104		Development of 20-25 dwellings	Proposal for 25 dwellings
	E82		Development of 10ha of employment	Proposed reduction from 10 to 5ha due to provision at Wixams.
Dunton	H192		Development of 10-15 dwellings. The task force commented that the preference for this development should be bungalows.	Proposal for 15 dwellings
Everton	H246		Development of 8 dwellings	None
	H244		Development of 7 new dwellings and 1 renovation	None
Flitwick	H077/E62		Development of 475-500 dwellings and 0.6ha of commercial development	Proposal for 450 dwellings and 1.1 ha of employment
	H113		Mixed use development of 85 dwellings, employment, retail and leisure use with transport interchange.	None
Gravenhurst	H270		Development of 7-8 dwellings	Site is proposed to be removed from the allocations
Henlow	H135		Development of 15-25 dwellings. This was the preferred site for development in Henlow but the task force did resolve to revisit this site if necessary.	Site is proposed to be removed from the allocations
Houghton Conquest	None		It was considered that due to the development to the north (Wixams) no further sites should be supported for development in Houghton Conquest.	N/A
Langford	H164		Development of 44 sheltered homes for the elderly with cemetery, it was commented that this development was strongly supported	None

		for sheltered accommodation and a cemetery.		
	H160	Development of 5 dwellings		Slight increase proposed to 9 dwellings.
	H123	Development of approximately 30 dwellings along the frontage of the site. The task force commented that this site would only be required if there were not enough sites elsewhere.		Site is proposed to be removed on the basis that there are enough sites elsewhere.
Lidlington	H081	Development of approximately 45 dwellings		Site is proposed to be removed from the allocations
Marston Moretaine	E09	Mixed use development of approximately 100 dwellings and 7ha of employment. The task force commented that this site was also supported as a 'reserve' site for a further 320 homes which would only be developed if other developments at the Wixams were not developed on time.		Proposal of 125 dwellings, 7ha of employment and a contingency housing allocation of 320 dwellings.
Maulden	H218	Development of 60 dwellings		Reduction in proposal from 60 to 15 dwellings
	E18	Development of 1.8ha of employment. The task force commented that this site should be recommended as a reserve.		None (1.8 ha employment proposed)
Meppershall	H174	Development of 68 dwellings, cemetery, GP surgery, community hall and playing field		None
Moggerhanger	H154	Development of 17 dwellings. The task force additionally commented that concerns relating to traffic and access to the site needed to be addressed and that an appropriate number of affordable homes needed to be provided.		None
Potton	H356	Development of approximately 50 dwellings		These two sites are being

	H237	Development of approximately 60 dwellings	submitted as one for a proposal of 90 dwellings
	H075/H199 (combined proposal)	Development of 150 dwellings, 1ha B1 employment and community facilities	None
Sandy	H240/H276	Mixed use development of 65 dwellings	Proposal for 50 dwellings and 0.5ha employment.
	H295	Development of 77 dwellings	Proposal for 60 dwellings
	E38	Development of 10ha of employment	None
	H163	Development of 59 dwellings	None
Sheffield	H055	Development of 135 dwellings. The task force commented there may be a need to revisit sites in Sheffield as no decision was made on site H019/H171 regarding the 2ha of employment land, which is required.	Proposal for 120 dwellings
	H019	Mixed use development to include 70 dwellings and 2ha employment	See above. In view of the need for further sites across the Minor Service Centres, this site is recommended for inclusion
Shillington	H006	Development of 24 dwellings. The task force also commented that matters relating to access to the site needed to be resolved as part of the development.	None
Silsoe	H106	Development of 380 dwellings with B1 business use	None
Stondon	H079	Development of 70 dwellings and community facility. The task force also commented that matters relating to access to the site and sewage needed to be resolved as part of the development.	Removal of B1 (office/ light industrial) element

	H176	Development of 13 dwellings	None
Stoffold	<p>NB The sites recommended by Task Force for the Minor Service Centres were less than is required by the Core Strategy. In particular the sites recommended in Stoffold (94 dwellings) were below the Core Strategy range (150-250). To remedy this, two sites have been proposed that have been discussed previously. Both are within the existing settlement envelope.</p>		
	H260	Development of 85 dwellings.	None
	H129	Development of 8 or 9 dwellings	Proposal for 9 dwellings
	Roker Park	Development of 43 dwellings	New site – outline application due to be considered at DM committee early in 2010
	Roecroft Lower School	Development of 40 dwellings	New site – initial consultation undertaken on school relocation. Principle of redeveloping existing site considered acceptable.
	E25	Development of 1.8ha of employment	5ha employment land Site with planning permission amounts to 5ha
Wixams	H278/ E14	Mixed use development of approximately 1,000+ dwellings, employment, education and community facilities.	1,000 dwellings and a minimum of 5ha employment
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley	H090	Development of 21 dwellings. The task force commented in relation to this site that if there were enough rural development sites then this one should be removed from development.	Site is proposed to be removed from the allocations

COUNCIL MEETING – 7 JANUARY 2010

**Recommendations to Council from General Purposes Committee:
17 December 2009**

**Minute No. Working Group Report on Proposed Electoral Arrangements
GPC/09/06**

The Committee considered the draft submission to be made in response to the consultation by the Boundary Committee for England on the number and location of electoral wards for Central Bedfordshire. It was noted that a recommendation from the Committee would be considered by full Council at its meeting on 7 January 2010.

The Committee noted the presentation from Councillor Rawcliffe, Chairman of the Electoral Arrangements Review Working Group which the Committee had set up to enable detailed consideration of the associated matters. He explained that the Working Group had established a preference for separating town and rural communities into separate wards, and had also tried to restrict the variance from the Boundary Committee's preferred number of electorate per 1, 2 and 3 members wards to no more than 10%.

Comments were made that the Boundary Committee's decision that there should be 59 elected members for Central Bedfordshire and not the 66 recommended by the Council meant that it was necessary to be pragmatic in the approach to determining the number and location of wards as the ideal, based on additional numbers of members, was not a possibility.

The Working Party had put forward the majority political group's preferred solution and had also allowed the Liberal Democrat Group's solution to be submitted to this Committee. The Committee therefore had two proposals before it for consideration; the Conservative Group's preferred option was set out at Appendix A of the papers and the Liberal Democrat Group's was set out at Appendix B.

Councillor Rawcliffe thanked the Working Group for the work they had put in to achieve the proposals before the Committee. He also paid tribute to the invaluable help the Working Group had received from Stephen Cooke and Brian Dunleavy who had provided detailed guidance to the Working Group and had worked through the many comments and suggestions which had been made.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Rawcliffe for the considerable work he had carried out as Chairman of the Working Group.

A discussion ensued and it became evident that the different political groups had different approaches and preferences regarding numbers of elected members for each ward.

RESOLVED:-

1. that having considered the conclusions of the Electoral Arrangements Review Working Group in relation to the number and location of wards for Central Bedfordshire, the Committee determined that it would recommend to Council to approve the pattern of wards as shown in Appendix A set out in the report as the Conservative Group's option;
2. that the Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Group and the Chairman of the Committee, be authorised to prepare the draft submission to be presented to Council on 7 January 2010 including taking account of any further responses to consultation received in the intervening period prior to the Council meeting;
3. to thank the officers, Stephen Cooke and Brian Dunleavy, for the invaluable help they had provided whilst supporting the Electoral Arrangements Review Working Party

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

1. **to endorse the proposed pattern of wards set out in Appendix A of the submitted report;**
2. **to take into consideration any 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 Working Group, to respond to questions raised by the Boundary Committee regarding the Submission.**

Electoral Review

Submission on Pattern of Wards



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1. INTRODUCTION

This submission presents the case for the number and location of electoral wards for the Central Bedfordshire unitary authority.

The proposals made are in line with the regulations contained with the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government and Public Involvement In Health Act 2007 in that, due consideration has been given to the statutory criteria; of:

the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities;

the need to secure effective and convenient local government; and

the need to secure equality of representation.

2. BACKGROUND

Following direction by the Electoral Commission in 2008, the Boundary Committee for England commenced an electoral review of the new unitary authority of Central Bedfordshire on 4 August 2009.

Stage 1 of the review invited submissions on the appropriate number of Councillors for the authority. In considering the evidence submitted on the council size the Boundary Committee advised that they were minded to recommend that Central Bedfordshire council should consist of 59 members.

3. PROFILE OF CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE

Central Bedfordshire is home to approximately 250,000 people living in 105,400 households. It is estimated that housing growth will increase the population to over 282,000 by 2021. It is an area just north of London set in beautiful countryside that embraces the Chiltern Hills and the Greensand Ridge.

Central Bedfordshire is classified as predominantly rural with just over half of the population living in rural areas. In common with many rural areas, the area has long standing agricultural and market gardening traditions. The intensification of agricultural methods over the years, however, has led to less reliance on these activities for local employment, with many villages becoming commuter suburbs. Indeed 50% of Central Bedfordshire's resident workforce commutes outside the area for work; many heading to the surrounding employment centres of Bedford, Luton, Milton Keynes and Hertfordshire as well as London, 40 miles to the south. Car dependency is high with the majority of work journeys being made by car, with limited alternatives available for people without a vehicle in the rural areas.

The area is diverse with picturesque villages, hamlets and historic market towns. However, it is at the same time one of the most rapidly growing areas in England and is planning for substantial additional development as part of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area.

There are many areas of outstanding natural beauty and attractions, which include stately homes and gardens, woodland walks and nature reserves, country parks and world-famous animal parks.

Industry is well represented in the area with industrial developments in most of the larger towns and parishes.

4. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Bedfordshire (Structural Changes) Order 2008 determined that Central Bedfordshire was to be divided into wards and that the area of each new ward would be same as that of the existing divisional ward of the former Bedfordshire County Council.

The wards of Biggleswade, Dunstable Downs, Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade Central, and Stotfold and Arlesey would have four councillors and that every other ward would have two councillors.

The 2008 electorate totalled 192,915 divided between 5 x 4 member wards and 23 x 2 member wards. This equates to an average of 2,923 electors for each Councillor although not all wards have equal numbers of electors. The following table shows the variance from the average for each ward

Ward	Variance from average
Amphill	-5.92%
Barton	-1.64%
Biggleswade	5.27%
Cranfield	-25.56%
Dunstable Downs	-5.13%
Flitwick East	7.01%
Flitwick West	0%
Grovebury	18.47%
Houghton Regis	4.75%
Icknield	-9.95%
Langford & Henlow	9.58%
Leighton Linlade Central	-4.17%
Marston	-24%
Maulden & Houghton Conquest	0.13%
Northfields	-8.65%
Northill & Blunham	15.87%
Plantation	3.69%
Potton	-1.81%
Sandy	14.78%

Shefford	12.35%
Silsoe & Shillington	6.16%
South East Bedfordshire	3.83%
South West Bedfordshire	-3.08%
Southcott	-8.79%
Stotfold & Arlesey	-7.22%
Toddington	-12.52%
Watling	-7.63%
Woburn & Harlington	30.07%

5. OUR APPROACH TO DETERMINING PATTERN OF WARDS

From the onset of the Review of the Electoral Arrangements, the Council established a cross party Member Working Group consisting of four members and three substitute members. At this stage of the review, the Group met on a number of occasions and formulated a submission having consulted with Member colleagues and stakeholders. Substitute members were also in attendance at most of the meetings.

Throughout the process the Working Group looked at a variety of ward patterns using the parishes as the “building blocks” of the proposed wards. However, given the wide disparity on the numbers of the electorate across the parishes it was felt that there was justification for areas to be represented by either one, two or three members.

In formulating the proposals, the priority has been to reflect community identity and interests with electoral equality as secondary criteria albeit the submission has endeavoured to minimise the number of wards outside of the tolerance levels.

6. CONSULTATION

Whilst acknowledging that the Boundary Committee has already invited the Town and Parish Councils to submit their own proposals on the pattern of wards it was still felt that the Council’s submission should be circulated to the Towns and Parishes for their consideration and comment. At the same time, an alternative scheme from the opposition political party group was also circulated.

Due to the time constraints, and the intervening holiday period, it was not expected that all of the Towns of Parishes would have the opportunity to comment. The responses received to date, are shown at Appendix G.

Public awareness of this stage of the review was via the Council’s website. Additionally, posters were sent to community groups, selected outside bodies and all of the post offices and public libraries within the Council’s area.

7. PROPOSED ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Leighton-Linslade

Leighton Linslade is the largest town in Central Bedfordshire and is proposed to be represented by 9 Councillors. It is formed of two once separate towns, Linslade and Leighton Buzzard. They are separated by the River Ouzel and the Grand Union Canal and each has retained its own town centre. They were until 1960's in different counties, Linslade having been in Buckinghamshire, and remain in different dioceses of the Church of England. Thus they are by reason of history and geography more clearly separate communities than exist in any of the other larger towns. The proposal is for Linslade to be one 3-Member Ward and for Leighton Buzzard to have 2 3-Member Wards.

This is the justification for proposing that Linslade has separate representation from Leighton Buzzard even though with some 30% of the town's population the proposed 3 Councillors out of 9 makes it inevitable that its ratio of electors to councillors will be lower than average with the ratio in Leighton Buzzard being correspondingly above average by way of compensation. Within Linslade the West Coast mainline separates the somewhat older settlement to the east to the more recent suburb of Southcott to the west. The numbers involved would also allow a potential separation of wards with Linslade to the east of the railway line having one seat and Southcott two, although Southcott would then be more than 10% below the average of electors per Councillor.

In contrast to Linslade there are no correspondingly clear-cut divisions between communities in Leighton Buzzard. Estates developed at different times in the past are the nearest approach to community identification. Of the main roads into the town, Hockliffe Road (A4012) is the one acting as the main divider of population as the Billington Road route from the south has very little population to the west of it. Hockliffe Road runs due east to the nearest point of A5 and has close to equal numbers of the town's projected population north of it and south of it. North of it the Clarence Road, Willowbank Walk and Planets estates are each identifiable areas, as is the more wooded Heath Road/Plantation Road area. But each contains numbers of electors well short of those which would justify a Councillor to represent it even as a single-member ward. South of Hockliffe Road, the estates of Meadow Way, Brooklands Drive, Billington Park and Sandhills are similarly identifiable communities, the latter two being very recently-developed.

Since 1973 Leighton Buzzard has had a variety of electoral arrangements, with 2, 3 or 4 divisions at various times and clearly a number of different options are possible. Current electoral arrangements bring together some areas that have few if any common characteristics with other areas within the same ward and these arrangements are therefore not necessarily a useful starting reference point. Under South Midlands Growth Area proposals the town's Councillors may well have to represent very significant additional

numbers of electors within possible 'urban extensions' to the east of the town during the period of currency of these arrangements beyond 2013. It therefore makes sense to share this burden among all the Councillors for Leighton rather than have it falling heavily on the smaller number who would represent the eastern portions if a pattern of one or two member wards were to be adopted.

It is therefore proposed that Leighton be divided by the main east-west route West Street/Hockliffe Street/Hockliffe Road into 2 3-Member wards. By way of exception the Meadow Way estate lying immediately south of Hockliffe Road but connecting only into that road would continue to be aligned with the northern half of the town. This gives 2 wards with electorates less than 10% above the average electorate per Councillor.

Linslade

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Leighton Linslade (Southcott Ward)	3991	
Leighton Linslade (Linslade Ward)	5452	
Leighton Linslade (All Saints Ward) AS1 part (Vimy Road area)	180	
Total	9623	
Divided by 3 members	3208	8.88%

Leighton Buzzard North

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Leighton Linslade (Plantation Ward)	5423	
Leighton Linslade (Planets Ward)	3563	
Leighton Linslade (All Saints Ward) AS1 part (except Vimy Road area)	1685	
Leighton Linslade (All Saints Ward) AS2 part (north of Hockliffe Street)	228	
Leighton Linslade (All Saints Ward) AS3 part (north of Hockliffe Road)	657	
Total	11556	
Divided by 3 members	3852	9.40%

Leighton Buzzard South

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Leighton Linslade (Grovebury Ward)	9514	
Leighton Linslade (All Saints Ward) AS2 part (south of Hockliffe Street)	714	
Leighton Linslade (All Saints Ward) AS3 part	857	

(south of Hockliffe Road)		
Total	11085	
Divided by 3 members	3695	4.94%

Dunstable

Dunstable takes its place as an historic town of nearly 30,000 electorate lying on the general line of communications between London and the Midlands. It adjoins the much larger town of Luton to the east where it has access to the M1 motorway, to a railway passenger service and an airport. The town sits in a gap through the Chiltern Hills on the site of a small roman settlement called Durocobrivis, which was established as crossroads formed by Roman Watling Street and the prehistoric Ickniel Way.

Dunstable is the second largest town within the Council area and it is proposed that it is represented by 8 members, 2 less than the number currently representing the former divisional boundaries.

In determining the proposed scheme strong consideration has been made to reflect community identities rather than simply extending the existing ward boundaries to achieve electoral equality.

The existing ward of Northfields has seen considerable development in the last 5 years and a substantial number of properties have been built on a former industrial site adjacent to French's Avenue, with an even greater number of houses planned in the next 5 years. These increases in the electorate however would not provide a sufficient number to merit a two-member ward within the existing boundaries. Additionally, it is felt that this new community will have a clear and distinctive boundary by way of Brewers Hill Road and therefore it is proposed to make this area a single-member ward.

The remaining part of the Northfields ward (Beecroft) is a self contained community with its own distinct identity. A fact recognised by this Authority through the sponsorship of the Beecroft Residents Association. It is proposed to slightly extend the ward boundary into part of the Dunstable Central parish ward to achieve electoral equality and to make the area a single member ward.

The current ward of Ickniel has distinct boundaries to the east (Luton Borough Council) and to the north (Houghton Regis) however it has insufficient numbers to make a two-member ward. A natural extension of the ward is to the west of the town into the shopping centre area and the associated housing around Kingsway, indeed the areas have now been joined by a link road running parallel to Dunstable college. There is planned development around the former railway line and an extension of the Ickniel ward would accommodate this development. The proposal for an extended Ickniel would be for a two-member ward.

The parish ward of Manshead within the Central Bedfordshire ward of Dunstable Downs is a self contained community again a fact recognised by this Authority through the provision of a full time appointment of a Downside Community Officer. It is proposed to make this area a single-member ward.

Watling ward has insufficient numbers to constitute a two-member ward and has a clear boundary to the east, the A5 Trunk Road (High Street South) which provides a clear and logical boundary. The community interest of Watling ward would naturally however extend to the west into the parish ward of Chiltern. It is proposed therefore to extend the boundary of Watling ward to encompass part of the Chiltern parish ward and make the area a two-member ward.

The extensions of the Icknield and Watling wards together with newly formed Beecroft ward would leave an area in the centre of the town that would continue to maintain the existing community interests and identities albeit on a smaller scale. It is proposed therefore that this area (Dunstable Central) be represented by a single-member.

Dunstable - Northfields

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N2	1800	
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N5	790	
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N6	671	
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N4 part (north of Brewers Hill Road)	164	
Total	3425	-2.72%

Dunstable – Beecroft

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N1	1183	
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N3	883	
Dunstable (Northfields Ward) N4 part (south of Brewers Hill Road)	664	
Dunstable (Central Ward) DC1 part (north of Dog Kennel Path)	696	
Dunstable (Central Ward) DC1 part (north of Union Street, east of Victoria Street)	478	
Total	3904	10.87%

Dunstable – Central

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Dunstable (Central Ward) DC3	1063	
Dunstable (Central Ward) DC4	500	
Dunstable (Central Ward) DC2 part (west of Victoria Street)	635	
Dunstable (Chilterns Ward) CT3	1044	
Dunstable (Chilterns Ward) CT1 part (east of Meadway)	470	
Total	3712	7.01%

Dunstable – Watling

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Dunstable (Watling Ward)	5516	
Dunstable (Chilterns Ward) CT2	1251	
Dunstable (Chilterns Ward) CT1 part (west of Meadway)	988	
Total	7755	
Divided by 2 members	3878	10.13%

Dunstable – Manshead

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Dunstable (Manshead Ward)	3842	9.11%

Dunstable – Icknield

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Dunstable (Icknield Ward)	5474	
Dunstable (Dunstable Central) DC1 part (south of Dog Kennel Path)	697	
Dunstable (Dunstable Central) DC1 part (new development)	908	
Total	7079	
Divided by 2 members	3540	0.53%

Houghton Regis

Houghton Regis is a town located between the major towns of Luton to the east and Dunstable to the west. The town is considerably older than Dunstable, and is mentioned in the Domesday Book when it was called

Houstone. The parish includes the ancient hamlets of Bidwell, Thorn and Sewell.

Bordered by the Chiltern Hills, the town was once a small village that had its character changed completely when massive development took place in the 1950's and 60's to accommodate a 'London overspill'. Redevelopment of the area continued through the 1970's when the Parkside Estate was built.

The area is warded into three parishes Houghton Hall, Parkside and Tithe Farm. Both the Parkside and Tithe Farm wards have clear boundaries and self-contained community identities and would therefore be ideally suited to being single member wards. Indeed the Council recognises this fact by employing full time community development officers for both wards. The Houghton Hall ward does not have sufficient numbers to justify a two-member ward and we therefore propose that the area to east of Bedford Road that was transferred to the Houghton Hall in the 2001 review of the electoral arrangements in South Bedfordshire be extended to incorporate the remaining properties in Churchfield Road and the adjoining streets. This would have the effect of transferring 422 of the electorate from the Tithe Farm ward to the Houghton Hall ward.

Houghton Hall

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Houghton Regis (Houghton Hall Ward)	6041	
Houghton Regis (Tithe Farm Ward) TF4 (part) properties west of Tithe Farm Road	422	
Total	6463	
Divided by 2 members	3231	-8.23%

Parkside

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Houghton Regis (Parkside Ward)	3576	1.56%

Tithe Farm

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Houghton Regis (Tithe Farm Ward)	3545	
Less: Houghton Regis (Tithe Farm Ward) TF4 (part) properties west of Tithe Farm Road	422	
Total	3223	-8.46%

Caddington, Hyde, Slip End, Kensworth, Whipsnade, Studham

The parishes of Caddington, Hyde and Slip End were collectively linked following the review of the electoral arrangements of the former South Bedfordshire Council in 2001.

The parish of Hyde is separated from the remainder of the Council area by the M1 motorway. Apart from the small village of East Hyde, much of the parish is taken up by the extensive parkland of the Luton Hoo Estate. Caddington is the largest parish in the south of the Council area and has always contained a number of hamlets including Aley Green, Woodside and Chaul End. The civil parish of Caddington was known officially as Caddington & Slip End until 2000 when in recognition of the growing size of the latter hamlet of Slip End a separate civil parish was created, with its own Parish Council.

The combined electorate of Caddington, Hyde and Slip End is too many for a single member ward and insufficient for a two-member ward. Moreover, the ability to consider alternative warding arrangements in this area is somewhat limited due to relatively isolated nature of these communities that abut the south east boundary of the Council area. The adjoining parish of Kensworth was added to the division of Caddington/Hyde and Slip End following the review of the electoral arrangements for Bedfordshire County Council in 2004.

Although, Kensworth parish has an electorate of just over a thousand, that is still insufficient to make two-member ward. The inclusion of the adjoining, but smaller, parishes of Whipsnade and Studham provides for a completely integrated rural ward covering both of the most southerly villages in the Council area. The proposed two-member ward shares good community links and social ties, despite the presence of the M1 motorway.

Caddington

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Caddington	3195	
Hyde	317	
Slip End	1580	
Kensworth	1179	
Whipsnade	403	
Studham	986	
Total	7660	
Divided by 2 members	3830	8.79%

Eaton Bray, Totternhoe, Great Billington

Eaton Bray sits at the foot of the Dunstable Downs and is a village steeped in history; it takes its name from the Bray family who came to the area in 1490. Today it is a lively vibrant village with many activities, clubs and societies for the inhabitants to participate in.

The parish has traditionally been linked to the adjoining parish of Totternhoe for at least thirty years or more when the area was represented as the divisional ward of Luton Rural No3. In the 1980's the divisional ward of Eaton Bray incorporated several parishes including the parishes of Totternhoe and Great Billington. The electoral review of Bedfordshire County Council in 2004 re-affirmed the relationship between these villages with the inception of the new division of South West Bedfordshire.

The villages of Eaton Bray, Totternhoe and Great Billington all boast histories from the 13th century and are traditional rural communities surrounded by wooded countryside with views over rich farmland. These communities share the same common interest of village life and are inextricably linked; collectively they make a single-member ward.

Eaton Bray

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Eaton Bray	2127	
Totternhoe	1036	
Great Billington	273	
Total	3436	-2.41%

Heath & Reach, Hockliffe, Stanbridge, Chalgrave, Tilsworth, Eggington.

Heath & Reach is the largest parish within this group. It is bordered by Soulbury (Buckinghamshire) to the west, Little Brickhill (Buckinghamshire) to the north-east, Potsgrove to the east and north-east, Hockliffe to the south-east, Eggington to the south, Leighton Buzzard to the south and Linslade to the south-west. The boundary between Heath & Reach and Potsgrove is formed by the Roman Road later called Watling Street, now the A5.

In the electoral review of Bedfordshire County Council in 2004 Heath & Reach was included within the Plantation division from the adjoining town of Leighton Buzzard. Whilst it can be argued that there is a clear geographical link to Leighton Buzzard the two communities are distinctively different. The village has a thriving community with several community based activities being held throughout the year. Indeed and quite uniquely, the village has its own sports association offering a variety of sports facilities.

Although Heath & Reach has no community ties with the neighbouring village of Hockliffe there is a direct connection in the A5 trunk road. This fact was recognised when both the villages were formed to create the district ward of Heath & Reach in the 2001 electoral review of South Bedfordshire.

The combination of these two parishes does not give sufficient numbers to form a single member ward. Therefore, the adjoining parishes of Stanbridge,

Chalgrave, Tilsworth and Eggington have been added to make a single-member rural ward with a mutual sense of identity.

Heath & Reach

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Heath & Reach	1145	
Hockliffe	715	
Stanbridge	602	
Chalgrave	401	
Tilsworth	318	
Eggington	227	
Total	3408	-3.20%

Barton-le-Clay

The attractive village of Barton-le-Clay nestles at the foot of the Barton Hills, which form the northernmost extremities of the Chilterns. It is ringed by beautiful Bedfordshire countryside and is famous for its impressive chequered stone church.

The church, dedicated to St. Nicholas has been a place of worship for over eight hundred years and today continues to play a central role in the life of the village.

Around the village the special countryside is a nature reserve. This offers interest to everyone with an amazing range of wild plants, trees, bushes and natural habitats for creatures of the wild.

The village has an attractive mix of properties and a considerable number of amenities; it is a friendly place with a strong community spirit. The parish contains a relatively large electorate of 3,991 but nevertheless retains a cohesive rural community. It is therefore considered appropriate to retain this parish as a single-member ward notwithstanding that the variance on electoral equality exceeds the normal tolerance level of 10%.

Barton-le-Clay

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Barton-le-Clay	3991	13.36%

Toddington, Harlington, Chalton, Sundon, Streatley

Toddington is the largest village in this group and is situated 4 miles north of Dunstable on the A5120 and B579. It is half a mile from Junction 12 of the M1 motorway and lends its name to the nearby service station.

Toddington's past importance as a market town is witnessed by the fine old houses built around a large village green, on which sits the parish church and four of the village's seven public houses. Many of the population commute to London for work using the nearby rail services at Harlington.

Harlington village is home to Harlington Lower and Upper Schools which serve students up to A level. Many students from the surrounding villages travel to Harlington for its schools. The Upper School recently became a specialist science college.

The villages of Chalton, Sundon and Streatley share many common interests with the parishes of Toddington and Harlington and their residents use joint amenities and facilities.

These communities are subject to the same local issues, specifically in relation to the traffic problems generated from the M1 motorway. It is proposed that they become a two-member ward.

Toddington

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Toddington	3497	
Harlington	1834	
Chalton	450	
Sundon	383	
Streatley	1449	
Total	7613	
Divided by 2 members	3807	8.12%

Potton, Everton, Tempsford, Sutton, Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley, Eyeworth, Dunton, Edworth

The town of Potton is by far the largest settlement within this group of parishes. It is 10 miles east of the county town of Bedford and 15 miles south-west of Cambridge. It is on the B1042 road to the east of Sandy.

Potton is a thriving town of nearly 4000 electorate. It has an historic Georgian Market Square which is the heart of the Town. There are many busy local shops in and around the Square. In the centre stands the Clock House in which are located the Town Library and the Council Chamber all watched over by the Town Clock. There are also many small businesses situated in and around the town providing local employment.

Potton has a strong artistic community with many theatre groups, sports clubs, community groups and social organisations all of which are shared by the neighbouring parishes. Consequently it is felt that this group of parishes would be best served as a two-member ward.

Potton

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Potton	3850	
Everton	444	
Tempsford	433	
Sutton	244	
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley	632	
Eyeworth	80	
Dunton	536	
Edworth	76	
Total	6295	
Divided by 2 members	3148	-10.60%

Sandy

Sandy is a small market town situated on the A1 which hugs the western edge of the town. The A603 leads west towards Bedford; the B1042 leads east towards Potton and Cambridge. There are a number of bus routes, principally from Biggleswade to Bedford. The town has a railway station which is on the East Coast Main Line with services north to Peterborough and south to London King's Cross. The area is dominated by a range of hills known as the Sand Hills.

Sandy is probably best known today as the headquarters of the RSPB. The Society moved to The Lodge, on the outskirts of the town in 1961.

Although the town has four wards it is suggested that the discrete urban area covered by the wards of Ivel and Pinnacle has limited affinity to the surrounding parishes and therefore this part of the town is best suited as a two-member ward.

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Sandy (Ivel Ward)	2840	
Sandy (Pinnacle Ward)	3900	
Total	6740	
Divided by 2 members	3370	-4.28%

Sandy (Fallowfield Ward), Sandy (Beeston Ward), Old Warden, Blunham, Southill, Moggerhanger, Northill

Blunham and Northill parishes lie broadly to the west of Sandy and the A1. The parish of Northill represents the largest electorate and covers a number of villages and hamlets. The Shuttleworth estate is in the parish. Additionally,

the parish contains a feeder stream to the River Ivel, which forms the eastern boundary.

The combination of these two parishes does not give sufficient numbers to form a single member ward. Therefore, the adjoining parishes of Old Warden, Southill and Moggerhanger together with the two adjoining town wards of Sandy (Fallowfield) and Sandy (Beeston) have been added to make a two-member rural ward to reflect the interests and identities of the local community.

Northill

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Sandy (Fallowfield Ward)	1465	
Sandy (Beeston Ward)	665	
Old Warden	262	
Blunham	802	
Southill (Stanford Ward)	200	
Southill (Broom Ward)	467	
Southill (Southill Ward)	266	
Moggerhanger	508	
Northill	1837	
Total	6472	
Divided by 2 members	3236	-8.09%

Biggleswade

Biggleswade is a market town with a rich history and much of its character comes from buildings that have remained largely unchanged over the years. The town centre features the Market Square where a general market is held each Saturday. It is surrounded by shops, many in attractive converted buildings such as the old Market house.

The River Ivel runs along the northern and western boundaries of the town causing development to be very one-sided, with housing estates in the east and south.

It is well served by transport routes, being close to the A1 road between London and the North, as well as a railway station on the main rail link North from London (the East Coast Main Line).

Biggleswade is in the heart of the market gardening area of the county of Bedfordshire. It acts as a centre for a number of nearby villages.

The town lies on the B1040 and A6001 (a section is the former A1) which also leads to Henlow to the south.

The town is the largest settlement in the northern part of the Council's area and it is considered that to reflect local community ties a clear identifiable boundary running through the High Street and from west to east would be best served by 2 x two-member wards.

Biggleswade North

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Biggleswade (Ivel Ward) ATZ	2132	
Biggleswade (Ivel Ward) AUZ	1009	
Biggleswade (Ivel Ward) AVZ	1134	
Biggleswade (Stratton Ward) AYZ	2393	
Biggleswade (Stratton Ward) AZZ (part) Orchard Close	38	
Total	6706	
Divided by 2 members	3353	-4.76%

Biggleswade South

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Biggleswade (Ivel Ward) AWZ	1759	
Biggleswade (Holme Ward) AXZ1	2737	
Biggleswade (Holme Ward) AXZ2	1118	
Biggleswade (Stratton Ward) AZZ	1487	
Less: Biggleswade (Stratton Ward) AZZ (part) Orchard Close	-38	
Total	7063	
Divided by 2 members	3532	0.31%

Astwick, Langford and Stotfold

Langford and Stotfold Parishes lie in the eastern corner of the Council's area adjacent to the boundary with Hertfordshire

The town of Stotfold has developed considerably over the years and building work continues to expand the town, with new areas such as Mill View and Fairfield Park. Fairfield Park is on the site of the old Fairfield Hospital covering a very large area, south of Stotfold and to the east of Arlesey. The old hospital has been converted into luxury apartments, with hundreds of new homes being built in the grounds of the former mental health institute.

The parish of Langford has insufficient electorate to make a single member ward and therefore the adjacent parish of Stotfold together with the parish hamlet of Astwick have been added to create this new three-member ward.

Stotfold

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Astwick	32	
Langford	2436	
Stotfold	7953	
Total	10421	
Divided by 3 members	3474	-1.34%

Clifton, Arlesey, Henlow Camp, Henlow Village, Stondon

Arlesey is a small industrial town which borders with Hertfordshire. In historic times Arlesey was a Royal Manor (Manor of Arleseybury) and a market town, once known as the most prosperous parish in the area. It is located about three miles north-west of Letchworth Garden City and six miles south of Biggleswade. Arlesey railway station provides train services to London, Peterborough, York and Edinburgh.

The parish of Arlesey has too many electorate for a single-member ward and insufficient electorate for a two-member ward consequently it is proposed to add this parish to the parishes of Clifton, Henlow and Stondon to form a three-member ward.

The combination of these parishes achieves electoral equality whilst also meeting the statutory criteria.

Arlesey

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Clifton	2391	
Arlesey	4316	
Henlow Camp	1147	
Henlow Village	1744	
Stondon	1784	
Total	11382	
Divided by 3 members	3794	7.76%

Campton & Chicksands, Meppershall, Shefford

Campton and Chicksands, Meppershall and Shefford parishes are linked by the A507. The largest settlement in this grouping is Shefford which is dominated by the River Flitt which runs more or less through the middle, with

the River Hit flowing into it from the south in the angle between Stanford Road, Northbridge Street and Southbridge Street, after which point the combined river becomes part of the River Ivel Navigation (although this is now disused as such)

The parish of Shefford borders Clifton to the east, Meppershall to the south, Campton and Chicksands to the south-west.

The combination of these parishes will facilitate a two-member ward.

Shefford

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Campton & Chicksands	928	
Meppershall	1404	
Shefford	4471	
Total	6803	
Divided by 2 members	3402	-3.39%

Gravenhurst, Shillington, Silsoe

The village of Silsoe is situated midway between Bedford and Luton on the A6 and between Ampthill and Shefford on the A507.

Silsoe is a large village and was, until 2007, the location of the Silsoe Research Institute which had an international reputation for its research in Agricultural, Food Processing and Environmental Engineering.

The adjoining villages of Gravenhurst and Shillington are steeped in history and village and community life are sustained by farming. Collectively the villages share a rural lifestyle whilst maintaining their own character.

This group of villages would be a single-member ward.

Silsoe and Shillington

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Gravenhurst	482	
Shillington	1481	
Silsoe	1582	
Total	3545	0.69%

Ampthill, Clophill, Maulden

The ancient market town of Ampthill is situated under the brow of the Greensand Ridge. It is a town that enjoys the rural surrounds of open and wooded countryside.

The town is mainly Georgian boasting over 200 listed buildings. The four main streets lined with elegant houses and other buildings meet at the Market Square.

The village of Maulden is located 1.5 miles east of Ampthill and about 8 miles south of Bedford. Adjacent to Maulden is the village of Clophill which somewhat hides it light under a bushel in that the houses along the A6, whilst perfectly respectable, do not give any idea of the wealth or number, of older buildings tucked away behind.

Collectively these parishes would make a three-member ward.

Ampthill

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Ampthill	5828	
Clophill	1368	
Maulden	2417	
Total	9613	
Divided by 2 members	3204	-8.99%

Houghton Conquest, Haynes

The parish of Houghton Conquest lies some 6 miles south of Bedford. The village stands at the crossing of two byroads and is dominated by the fine church of All Saints.

The parish comprises 3,431 acres, of which 80 are woodland, while the remainder are divided in almost equal proportions between arable land and permanent grass.

There is insufficient electorate for Houghton Conquest to be a single-member ward so the adjacent parish of Haynes has been added.

Houghton Conquest

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Houghton Conquest	2257	
Haynes	985	
Total	3242	-7.92%

Brogborough, Cranfield, Hulcote & Salford, Ridgemont, Lidlington, Marston Moretaine, Millbrook

Cranfield and Marston Moretaine are the largest settlements within this group of parishes. Cranfield is situated between junctions 13 and 14 and to the east of the M1 motorway. Bedford is 9 miles to the east and Milton Keynes is 6 miles to the west. The north of the village joins on to Cranfield University and Airfield and the other three sides are surrounded by farmland with good countryside views as the village is built on a hill.

About 1,500 students live on the University campus or in lodgings in the village (about 2 miles apart by road).

The adjacent village of Marston Moretaine is a large village on the A421 road towards Bedford. It has an electorate of just over 4,000 and is served by Millbrook railway station, which is about a mile away.

On the outskirts of the village sits the Forest Centre and Millennium Country Park in the heart of the Forest of Marston Vale.

Collectively, the parishes of Cranfield and Marston Moretaine have too many electorate for a two-member ward but have insufficient numbers for a three-member ward. Therefore the adjoining parishes of Brogborough, Hulcote & Salford, Ridgemont, Lidlington and Millbrook have been added to the group.

Cranfield & Marstone Moretaine

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Brogborough	250	
Cranfield	4282	
Hulcote & Salford	154	
Ridgmont	337	
Lidlington	1029	
Marston Moretaine	4135	
Millbrook	115	
Total	10302	
Divided by 3 members	3434	-2.46%

Flitwick, Steppingley

Flitwick is a small town in the heart of Central Bedfordshire dating back to Saxon times. It is considered that there are no distinct areas of the town that clearly reflect any specific community and therefore it is recommended that the area is represented by a three-member ward. The adjacent parish of Steppingley, which has strong community links with the town, has been added.

Flitwick

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Flitwick East	4468	
Flitwick West	5671	
Steppingley	208	
Total	10347	
Divided by 3 members	3449	-2.04%

Flitton & Greenfield, Pulloxhill, Tingrith, Westoning, Aspley Guise, Aspley Heath, Husborne Crawley, Battlesden, Eversholt, Milton Bryan, Potsgrove, Woburn.

Aspley Guise is the largest parish within this group and lies in the west of the Council's area adjacent to the boundary with Milton Keynes. This grouping of parishes retains a mixed profile of residents, small businesses and larger organisations.

This extensive area shares good communication links and the same common interest of village and rural lifestyle, with the smaller parishes looking to their larger neighbours for their services.

It is proposed that this grouping is served by a two-member ward.

Aspley Guise & Westoning

Parish	2013 electorate	Variance
Flitton & Greenfield	1114	
Pulloxhill	760	
Tingrith	125	
Westoning	1647	
Aspley Guise	1800	
Aspley Heath	508	
Husborne Crawley	180	
Battlesden	41	
Eversholt	358	
Milton Bryan	140	
Potsgrove	41	
Woburn	724	
Total	7438	
Divided by 2 members	3719	5.63%

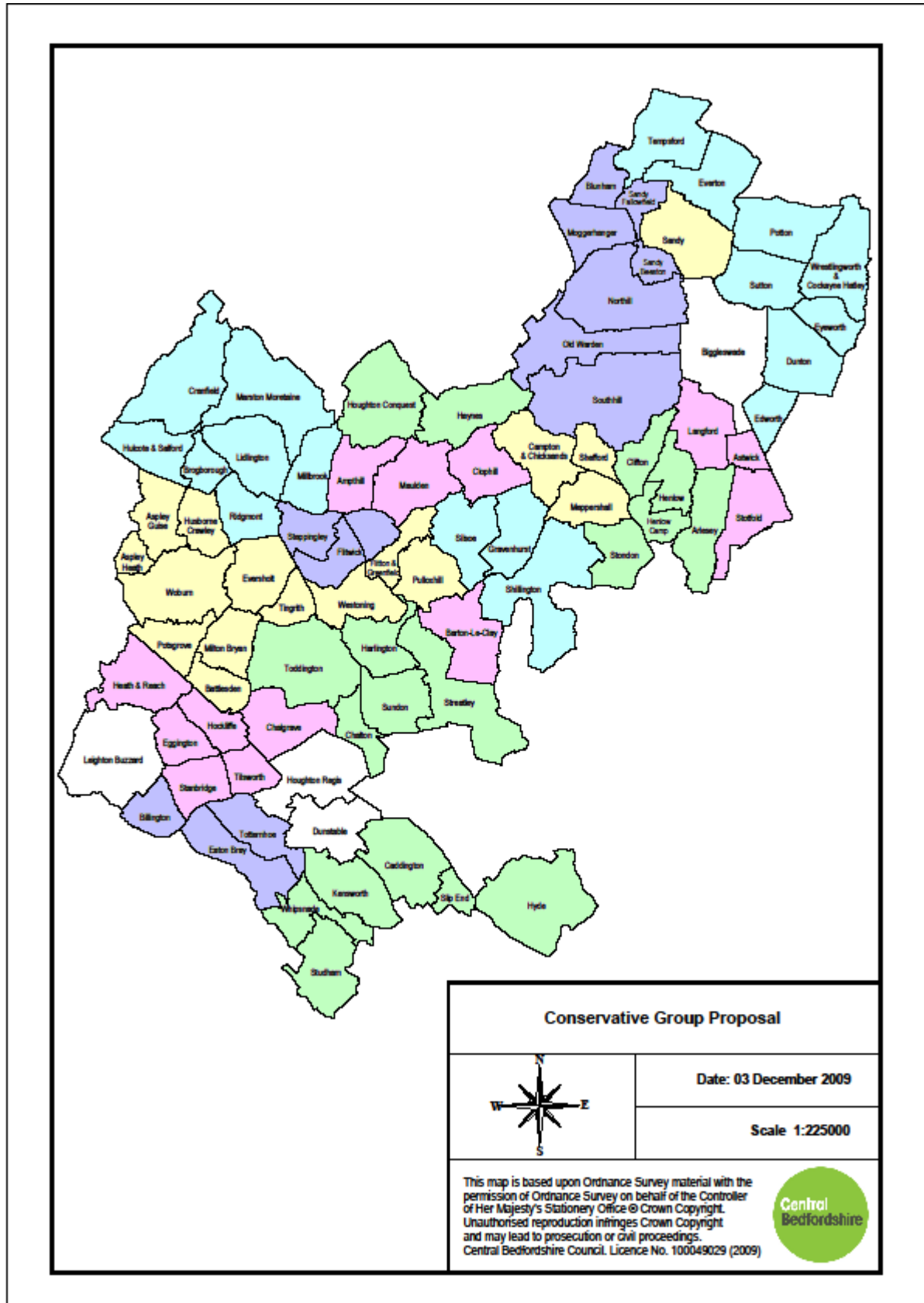
8. PARISHES

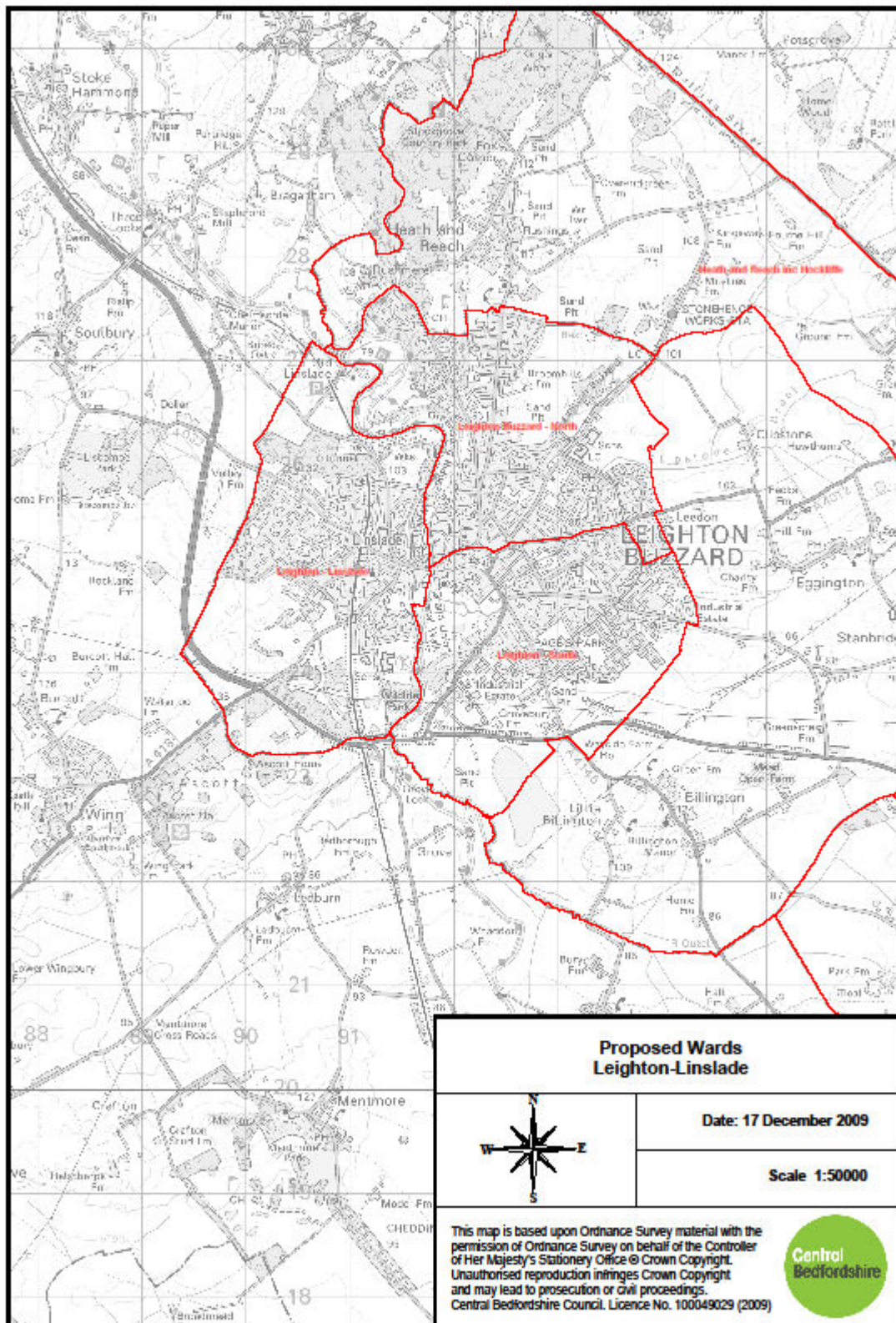
Central Bedfordshire is fully parished with 71 town and parish councils and 8 parish meetings. A schedule of the parishes together with the number of councillors is shown at Appendix F.

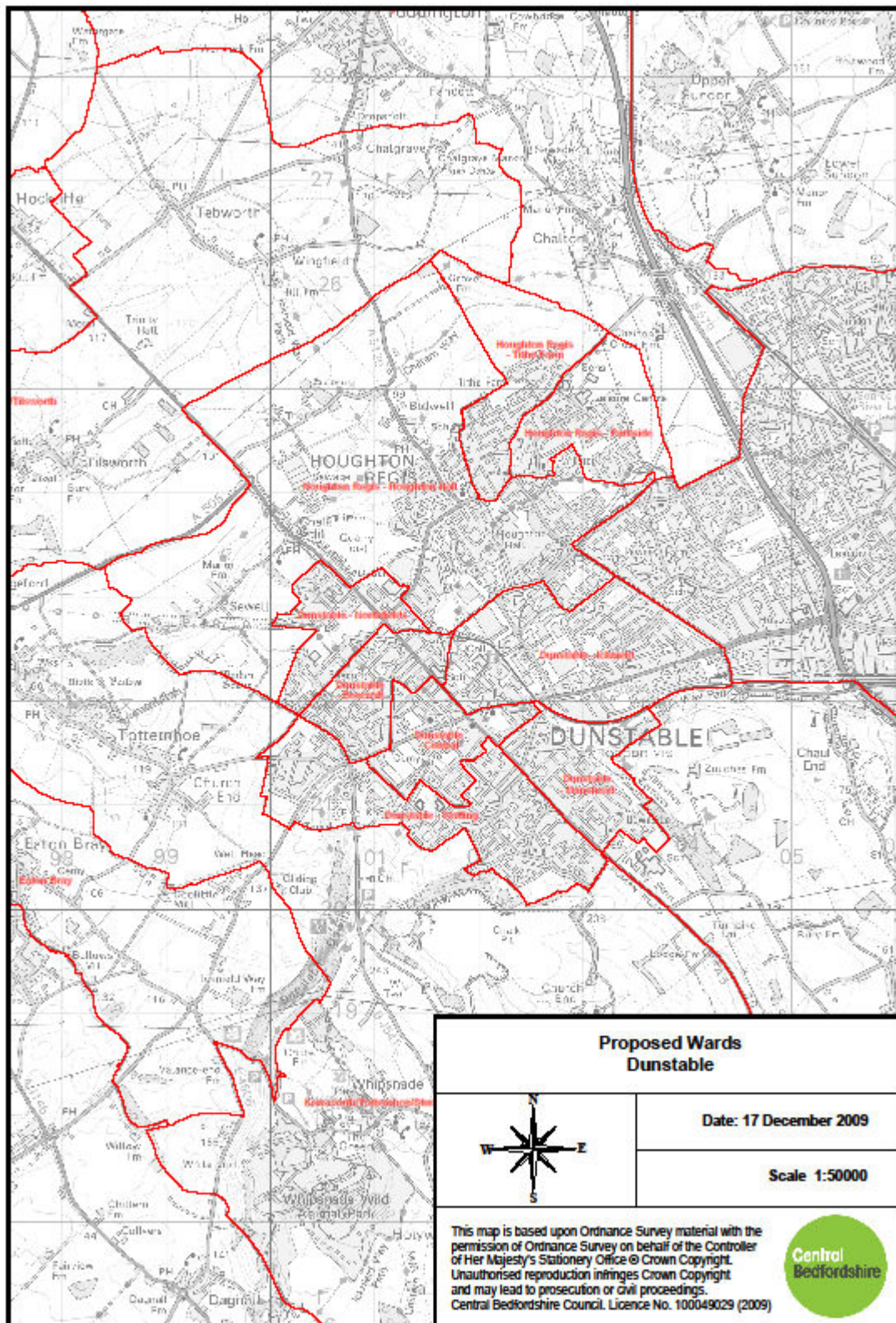
9. CONCLUSION

In summary, the Council is proposing (shown at Appendix E) 11 single-member wards, 12 two-member wards and 8 three-member wards resulting in 31 wards being represented by 59 members. Of the 31 wards, 4 are outside the $\pm 10\%$ tolerance on electoral equality.

The submission, we believe, represents clear community identities and interests as well as identifiable communication links.







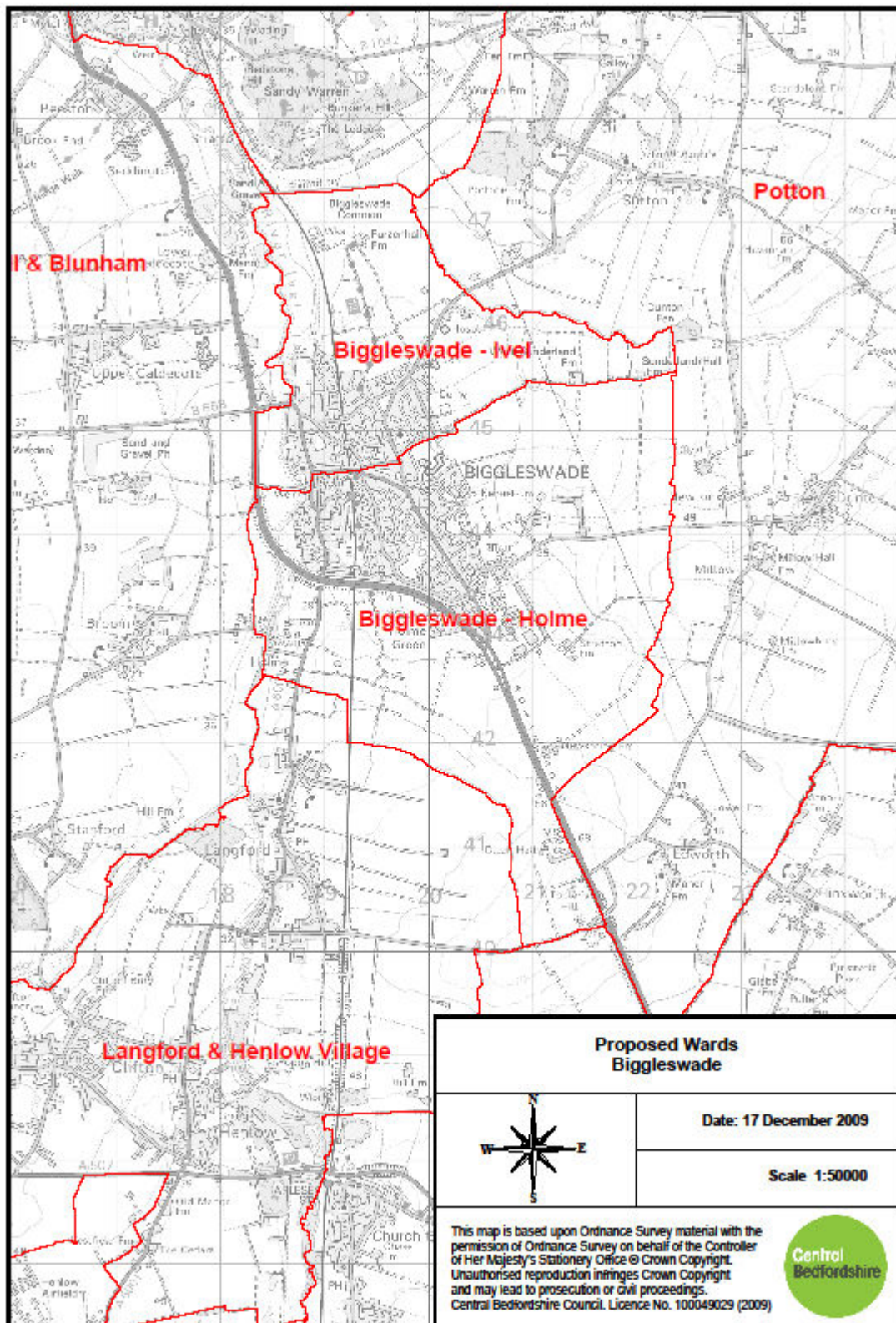


Table of Wards

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Potton	3,798	3,850		
Everton	434	444		
Tempsford	423	433		
Sutton	234	244		
Wrestlingworth	612	632		
Eyeworth	70	80		
Dunton	526	536		
Edworth	66	76		
	6,163	6,295	2	-10.60%
Sandy	6,710	6,740		
	6,710	6,740	2	-4.28%
Fallowfield	1,455	1,465		
Beeston	635	665		
Old Warden	252	262		
Blunham	792	802		
Stanford	190	200		
Broom	457	467		
Southill	256	266		
Moggerhanger	498	508		
Northill	1,817	1,837		
	6,352	6,472	2	-8.09%
Biggleswade North From Biggleswade Ivel Ward				
Polling District ATZ	2,081	2,132		
Polling District AUZ	999	1,009		
Polling District AVZ	955	1,134		
From Biggleswade Stratton Ward				
Polling District AYZ	1,315	2,393		
Plus Orchard Close from AZZ	38	38		
	5,388	6,706	2	-4.76%

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Biggleswade South From Biggleswade Ivel Ward				
Polling District AWZ	1,749	1,759		
From Biggleswade Holme Ward				
Polling District AXZ1	2,624	2,737		
Polling District AXZ2	1,108	1,118		
From Biggleswade Stratton Ward				
Polling District AZZ (less Orchard Close)	1,477 -38	1,487 -38		
	6,920	7,063	2	0.31%
Astwick	22	32		
Langford	2,409	2,436		
Stotfold	6,522	7,953		
	8,953	10,421	3	-1.34%
Clifton	2,328	2,391		
Arlesley	4,306	4,316		
Henlow Camp	1,137	1,147		
Henlow Village	1,670	1,744		
Stondon	1,774	1,784		
	11,215	11,382	3	7.76%
Campton & Chicksands	918	928		
Meppershall	1,394	1,404		
Shefford	4,257	4,471		
	6,569	6,803	2	-3.39%
Gravenhurst	472	482		
Shillington	1,471	1,481		
Silsoe	1,353	1,582		
	3,296	3,545	1	0.69%

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Ampthill	5,396	5,828		
Clophill	1,358	1,368		
Maulden	2,397	2,417		
	9,151	9,613	3	-8.99%
Houghton Conquest	1,124	2,257		
Haynes	975	985		
	2,099	3,242	1	-7.92%
Brogborough	240	250		
Cranfield	3,968	4,282		
Hulcote & Salford	144	154		
Ridgmont	327	337		
Lidlington	1,019	1,029		
Marston Moretaine	3,439	4,135		
Millbrook	105	115		
	9,242	10,302	3	-2.46%
Flitwick East	4,448	4,468		
Flitwick West	5,651	5,671		
Steppingley	198	208		
	10,297	10,347	3	-2.04%
Flitton & Greenfield	1,094	1,114		
Pulloxhill	714	760		
Tingrith	115	125		
Westoning	1,637	1,647		
Aspley Guise	1,780	1,800		
Aspley Heath	498	508		
Husborne Crawley	170	180		
Battlesden	31	41		
Eversholt	348	358		
Milton Bryan	130	140		
Potsgrove	31	41		
Woburn	714	724		
	7,262	7,438	2	5.63%
Barton-le-Clay	3,936	3,991		
	3,936	3,991	1	13.36%

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Toddington	3,454	3,497		
Harlington	1,824	1,834		
Chalton	441	450		
Sundon	374	383		
Streatley	1,440	1,449		
	7,533	7,613	2	8.12%
Chalgrave	390	401		
Heath & Reach	1,136	1,145		
Eggington	216	227		
Hockliffe	613	715		
Tilsworth	307	318		
Stanbridge	591	602		
	3,253	3,408	1	-3.20%
Houghton Regis	12,250			
	12,250			
Houghton Hall part TF4 (west of Tithe Farm Road)		6,041		
		422		
		6,463	2	-8.21%
Parkside		3,576		
		3,576	1	1.57%
Tithe Farm less: part TF4 (west of Tithe Farm Road)		3,645		
		-422		
		3,223	1	-8.46%

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Dunstable	27,097			
	27,097			
Northfields				
N2		1,800		
N5		790		
N6		671		
part N4 (north of Brewers Hill Road)		164		
		3,425	1	-2.72%
Beecroft				
N1		1,183		
N3		883		
part N4 (south of Brewers Hill Road)		664		
part DC1 (north of Dog Kennel Path)		696		
part DC2 (north of Union St, East of Victoria St)		478		
		3,904	1	10.89%
Central				
DC3		1,063		
DC4		500		
CT3		1,044		
part DC2 (west of Victoria St)		635		
part CT1 (east of Meadway)		470		
		3,712	1	5.43%
Watling				
W1 to W5		5,516		
CT2		1,251		
part CT1 (west of Meadway)		988		
		7,755	2	10.14%

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Manshead M1 to M3		3,842		
		3,842	1	9.13%
Icknield ICK1 to ICK4 part DC1 (south of Dog Kennel Path) DC1 (New Development)		5,474 697 908		
		7,079	2	0.53%
Leighton Linslade	28,389			
	28,389			
Linslade L1 to L3 SO1 to SO4 part AS1 (Vimy Road)		3,991 5,452 180		
		9,623	3	-8.89%
Leighton Buzzard North PLTN1 to PLTN4 PLS1 to PLS3 part AS1 except (Vimy Road) part AS2 (north of Hockliffe Street) part AS3 (north of Hockliffe Road)		5,423 3,563 1,685 228 657		
		11,556	3	9.41%
Leighton Buzzard South G1 to G6 part AS2 (south of Hockliffe Street) part AS2 (south of Hockliffe Street)		9,514 714 857		
		11,085	3	4.95%

Parish	Electorate (2008)	Electorate (2013)	Members	Variance From Average
Totternhoe	1,025	1,036		
Eaton Bray	2,111	2,127		
Billington	264	273		
	3,400	3,436	1	-2.41%
Hyde	308	317		
Slip End	1,571	1,580		
Caddington	3,024	3,195		
Kensworth	1,168	1,179		
Whipsnade	394	403		
Studham	975	986		
	7,440	7,660	2	8.79%
Total	192,915	207,720	59	
Electorate/Councillor	3,270	3,521	0	

Schedule of Parishes

Town/Parish	Ward	No of Councillors
Ampthill		12
Arlesey		15
Aspley Guise		12
Aspley Heath		9
Astwick		Parish meeting
Barton-le-Clay		13
Battlesden		Parish meeting
Biggleswade	Holme	4
Biggleswade	Ivel	6
Biggleswade	Stratton	5
Blunham		10
Brogborough		7
Caddington		10
Campton & Chicksands		7
Chalgrave		7
Chalton		7
Clifton		12
Clophill		10
Cranfield	Cranfield	13
Cranfield	Wharley End	2
Dunstable	Chiltern	3
Dunstable	Dunstable Central	3
Dunstable	Icknield	4
Dunstable	Manshead	3
Dunstable	Northfields	4
Dunstable	Watling	4
Dunton		7
Eaton Bray		9
Edworth		Parish meeting
Eggington		7
Eversholt		7
Everton		7
Eyeworth		Parish meeting
Flitton & Greenfield	Greenfield	5
Flitton & Greenfield	Flitton	5
Flitwick	East	7
Flitwick	West	10
Gravenhurst		7
Great Billington		7
Harlington		12
Haynes		10

Heath and Reach		9
Henlow	Camp	2
Henlow	Village	10
Hockliffe		7
Houghton Conquest		10
Houghton Regis	Houghton Hall	6
Houghton Regis	Parkside	4
Houghton Regis	Tithe Farm	4
Hulcote & Salford		7
Husborne Crawley		7
Hyde		7
Kensworth		9
Langford		13
Leighton-Linslade	All Saints	3
Leighton-Linslade	Grovebury	4
Leighton-Linslade	Linslade	3
Leighton-Linslade	Planets	3
Leighton-Linslade	Plantation	4
Leighton-Linslade	Southcott	4
Lidlington		9
Marston Moretaine		12
Maulden		12
Meppershall		10
Millbrook		Parish meeting
Milton Bryan		Parish meeting
Moggerhanger		9
Northill		12
Old Warden		7
Potsgrove		Parish meeting
Potton		15
Pulloxhill		7
Ridgmont		9
Sandy	Beeston	1
Sandy	Fallowfield	3
Sandy	Ivel	5
Sandy	Pinnacle	6
Shefford		15
Shillington		10
Silsoe		10
Slip End		7
Southill	Broom	6
Southill	Southill	3
Southill	Stanford	3
Stanbridge		7
Steppingley		7

Stondon		10
Stotfold		15
Streatley		7
Studham		7
Sundon		7
Sutton		7
Tempsford		7
Tilsworth		7
Tingrith		Parish meeting
Toddington		11
Totternhoe		9
Westoning		10
Whipsnade		7
Woburn		9
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley		7

TOWN/PARISH - CONSULTATION

Town/Parish Council	Response
Ampthill Town Council	
Arlesey	
Aspley Guise	
Aspley Heath	
Astwick (Meeting)	
Barton-le-Clay	
Battlesden (Meeting)	
Biggleswade Town Council the Town Council resolved to adopt the proposals put before the meeting to split Biggleswade into two wards running west to east.....
Blunham	
Brogborough	
Caddington	
Campton & Chicksands	
Chalgrave	
Chaltonagrees with the views of the Conservative Group and requests that you recommend an electoral ward with two members comprising – Toddington, Harlington, Chalton, Sundon and Streatley. This group of parishes already have close links through GAPP and the proposal is completely logical and sensible. Chalton specifically does not want to be part of a single ward.....
Clifton	
Clophill	
Cranfield	
Dunstable Town Council overall Members were not in agreement with the proposals set out. Furthermore, they believed the proposals would not achieve the aim of reflecting the new functions of Central Bedfordshire Council nor did they believe the arrangements would lead to an improvement in Central Bedfordshire Councillors engagement with local communities. Members also felt that Dunstable should have one more Councillor to that proposed at the expense of a representative to the north of Central Bedfordshire....
DuntonMembers prefer the proposal from the Conservative Group warded as detailed with two Councillor

	representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council.
Eaton Bray	
Edworth (Meeting)	
Eggington	
Eversholt	
Everton	
Eyeworth (Meeting)	
Flitton and Greenfield	
Flitwick Town Council	
Gravenhurst	
Great Billington	
Harlington	
Haynes	
Heath & Reach	...wishes to retain its current electoral ward in which Heath & Reach is linked with Plantation Ward – Leighton Buzzard and not the proposals suggested by Central Bedfordshire Council. The Parish Council strongly opposes the Liberal Democrat Party's suggestion of becoming part of Woburn Unitary ward. If the parish council's request to remain within Plantation Ward is not granted by the Boundary Committee they would opt for the Conservative Party's suggestion to link Heath & Reach with Hockliffe.....
Henlow they prefer the Liberal Democrat proposal as this shows Langford, Henlow and Arlesey as one electoral ward. The area accords with the present area of Policing, SN Teams and service providers...
Hockliffe	
Houghton Conquest	
Houghton Regis Town Council	
Hulcote & Salford	
Husborne Crawley	
Hyde	
Kensworth	
Langford favours the option of Langford being linked with Stotfold and Astwick....
Leighton-Linslade Town	

TOWN/PARISH - CONSULTATION

Council	
Lidlington	
Marston Moretaine	
Maulden supports the Liberal Democrat proposal which would link our village of Maulden with Clophill village. My Councillors feel that the two rural villages would be the best combination and do not wish to be linked with the urban town of Ampthill as suggested by the Conservative Group
Meppershall	
Millbrook (Meeting)	
Milton Bryan (Meeting)	
Moggerhanger	
Northill	...they wish Northill Parish Council to remain warded as at present with two Councillor representatives from Central Bedfordshire Council.
Old Warden	
Potsgrove (Meeting)	
Potton	
Pulloxhill	
Ridgmont	
Sandy Town Council	<p>...It took account of the need for each ward to have a similar number of electors but was also cognisant of the need to recognise the identities and interests of local communities.</p> <p>Sandy is a small town which over the past ten years has expanded northwards by means of a new estate “the Fallowfield area”. Although an integral part of the town the area is a discrete one and could easily be separated physically from the rest of Sandy. Sandy Town Council has expended considerable efforts to ensure that Fallowfield is integrated into the town and that its residents identify with the rest of the townspeople. However, Council Members fear that the area, because it can be easily separated on paper from the rest of the town, will be attached to a ward outside Sandy.</p> <p>Similar concerns have been expressed with regard to Beeston, a settlement on the A1 which is part of the parish of Sandy. Again the Town Council has tried to ensure that this village remains an integral part of the town. This endeavour would be damaged if, as is proposed in some quarters, Beeston were placed in an</p>

	<p>electoral ward other than Sandy.</p> <p>Proposals put forward by Central Bedfordshire so far have included the separation of either both of the proposed areas or just Fallowfield, neither solution is acceptable to the Town Council.</p> <p>It must be pointed out that, on the current information we have, no other town or parish in Central Bedfordshire is proposed for division in this way.</p> <p>The solution proposed by Sandy Town Council is as follows:</p> <p>Sandy, Beeston and Fallowfield should remain as one ward but be joined by the neighbouring parish of Blunham. This would give an electorate of 9,592, allowing for 3 members to stand for the ward.</p> <p>This would then leave the parish of Northill, together with Old Warden, Stanford, Broom, Southill and Moggerhanger to form a one member ward with an electorate of 3,470.</p> <p>The final neighbouring wards would be Potton encompassing Everton, Tempsford, Sutton, Wrestlingworth, Eyeworth, Dunton and Edworth (2 members, electorate of 6,163) and Biggleswade which traditionally has been divided into separate wards.</p> <p>The Town Council would be very grateful for the Committee's careful consideration of the facts of the case and the need to ensure that the people of Fallowfield and Beeston continue to identify with the town of Sandy as a whole.....</p>
Shefford	<p>... overall they feel that reducing the number of members to 59 is not viable and feel that it would be far better to increase the number of Councillors and reduce the allowances. It was generally agreed that in today's society there is a far greater workload than there used to be and to have this spread over 59 members is nonsensical. In Shefford there used to be 3 District Councillors and 1 County Councillor - now reduced to 2 members in total. Prior to the recent demise of Bedfordshire County Council there were 127 members for Bedfordshire.</p> <p>The Town Council feels that such a change in numbers will discriminate against Councillors with full-time employment and therefore is not commensurate with the delivery of a quality service on behalf of the electorate.</p>

TOWN/PARISH - CONSULTATION

	It could be further argued that potentially members could comprise of retired people with more time on their hands and/or people with sufficient personal monies that they don't have to work. It is unlikely that either of those groups would fully represent the views of the majority of the people they represent.....
Shillington	
Silsoe	
Slip End	...are pleased to advise that we are in agreement to the proposed grouping put forward by the Conservative party, in that Slip End would be grouped with Hyde, Caddington, Kensworth, Whipsnade and Studham....
Southill	
Stanbridge	
Steppingley	...continue to link with Flitwick West. This is the current arrangement and has worked satisfactorily for many years.....
Stondon	
Stotfold	
Streatley	
Studham	
Sundon	
Sutton	
Tempsford	
Tilsworth	
Tingrith (Meeting)	
Toddington	
Totternhoe	
Westoning	...broadly supports the proposals but would wish to see the locality be a two single Member ward and not a two Member ward.
Whipsnade	
Woburn	
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley	

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Decisions Taken by the Leader

To advise the Council of changes in Executive delegations to Officers in accordance with Paragraph 1.4 of Part C4 of the Constitution:-

a. New Delegation

Power

Qualifications (if any)

To appoint “Champions” for elected Member development and to appoint one of the Champions to act in the capacity of “Lead Champion”.

After consultation with the Group Leaders.

To take all necessary steps to ensure that the Council reaches and maintains the required level of skills, competencies and practices to achieve EERA Member Development Charter status.

After consultation with the Champions for elected Member development and subject to seeking the views of the Group Leaders and wider Council membership, as appropriate.

Any matter relating to a policy or strategy or involving expenditure outside the existing budget, shall be referred to the Executive.

To make arrangements for the conduct of personal development reviews for elected Members.

After consultation with the Champions for elected Member development.

To make bids for external funding to support elected Member development.

After consultation with the Champions for elected Member development.

b. Delegation 4.6.60 – Amend existing delegation to read as follows:-

To approve expenditure from the budget for Members’ attendance at annual conferences, external seminars and courses and to approve Member attendance according to individual training needs.

After consultation with Lead Champion for elected Member development and relevant Group Leader. Regular Monitoring statements in respect of expenditure to be submitted to the Champions for elected Member development.

Power

Qualifications (if any)

c. Delegation No. 4.6.61

To agree arrangements for the Annual Member Training and Development Programme and the periodic Induction Programme.

After consultation with the Champions for elected Member development and subject to seeking the views of the Group Leaders and wider Council membership, as appropriate.

Any matter involving expenditure outside the existing budget, shall be referred to the Executive.

Meeting: Council
Date: 7 January 2010
Subject: Audit Committee Activity April 2009 – December 2009
Report of: Chairman of the Audit Committee
Summary: The report proposes to set out the work undertaken by the Audit Committee for the period April 2009 – December 2009.

Contact Officer: Councillor David Lawrence
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

An effective Audit Committee is an integral part of the internal control and governance arrangements of the council. As such it will be supporting all of the council's priorities.

Financial:

None.

Legal:

None.

Risk Management:

The work undertaken to date by the Audit Committee has raised awareness of the legacy position. This has helped form an important baseline for the committee and Central Bedfordshire moving forward.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

None.

Community Safety:

None.

Sustainability:

None.

RECOMMENDATION:

that Council note the work activity of the Audit Committee.

Background

1. Paragraph 6.2.2 of the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference require a report to be made by the Chairman of the Audit Committee to Council on the Committee's activities twice each year.

The Audit Committee has met five times since the start of the financial year. An additional two meetings were required as a result of the additional work and time needed for the committee to close the legacy authorities.

2. A review of the terms of reference was carried out with particular interest around the restriction of members of the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee not being members of the Audit Committee. As a result Councillor Brian Spurr has replaced Councillor David Bowater.

Legacy Authority Reports

3. In an unusual year the committee has undertaken the role of three audit committees of the former legacy authorities by approving the 2008/09 Annual Governance Statements and the 2008/09 Annual Statement of Accounts for Bedfordshire County Council, Mid Bedfordshire District Council, South Bedfordshire District Council and the Pension Fund.
4. All of this activity included the need to review the approved Annual Governance Statements prepared by the legacy authorities and each of the legacy Annual Audit Letters as presented by the Audit Commission. All of this information was discussed and registered as important background information for Central Bedfordshire.
5. The committee also received the unqualified external audit opinion of each of the three sets of accounts as presented by the Audit Commission in the form of an Annual Governance Report. A summary of the findings was included in the Central Bedfordshire Annual Audit Letter, which will be considered by the Audit Committee on 27 January 2010.
6. Member Allowances paid to councillors representing the legacy authority and shadow authority were also noted.
7. The committee also received the Annual Audit Letter for the demised Citizen Service Partnership (CSP) and made a number of recommendations around the operational procurement procedures for ICT.

Central Bedfordshire activity

8. In helping to determine the work of the Internal Audit function, the committee received information arising from the legacy authority Internal Audit reviews. Together with this it also approved the process to undertake a full audit needs assessment of Central Bedfordshire. The results of which, a three year audit plan, will be presented to the committee at its next meeting on the 27 January 2010.
9. Recognising the importance of the above piece of work and by receiving enough information for the work undertaken by September 2009, the committee were able to approve an indicative 2009/10 Internal Audit Plan.
10. In our attempts at combating fraud and corruption, the Committee also approved an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and also reviewed the Confidential Reporting Policy. Both of these items were considered by the Standards Committee prior to the Audit Committee. The Standards Committee made valuable recommendations which were considered and approved by the Audit Committee.
11. As a result and to strengthen the Constitution, the Audit Committee were successful at recommending to the Constitutional Advisory Committee that both of these documents should be included in the Ethical Framework section.
12. The Committee have also endorsed the Corporate Risk Management Strategy approved by the Shadow Executive and have approved the operational working practices supporting that strategy.
13. Progress reports on the introduction to International Financial Reporting Standards are also being monitored by the committee.

Partnership activity

14. The development of fully accountable partnerships, with both public and private partners, continues to develop but not yet at a sufficient level that full audit and reconciliation reports came forward to the committee.
15. This part of the committees function was highlighted in the Constitution but has to await the completion of transition, the Service Level Agreements and contract negotiations with private suppliers.
16. Once fully established there will be regular reports of partnerships reviewed by the Audit Committee to ensure that the governance and risk management is in place where the Council accepts liability without being in direct control.

Conclusion

17. In closing the legacy authorities, there has been recognition of the differences in policies, processes and style to alert the Central Bedfordshire committee to the need for harmonisation. Until this harmonisation takes place there will be less efficient management which will have many corporate implications.

18. The work involved in transition turned out to be greater where the opportunity was also taken to improve data quality (essential for transformation). Whilst the affairs of Central Bedfordshire have been lower in priority this year, the necessary attention of the work undertaken to date should set a correct and firm foundation for Central Bedfordshire moving forward.

Background Papers:

Agenda and minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 6 April 2009.

Agenda and minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 29 June 2009.

Agenda and minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 27 July 2009.

Agenda and minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 21 September 2009.

Agenda and minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 30 November 2009.

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands



REPORT TO CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

7 January 2010

1 MEETING

The Authority last met on 11 December 2009. Set out below are some of the issues discussed.

2 PROVISIONAL BUDGET SETTLEMENT 2010/11

On 26 November 2009, the Minister of State for Local Government announced the proposed Local Government Finance Settlement for the final year of the 2008/09 Three-Year Settlement.

The announcement confirmed that the level of grant included in the Three-Year settlement for 2010/11 continued to be at the level of grant Bedfordshire expected to receive.

For 2010/11 the settlement for Bedfordshire was an actual increase of 3.3% as expected increasing Police Grant from £70.754M to £73.089M, an overall increase of £2.335M.

However as with previous years the actual settlement, due to the use of 'floors and ceilings' is £3.551M less than Bedfordshire Police should actually receive through the relative needs formula. Since 2006/07, the actual reduction in the grant Bedfordshire has received, due to floors and ceilings, totals £19.2M.

The following is a summary of the overall position for 2010/11

	2010/11	2009/10
	£M	£M
Total Formula Grant	73.089	70.754
Funded by:		
Business Rates	26.580	23.879
Revenue Support Grant	3.860	5.511
Police Grant	42.649	41.364
Total	73.089	70.754

This is the final year of a three-year settlement and without the announcement of a Comprehensive Spending Review; the expected level of grant for ensuing years is very much speculative but there is a consensus of opinion across the police service that grant is not likely to increase but instead could actually reduce over the next three years. It is predicted that the grant would gradually reduce down from the 3.3% received in 2010/11 to somewhere around 0.5% by 2012/13. In addition to the predictions on formula grant it is also estimated there could be a general reduction in specific grant over the Medium Term averaging approximately £0.300M reduction per annum.

Due to the uncertainty over the Medium Term, the Authority is to consider increasing its general reserves in 2010/11 to offset the funding gap for the period 2011/12 to 2013/14.

Based upon this settlement and the pressures to deliver a service that the public deserve the 2010/11 budget the potential budget requirement is £104.198M leaving a funding gap of £1.6M.

In recognition of the potential funding gap the Authority continues to deliver efficiencies through initiatives such as collaboration and a process improvement programme and the savings expected in 2010/11 could reduce this funding gap to £1.1M based upon a 3% Council Tax increase.

The Authority is very cognisant of the current financial climate and the ability for capping to be applied will be considering budget options based on Council Tax increases of between 2% and 4%. Given that financial outlook is bleak when considering the budget scenarios for 2010/11 the Authority will also be looking at the impact of reduced levels of funding on the delivery of a police service over the next two years.

The Authority is in the process of consulting with the public around the budget and views expressed will be taken into account when considering the budget.

The Authority on 12 February 2010 will determine the budget, budget requirement, Precept and Council Tax for 2010/11.

3 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Half yearly performance figures show that Bedfordshire Police is continuing to improve performance with significant reductions in most crime areas.

Members of Bedfordshire's Police Authority's Performance Committee were pleased to see that overall crime had reduced by 8% (1990 less crimes) in the first six months of the year compared to the same period the previous year. The areas where key reductions have been made are:-

- Robbery
- Domestic burglary
- Theft from a motor vehicle
- Theft of a motor vehicle
- Fraud and forgery
- Sexual offences

There has been a slight increase in violence against the person and drugs offences. The Authority is keen to see violent crime reduced and have considered a detailed report on the work being undertaken to combat knife crime and other violent crimes. Members hope that its next performance monitoring report will show an improvement in performance around all violent crime.

These latest performance figures show that the Authority's investment in policing is continuing to pay dividends and thanks to a lot of hard work performance is being sustained in priority areas. There are now considerably fewer victims of crime, which is very good news.

The force is also continuing to perform well against the targets set down in the Policing Pledge. In October the HMIC released the findings of its Inspection on the progress of the Policing Pledge. Bedfordshire's inspection had been undertaken in April and the Force had had been grade as fair. This placed Bedfordshire in the middle part of the grading table compiled following this Inspection. Bedfordshire. Only 8 forces had been graded as good and 2 as excellent.

4 PUBLIC PROTECTION UNIT

A Public Protection Unit (PPU), set up in April 2007 with the help of Police Authority investment, is paying dividends in helping to keep vulnerable people safe.

A special report presented to Bedfordshire Police Authority's Performance Committee highlighted some of the excellent work the PPU is providing.

The Unit deals with specialist areas such as Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage and Honour-based Violence, Child Abuse, Rape, Sex Offenders, Vulnerable Children and Missing People.

The report highlighted the increased confidence the public are showing in the domestic abuse investigation team, with more cases being reported, and a reduction in the number of repeat offences. This team also works closely with multi agency partners to help protect vulnerable people at risk from domestic abuse.

Members were pleased to learn more about the work to protect young people. The Vulnerable Missing Children/Young Person Co-ordination Unit, again supported by Police Authority investment, has led to a significant reduction (36%) in the number of people reported missing on three or more occasions. Further funding has led to the creation of a multi-agency Missing Children Group to respond when young people go missing, to identify the reasons for them running away and to try and resolve the problem.

The Authority places great significance on this area of business and Members are pleased to see that our ongoing investment and support are delivering results."

5 USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSEMENT

Bedfordshire Police Authority has been formally assessed by the independent Audit Commission as 'performing well' in its 'Use of Resources'.

Bedfordshire, is one of a handful of Police Authorities to be assessed as Level 3 (performs well), with no Authority being awarded a '4'. There are four possible levels of performance running from Level 4 (performs excellently) to Level 1 (performs poorly).

The recent report looked at how well Bedfordshire Police Authority used and managed its resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people.

This assessment is particularly pleasing as it refers to the year (2008-09) when the methodology behind the assessments was revised. The new approach focuses on three themes:

- Managing Resources
- Managing Finances
- Governing the Business

This is independent verification that Bedfordshire Police is managing its finances and all other resources effectively and providing good value for money.

This positive assessment is particularly pleasing in the current economic climate as, like every Police Authority, we face some very challenging decisions regarding funding in the next few years.

PETER HOLLICK
REPORT OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE AUTHORITY



BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

REPORT OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE AND LUTON COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY FROM ITS MEETING ON 11 DECEMBER 2009 TO CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

MEETINGS

Bedfordshire and Luton Combined Fire Authority (CFA) held a meeting on 11 December 2009 at Dunstable Community Fire Station. The major issues discussed at the meeting are summarised below:

1. FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITIES' MUTUAL LIMITED (FRAML)

As noted at the last meeting, FRAML had no directors, or power to appoint directors, and, as such, the company was to be closed down completely.

The recently enacted Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act gave qualifying authorities (including fire and rescue authorities) clear and specific legal powers to establish or participate in an insurance mutual.

Members noted that a meeting was proposed in early January 2010 to 'assess the appetite, if any, to create FRAML Mark 2'.

2. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER 2008/09

Ms Debbie Hanson and Ms Gillian Skillicorn of the Audit Commission attended the meeting to present the Annual Audit Letter 2008/09.

The Letter was circulated to Members, who expressed their disappointment that it highlighted substantial improvement which was not reflected in the scoring of the Authority as 'adequate'.

3. REGIONAL MANAGEMENT BOARD: 7 OCTOBER 2009

Members noted the draft Minutes of the meeting of the Regional Management Board held on 7 October 2009 and agreed proposed revisions to the quorum.

4. NAME OF AUTHORITY

It was agreed not to change the name of the Fire Authority or Fire and Rescue Service for the time being.

5. MOBILISING SYSTEM

Following a report on the robustness of the existing mobilising system, it was agreed that no action be taken at this stage to replace the system. However, a further report is to be made

to Members should the East of England Regional Control Centre project be delayed beyond May 2012.

6. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING – 2009/10

Members received their third budget monitoring report for 2009/10.

Members had previously agreed that £52,800 generated from the agreement of the APT&C Staff Pay Award, should be transferred to General Reserves.

Reference had been made elsewhere on the Agenda to the winding up of FRAML. As part of the distribution of Phase One, the Authority was to receive £143,983.91, which was the full reimbursement of its Capital Contribution (£106,506.51) to set up the Company, with the balance being a share of the Operating Surplus.

The Service had been advised in October that the suppliers of three Rescue Pumps were no longer able to undertake the work. With the help of Firebuy, a mini-tendering exercise had been undertaken and tenders received were currently being considered. It was anticipated that there would be an additional cost of circa £90,000 which, it was agreed, should be funded from Capital Receipts.

7. FRS CIRCULAR 59/2009: TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF NEW DIMENSION ASSETS

The Fire Authority supported the transfer New Dimension vehicles and equipment to hosting services.

FRS Circular 59/2009 asked fire and rescue authorities to sign up to a Transfer of Ownership Agreement by the end of December 2009, after which the transfer of the Service's three New Dimension vehicles and equipment would take place in early 2010.

Communities and Local Government (CLG) was committed to paying the fixed costs of the contract relating to routine maintenance and servicing, to ensure that the equipment and vehicles were ready to respond to a national incident over the next sixteen years.

However, once the New Dimension assets were transferred to the fire and rescue authorities, the authorities themselves will be responsible for arranging the monthly payment directly, and CLG would fund fire and rescue authorities for this cost.

Members noted that the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) was exploring these concerns with CLG, and that the Service was in contact with both CFOA and other fire and rescue services in this regard. Any sign-up by the Authority would be subject to further advice from CFOA following their discussions with CLG.

8. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2010/11

All Members present declared a personal interest in this Item.

The Combined Fire Authority's Members' Allowances Scheme (the Scheme) was introduced on 1 January 2004 and had been fully reviewed in 2007.

It was agreed that the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2010/11 should remain as existing with a further 6 days added to the Chair and Vice Chair's Special Responsibility Allowances to reflect their work as Directors of the Local Authority Control Centre Limited.

9. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHIEF FIRE OFFICER AND TREASURER

Following the recent appointment of former Deputy Chief Fire Officer Graeme Smith as Chief Fire Officer of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, a vacancy existed in the Service for a Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

Mr Vic Logan, who had held the position of Treasurer to the Combined Fire Authority since its creation in 1997, had notified the Authority of his wish to retire on 31 March 2010, although he was flexible in his actual retirement date.

Members agreed arrangements for the appointment of a Deputy Chief Fire Officer and replacement Treasurer to the Combined Fire Authority.

10. INFORMATION BULLETIN

The Combined Fire Authority received a Bulletin containing information on various matters relating to the Fire and Rescue Service.

Members noted forthcoming Member development sessions, including planned visits to Stations by Members, and the Celebration of Christmas to be held at Woburn Parish Church on 15 December 2009.

The Chair wished Members and Service personnel a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Amongst the items reported were:

A father of a casualty trapped in her car in a road traffic collision in Luton thanked crews from Luton and Stopsley Red Watch. He asked that the Chief Fire Officer be made aware of his gratitude for the professionalism of all crews attending, especially their calm manner and the reassurance they gave his daughter during the extrication. He advised that at all times his daughter knew exactly what was going on, which made the traumatic time so much easier for her to deal with. His daughter was admitted to hospital but was expected to make a full recovery.

Classes 2CB and 2CF at Sacred Heart School sent thanks to Stopsley Blue Watch:

.....'Thank you very much for coming to talk to us today about what you do and how you keep us all safe. We learnt lots and we enjoyed seeing the special clothes that you have to wear when you go to a fire and we loved seeing the fire engine and getting to try out the hose.'.....

The Deputy Community Leader at Emmaus Village Carlton expressed thanks to the crew from Harrod:

.....'On behalf of all at Emmaus Village Carlton just a brief note to thank you for your wonderful support relating to our recent Music and Arts Festival on Saturday 26 September. We were delighted with the all round support from the local community generally which made such a contribution to the overall success of the day. Once again many thanks and we hope to meet again soon.'.....

The Group Co-ordinator for Balliol Family Group and Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre Group sent the following letters of thanks to Green Watch at Kempston and Bedford:

.....'Thank you for attending our Balliol group to talk to our members about fire safety. The ladies found the talk on fire safety to be really informative and useful. Members commented that the Fire Fighters were very friendly and helpful. Both the women and children enjoyed having a tour of the fire engine.

We appreciate you giving up your time to come out to talk to the group.'.....

.....'Thank you for attending our Queens Park Neighbourhood Centre Group to talk to our members about fire safety. The ladies found the talk on fire safety to be really informative and useful. Members commented that the Fire Fighters were very friendly and helpful and they appreciated being able to ask questions during the informal talk.

The children from our crèche and the children from the Westbourne day nursery were very excited to meet the Fire Fighters and enjoyed having a tour of the fire engine.

We appreciate you giving up your time to come out to talk to the group.'.....

FUTURE REPORTS

Commencing in 2010, the Authority proposes to publish an occasional series of Thematic Briefing Notes on work being undertaken by Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service.

**COUNCILLOR J STREET
EXECUTIVE MEMBER OF THE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY**