

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



please ask for Mel Peaston, Senior Democratic Services Officer
direct line 0300 300 6076
date 7 December 2009

NOTICE OF MEETING

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Thursday, 17 December 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Venue at

Room 15 Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford.

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:

Cllrs Mrs J G Lawrence (Chairman), K Sharer (Vice-Chairman), R A Baker,
P A Blaine, P Rawcliffe, R C Stay and Mrs P E Turner MBE

[Named Substitutes:

Cllrs: Mrs C F Chapman MBE, M Gibson, K C Matthews and P Snelling]

All other Members of the Council - on request

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

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence and notification of any substitutes.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2009.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

4. **Public Questions, Statements and Deputations**

This is an opportunity for questions, statements and deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure set out in Section A4 of the Council's Constitution.

5. **Petitions**

To receive any petitions in accordance with the scheme of public participation set out in Annex 2 in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

6. **Working Group report on Proposed Electoral Arrangements**

To consider the attached report and make recommendations to Council for consideration at its meeting on 7 January 2010.

7. **Policies**

To consider the formal adoption of policies in relation to Human Resources, taking into account the view of the Employee Partnership Committee.

8. **Redundancies**

To consider a report providing an update on the position.

9. **Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions**

To receive an oral report providing an update on the position.

10. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on **Wednesday, 10 February 2010** starting at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Chicksands.

(This meeting replaces the one originally scheduled for 14 January 2010.)

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held at Council Offices, High Street North, Dunstable on Thursday, 27 August 2009.

PRESENT

Cllr K Sharer (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs P Rawcliffe
R Stay

Cllr Mrs P E Turner MBE

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs R A Baker
P A Blaine
Mrs J G Lawrence

Substitutes: Cllrs Mrs C F Chapman MBE
K C Matthews
P Snelling

Member in Attendance: Cllr J Murray

GPC/09/14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from the following:-

- Councillor Blaine (Councillor Snelling was present as his substitute)
- Councillor Baker (Councillor Matthews was present as his substitute)
- Councillor Jane Lawrence (Councillor Mrs Chapman, MBE was present as her substitute).

In view of Cllr Jane Lawrence's absence, Councillor Sharer chaired the meeting.

GPC/09/15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

GPC/09/16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

GPC/09/17 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

There were no announcements or matters of communication from the Chairman.

GPC/09/18 Public Questions, Statements and Deputations

There were no questions, statements or deputations from members of the public.

GPC/09/19 Petitions

There were no petitions.

GPC/09/20 Electoral Review of Central Bedfordshire; Council Size for the Authority

The General Purposes Committee noted that its Electoral Arrangements Review Working Group had met on three occasions to consider proposals for the Council size for Central Bedfordshire. The Working Group's conclusions were drawn together in a draft submission to the Boundary Committee for England which was now before the Committee. Members noted that the next step was to consider the draft submission and refer it together with recommendations from the Committee to Council.

In considering the submission, members of the Working Group who were present at the meeting thanked the officers, in particular Brian Dunleavy, Electoral Services Project Officer, for the invaluable support that they had provided to the Working Group.

Members noted that the draft submission was a comprehensive document setting out the methodology and the background information which had led to the conclusion drawn by the Working Party on the optimum size of the Council.

In discussing the submission, Members asked for some minor drafting changes, including changing the term "frontline councillor" to "ward councillor". A Member queried what was meant by the reference to "discounting members for the purpose of seat allocation" in paragraph 4.3 and suggested that this wording perhaps needed to be clarified. Some additional wording was also suggested to be added after the final bullet point on page 5 of the submission to reflect the need to ensure that sufficient capacity is available to respond to the emerging localism agenda.

Members discussed the recommendations before them. It was noted that the former County and District Councils had between them comprised a total of 136 councillors' places and that the recommendation for 66 members represented a considerable reduction on this. Reference was also made to the developing role of councillors as community champions and to the expectation that as housing developments were completed, there would be increasing numbers of people living locally drawing upon the support of councillors.

Members considered that the submission, as amended, provided a robust case for the recommendation to the Boundary Committee that there should be 66 elected councillors for Central Bedfordshire.

RESOLVED:-

1. **that the conclusions of the Electoral Arrangements Review Working Group in relation to the Council size for Central Bedfordshire, be endorsed.**
2. **that the draft submission to the Boundary Committee for England on Council Size for Central Bedfordshire be revised in accordance with the amendments referred to in the preamble above.**

RECOMMENDED:

1. **that the recommendation that there should be 66 elected Councillors for Central Bedfordshire, be endorsed; and**
2. **that the submission to the Boundary Committee for England on Council Size for Central Bedfordshire, be approved.**

(Note: a copy of the submission, which has been revised to take account of the amendments referred to in resolution 2 above, is attached.)

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 11.00 a.m.)

Chairman.....

Date.....

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Electoral Review

Submission on Council Size



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1. INTRODUCTION

Vision

- 1.1 The Council's vision is to *improve the quality of life of all in Central Bedfordshire, and enhance the unique character of our communities and our environment.*
- 1.2 The vision for Central Bedfordshire Council was created by councillors, staff, partners and stakeholders and was arrived at after considering the geography, demography and future growth of the area and views of the residents.
- 1.3 The Council's developing Community Engagement Strategy, builds on the commitments made in the bid for unitary status to place communities at the forefront of the Council's work – to ensure the Council and its key partners listen to, discuss and act on issues that are of utmost importance to the people in Central Bedfordshire. The aim is to build on the current engagement with the community, putting Councillors at the heart of community and to move the Council towards higher levels of community empowerment.
- 1.4 Councillors will be placed at the heart of this engagement strategy to ensure the Council maximises opportunities to engage with and positively respond to all of Central Bedfordshire's communities. This will mean that Councillors are:
 - fully supported to communicate and engage with their communities in a variety of ways;
 - supported to efficiently resolve community-based issues in their wards;
 - kept informed of key Council activities in their wards;
 - able to contribute to localised spending decisions; and
 - supported in attending key community events in their wards.

Area

- 1.5 Central Bedfordshire is the gateway to the Midlands and East Anglia and is served by the M1, A1, A5 and A6 roads together with three different rail networks traversing the district giving rise to the influx of commuters specifically around the towns that support the rail links.
- 1.6 The Central Bedfordshire area currently has a population of around 250,000 and it is planned to grow rapidly, to an estimated population of over 300,000 by 2021, through the development of some 50,000 new homes. Moreover, the population is predicted to continue to grow quickly between 2022 and 2031 through further in-migration.

- 1.7 Central Bedfordshire covers an area of some 716 square kilometres and has a diverse mix of urban and rural communities. Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard, as market towns, represent the largest urban areas and collectively account for some 29% of the population. The other 6 towns are geographically spread across the area of the authority and collectively they account for a further 31% of the population. The remaining 40% of the population extend across some substantially sized villages to the very small hamlets each with its own individual character
- 1.8 This profile places considerable difficulties on the councillors, in the way that they represent and serve their respective communities. Specifically when taking into account the diversity of the socio economic groups across the Authority.
- 1.9 Central Bedfordshire is fully parished with 70 Town and Parish Councils.

Council

- 1.10 Central Bedfordshire is a Unitary Council and was formed in April 2009 based on the combined area of the former Mid and South Bedfordshire districts.
- 1.11 Elections held in June 2009 returned a Council comprising 54 Conservative councillors, 11 Liberal Democrat councillors and 1 independent councillor. The councillors have been appointed for a two year term of office expiring in May 2011.
- 1.12 The Council employs 3,385 staff plus a further 10,824 in education services. The gross budget amounts to £497.05m with a net controllable budget of £165.8m.

Our Case

- 1.13 Our proposals are made against a background of national and local policy drivers and of seeking to deliver the commitments set out in the submission to the Secretary of State to create an excellent authority, providing strong, effective and accountable leadership for the communities of Central Bedfordshire.
- 1.14 **This submission presents the case for the size of Central Bedfordshire Council. The proposal is that the Council has 66 elected Members thus affording the new unitary council with the opportunity to continue to develop and sustain a better quality of life for the people living in our area.**

2. OUR APPROACH TO DETERMINING COUNCIL SIZE

- 2.1 We have been mindful of the Boundary Committee's guidance on factors to consider when making a proposal on Council size including:-
- The governance model in operation in the Council, working practices and the impact on the workload of councillors;
 - The existence of town and parish councils in the area;
 - The enhanced representational role of the councillor driven by the requirements in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, including the new "Councillor Call for Action", which has attracted cross party support; and
 - The need for electoral equality.
- 2.2 Against this background we have reviewed the various roles which councillors in Central Bedfordshire perform and the resultant workloads and have analysed this information to guide our recommendation on Council size.
- 2.3 In addition to the factors listed by the Boundary Committee, regard has been given to the following considerations:
- The significant demands placed on a councillor of a single tier council, particularly in their representational role;
 - The overall reduction in elected representation in Central Bedfordshire following the abolition of the County and District Councils;
 - The many demands placed upon councillors over and above committee meeting attendance and casework, most notably the need to work effectively with partner organisations such as the police and fire authorities, health authorities and the voluntary sector;
 - The requirement to ensure that the authority is able to be effectively represented on various local, regional and national bodies including the East of England Regional Assembly and the County Councils' Network; and
 - The need to ensure sufficient capacity to respond to the many new Government initiatives which will impact upon the workload of councillors, including the duty to promote democracy, the duty to involve, petitions and engaging with and empowering citizens.

- 2.4 To ensure that we can deliver our vision, the Council requires strong leadership and full participation politically. This submission sets out our case for 66 members in Central Bedfordshire. This will ensure that all roles at the political level can be carried out effectively, that members have the capacity fully to undertake their role as community leaders and will enable us to achieve our commitment to becoming an excellent authority. The rationale and evidence leading to our conclusion is set out below.

3. THE CASE

- 3.1 The combined area of the Mid and South Beds authorities had 103 district councillors and 33 county councillors (a total of 136 councillors). The bid for unitary status for Central Bedfordshire significantly reduced that number to 66 members to give residents clearer local representation. The figure was derived from the existing county divisions resulting in 28 wards, 5 of which return 4 councillors with the remainder returning 2 councillors each. A comparison was made with South Gloucestershire unitary council, which was deemed to have a similar settlement pattern and where a council size of 70 members gives an almost exactly similar elector ratio (2900:1). Whilst an outline governance structure was set out in the bid to the Secretary of State, the Shadow Council spent some 8 months reviewing and developing the proposed structure and the revised political management structure was approved by the Shadow Council in February 2009.
- 3.2 The opportunity has been presented by the electoral review to test the extent to which 66 is the appropriate number of councillors for Central Bedfordshire and its new governance structure.
- 3.3 In determining the number of councillors required to meet the delivery of our vision we have ensured that the collective decision making process and the scrutiny workload are appropriately shared. Moreover, that the number of constituents that each member represents does not make their case work unrealistic or unmanageable.

Political Management

Council

- 3.4 Full Council meets at least 6 times a year and is responsible for providing the overall strategic direction for the Council principally through the adoption of the budget and the policy framework.

The Executive

- 3.5 In accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 the Council has adopted "executive arrangements".

3.6 The Council has adopted the ‘Strong Leader’ Executive model. The Leader is responsible for appointing members to the Executive, for allocating portfolio responsibilities and for approving Executive delegations. The Leader has been appointed for a two year term of office until the next election of councillors in 2011.

3.7 The Executive must be made up of the Leader and at least two but no more than nine councillors including the Deputy Leader appointed by the Leader. Currently the Executive consists of 10 members and makes decisions which are in line with the Council’s budget and policy framework. The membership of the Executive and their respective portfolios are shown below:

- Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive
- Deputy Leader of the Council, Vice Chairman of the Executive and Portfolio holder for Business Transformation
- Portfolio holder for Corporate Resources
- Portfolio holder for Economic Growth and Regeneration
- Portfolio holder for Safer and Stronger Communities
- Portfolio holder for Sustainable Development
- Portfolio holder for Children’s Services
- Portfolio holder for Culture and Skills
- Portfolio holder for Social Care and Health
- Portfolio holder for Housing

3.8 The Executive meets formally every month and is responsible for carrying out all of the Authority’s functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Authority, either by law (The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities (England) Regulations 2000) or by the Council’s Constitution.

3.9 The Executive also meets informally every month with officers of the Council (primarily the Corporate Management Team). These meetings are held in advance of the Executive and in conjunction with the ‘Chairman’s briefing’ thus enabling the Executive to be briefed on forthcoming business.

3.10 Members of the Executive are expected to attend the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and indeed every Task and Finish Group consistent with their portfolio responsibilities. Unless specifically ‘called’ to give evidence an Executive members presence is to provide specialist information and advice to the committee or feedback on performance issues. Additionally, an Executive member will also contribute to the in depth analysis of any policy issues within their own areas of responsibility.

3.11 In order to provide further capacity to the Executive, there are four assistants to portfolio holders whose roles are to provide direct support to the appropriate portfolio holder (s) as follows:-

- Assistant to Corporate Resources Portfolio holder
- Assistant to Safer and Stronger Communities Portfolio holder
- Assistant to the Children's Services and Culture and Skills Portfolio holders
- Assistant to the Social Care, Health and Housing Portfolio holders

3.12 Whilst the four assistants can represent the Executive member in consultation with officers and other members, they cannot substitute in any decision making capacity. The system is also seen as a mechanism for increasing the number of members with experience of Executive procedures and functions and contributing to the development of individual members. The Council's Constitution precludes assistants to the portfolio holders from sitting on the corresponding overview and scrutiny committee.

3.13 In addition to the many formal meetings attended by Executive members, their role demands regular meetings with those Chief and Senior officers who support their portfolio area. Executive members , review performance, develop proposals and receive briefings to enable them to effectively meet their responsibilities. Executive members are also frequently required to meet with representatives of partner organisations and other authorities to discuss issues relevant to their portfolio area. This informal member-level activity is difficult to quantify but nonetheless represents an essential role in the administration of the Council and impacts on the office holders and overall capacity of the Council at political level.

Overview and Scrutiny

3.14 The Council has appointed five overview and scrutiny committees aligned to the Council's organisational structure, whose role is to support the work of the Executive and the Council as a whole. However, the role of the overview and scrutiny committees is not limited to 'holding the Executive to account' but also has a strong focus on policy development (a particularly demanding role as the new unitary authority has to determine all its policies and strategies), extending to carrying out work in a number of areas, including:

- Assisting the Council and the Executive in the development of the budget and policy framework through in-depth analysis of policy issues and proposed projects.
- Conducting research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues or proposed projects and other options
- The implementation of mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy or project options.
- Liaison with other external organisations operating in the area, to

ensure that the interests of the community are enhanced by collaborative working.

3.15 The overview and scrutiny committees and their principal responsibilities are:

- Business Transformation (including communications, customer services, community engagements and corporate planning)
- Children, Families and Learning (including leisure, culture, libraries and adult and community learning)
- Corporate Resources (including financial services, procurement, human resources and organisational development, ICT, legal and democratic services and property and asset management)
- Social Care, Health and Housing (including landlord services, homelessness and private sector housing)
- Sustainable Communities (including planning, transportation, economic growth, highways and parking, waste and recycling and community safety)

3.16 Whilst acknowledging that the five themed standing committees play the lead role in policy development and review, they are supported by time-limited task and finish groups with defined scopes and remit. These task and finish groups are playing a critical role in the in-depth examination and development of policies and strategies in the new unitary authority. Task and finish groups have already been established to review the following:-

- Community Engagement
- Customer Services
- Business Transformation
- Procurement Strategy
- Long term accommodation strategy
- Cultural Strategy

3.17 Additionally a standing task group has been set up to review the Local Development Framework.

3.18 Members of task and finish groups are selected according to their interest and expertise in the topic under review.

3.19 The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the overview and scrutiny committees meet informally as the “Overview and Scrutiny Management Panel” to co-ordinate the work of the five overview and scrutiny committees, particularly where topics for scrutiny or review cut across the terms of reference of two or more committees. These

meetings are held at least quarterly but are currently held on a more frequent basis as the new overview and scrutiny arrangements bed in.

Development Management

3.20 The Development Management Committee currently meets twice monthly to determine the planning applications. Additionally, site visits are held every fortnight in support of the more complicated and contentious applications. Traditionally, meetings can be quite lengthy (an average length of 3 hours per meeting in the period April to July 2009) due to the volume of applications and the Council's extensive scheme for public participation. Collectively therefore, Members of the committee are likely to spend a considerable amount of time dealing with planning issues and are therefore unlikely to be able to take up positions on more than one other committee within the Council.

Licensing and Regulation

3.21 In accordance with its statutory obligations the Council has appointed a Licensing Committee and a Regulation Committee. Whilst the membership of both committees is the same, they have distinct functions. The Licensing Committee is responsible for all aspects under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 whereas the Regulation Committee deals with other licensing functions including hackney carriage, private hire vehicles and street trading. There is also a Licensing Sub Committee to deal with liquor licensing and gambling applications, which is held as and when necessary. As meetings are held frequently, all members of the parent Licensing Committee are appointed as substitutes on the sub committee and therefore are likely to be required to participate in a substantial number of the hearings conducted by the sub committee.

Audit

3.22 The Audit Committee advises the Council and the Executive on audit and governance issues. It provides an independent assurance on the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and associated control environment, together with a scrutiny of the Authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Council's exposure to risk.

Standards

3.23 The Standards Committee has, in addition to its responsibility for overseeing standards of conduct amongst members of Central Bedfordshire Council (including the assessment, review and investigation of complaints), responsibility for the conduct of co-opted members and the 703 members of the 70 town and parish councils within Central Bedfordshire. The committee has three sub-committees which deal with; the initial assessment of any complaint made; the

review of decisions; and the conduct of hearings.

- 3.24 Experience of the local assessment regime at Central Bedfordshire since April 2009 has demonstrated that this large number of town and parish councillors has the potential to result in a heavy workload for the Monitoring Officer and the various standards sub-committees. Some 7 cases have already been dealt with or are in the “pipeline” for review by the sub committees. Research by the Standards Board for England suggests that, on average, most councils will process 8 standards cases in a 12 month period. The current workload is reflective of the national trend that complaints relate to members of town and parish councils to a greater extent than to members of principal authorities. As a new authority, however this current level of complaints may not be indicative of future workload. The Monitoring Officer and the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee have taken a proactive approach to promoting good ethical governance across Central Bedfordshire and have held a number of awareness events and workshops throughout the area over the first few months of the life of the new Council. These events have received excellent levels of attendance and participation from our town and parish colleagues.

Other Committees

- 3.25 The Council has appointed a number of other committees to assist with the discharge of its functions. The cycles of the meetings vary but generally they are programmed to meet between 4 and 6 times per year. Additionally, it is anticipated that a number of committees may meet more frequently than this, or indeed find it necessary to set up working groups to deal with specific projects. The committees and their primary function are:

- General Purposes Committee (To determine strategic employee policies and terms and conditions of employment. To carry out all functions relating to elections, electoral registration and governance arrangements).
- Appointments Sub Committee (To appoint or recommend the appointment of chief officers).
- Appeals Committee (To consider representations or appeals against decisions made on or behalf of the Council including staffing appeals and grievances).
- Wixams Joint Development Control Committee (To exercise the development control powers of Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils in relation to The Wixams new settlement).
- Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Committee (To exercise the functions of Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils in respect of the Luton and South Bedfordshire Growth Area).
- Joint Consultative & Negotiating for Primary and Secondary

Education Committee (A forum for negotiation on conditions of service for teachers and staff)

- Employee Partnership Committee (To promote effective joint working between the Council and its recognised trade unions).
- Constitution Advisory Group (To monitor and review the operation of the Council's Constitution and make recommendations to the Council in respect of any proposed amendments).
- Fostering Panel (For the approval of prospective fosters carers).
- Joint Adoption Panel (Making adoption plans for children).
- Fostering Permanence Panel (To consider permanence for foster carers)
- Corporate Parenting Panel (To ensure that the Council discharges its role as corporate parent of looked after children).
- Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) (To ensure that Religious Education is taught in all schools).
- Houghton Regis Town Centre Management Committee (To set the broad direction of the town centre initiative).
- Dunstable Town Centre Management Committee (To serve as a partnership forum for all those involved in town centre initiatives).
- Leighton Linlade Town Centre Management Committee (To serve as a partnership forum for all those involved in town centre initiatives).

4. POLITICAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

4.1 Membership of the Council's committees together with the annual cycle is as shown below.

	Scheduled meetings per annum	Councillor membership	Membership conditions (if any)
Council	6		
Executive	12	10 (4 assistants support the work of the portfolio holders but are not members of Executive)	
Overview and Scrutiny Committees:			No members of Executive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Transformation 	12	9	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children, Families and Learning 	12	10	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Resources 	12	9	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care, Health and Housing 	12	9	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Communities 	12	9	
Development Management Committee	24	18	
Licensing Committee	4	12	Membership of Licensing & Regulation Committees to be the same
Regulation Committee	4	N/A	As above
Licensing Sub Committee	As required	3	
Audit Committee	4	7	No Executive members and no member of Corporate Resources OSC
General Purposes Committee	4	7	At least 1 Executive member
Appointments Sub Committee	As required	3	At least 1 Executive member

Appeals Committee	As required	Minimum of 5	
Standards Committee	4	5	5
Wixams Joint Development Control Committee	As required	9	9
Luton & South Bedfordshire Joint Committee – Section 29	6 average	6	4 Executive members
Luton & South Bedfordshire Joint Committee – Section 101	As required	3	3 Executive members
Joint Consultative & Negotiating Committee for Primary and Secondary Education	4	7	At least 1 Executive member
Employee Partnership Committee	4	7	At least 1 Executive member
Constitution Advisory Group	As required	6	
Member Development Champions	As required	7	
Fostering Panel	As required	1	
Joint Adoption Panel	As required	1	
Fostering Permanence Panel	As required	1	
Corporate Parenting Panel	12	8	
SACRE	Once a term	5	
Houghton Regis Town Centre Management Committee	4	4	Must comprise either Executive members or members for ward
Dunstable Town Centre Management Committee	4	5	As above
Leighton Linlade Town Centre Management Committee	4	5	As above
Standards Assessment Sub Committee	As required	1	3 members are appointed by the Monitoring Officer from a panel comprising all members of the Standards Committee
Standards Review Sub Committee	As required	1	As above

Standards Hearings Sub Committee	As required	1	As above
Totals		194	Excluding membership of the Council

- 4.2 Excluding the 10 Executive seats and the 11 committee memberships that are required to be held by members of the Executive, there are 173 committee seats remaining.
- 4.3 It is considered that members of the Executive have the equivalent of a full-time job, for that reason, it is not considered to be reasonable to add to the already heavy workload of these members by allocating additional committee positions. *This means that 10 members are discounted for the purpose of seat allocation.* The “Portfolio Holder” Role Profile is shown at Appendix A.
- 4.4 The Chairman of Council fulfils an extremely important role on civic, ceremonial and representational functions. The Chairman promotes the Council in the community, to the public, businesses and voluntary bodies and encourages civic awareness and pride. This role is particularly relevant for a new authority such as Central Bedfordshire as it begins to build its reputation in the community. The Council therefore takes the view that the extent of the Chairman’s duties means that he/she could not commit to any other committee role. *This increases the number of members discounted for purposes of seat allocation to 11.* The Role Profile for the “Chairman of the Council” is shown at Appendix B.
- 4.5 As indicated in paragraph 3.20, given the frequency of meetings and workload associated with the Development Management Committee, it is considered that members of that committee cannot reasonably be expected to assume more than one additional committee per member. *This increases the number of members discounted for the purpose of seat allocation to 29.*
- 4.6 Assuming that each member of the Development Control Committee is allocated 2 committee seats (i.e.: seat on Development Management Committee plus one other committee place), this would reduce the number of non-executive seats to be filled to 137 (i.e.: 18 members x 2 committee seats = 36. 173 – 36 = 137)
- 4.7 The National Census of Local Authority Councillors 2008 indicates that across all authorities, members hold on average 3.7 committee or sub-committee seats. Using this standard, each member sitting on an average of 3.7 committees indicates that 37 councillors would be required to fill the remaining non-executive seats.

- 4.8 The principles above indicated that 29 Members (10 Executive members, the Chairman of the Council and the 18 members of Development Management Committee) should not be expected to assume the average number of committees, given their existing workloads and responsibilities. Adding back the 37 members referred to above suggests that a Council of 66 members would be an appropriate for Central Bedfordshire.
- 4.9 For ease of reference the details set out in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.8 are set out in tabular form below:-

Table 1

<i>No of Members discounted for purposes of seat allocation</i>	
Executive members	10
Chairman of the Council	1
Development Mgt Committee Members	18
Total	29

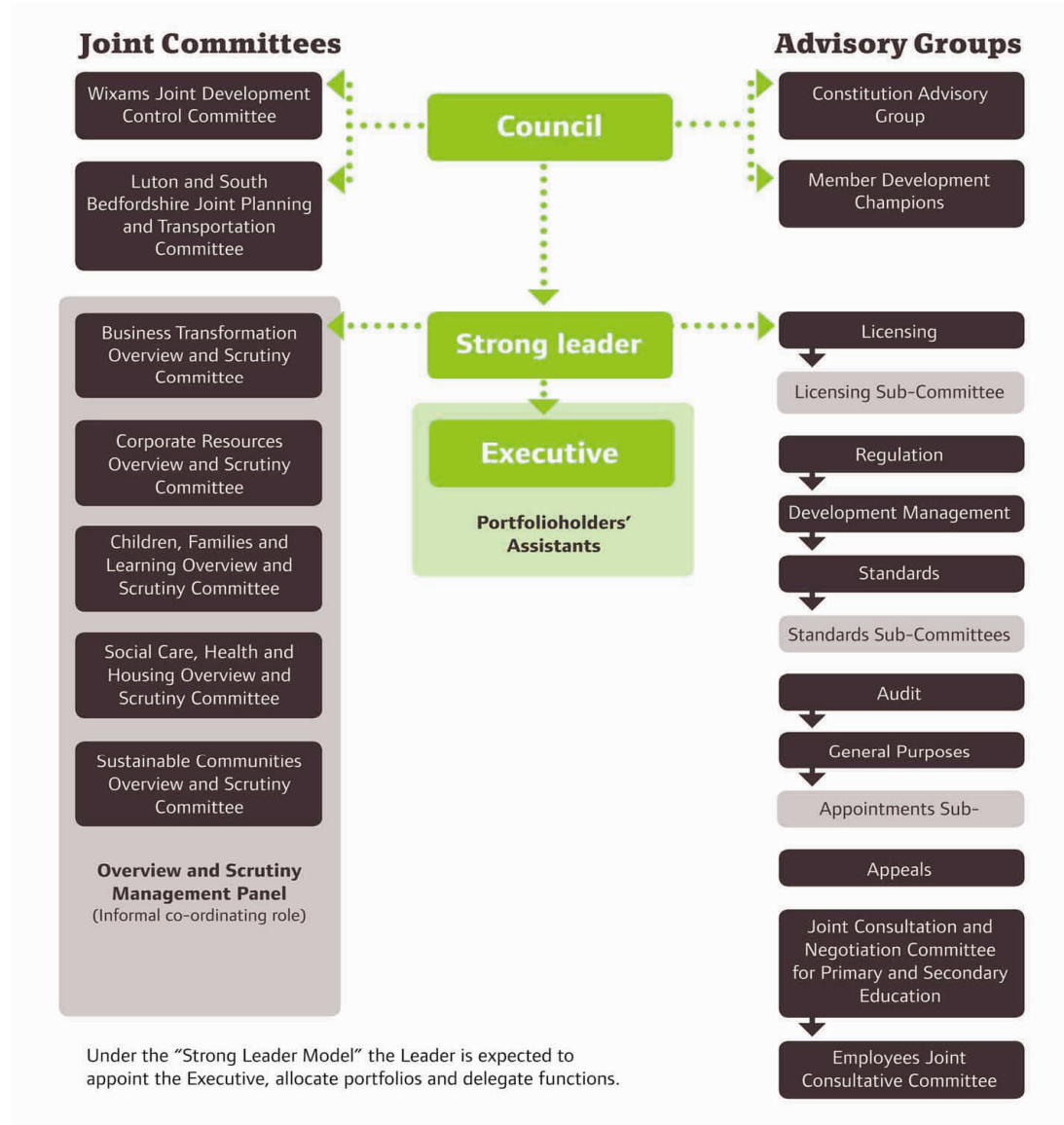
Table 2

<i>Allocation of Committee seats</i>	
Total no of seats	194
Minus seats to be allocated to Executive members	21
Sub total	173
Minus seats to be allocated to Development Management members	36
Sub total	137
Divided by IDeA average 3.7 to indicate no of frontline councillors needed to fill remaining seats	37.02

Table 3

<i>No of Members required for Central Bedfordshire</i>	
Frontline members	37
Plus members shown in table 1 above who were discounted for seat allocation purposes	29
Total	66

5. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



6. MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The role of the Unitary Councillor is both extensive and varied and it is recognised that members may need to move away from the detail that they would have experienced from within a district authority and take a more strategic approach in an authority responsible for combined services, whilst at the same time not losing sight of their role as advocates for the community and its residents.

Community Role

6.2 The Council's Constitution clearly defines the expectations of members in their community engagement role. Specifically by:

- Representing the communities of their ward, bringing their views into the Council's decision-making process and representing the Council to those communities – i.e. to become an advocate of and for, their communities.
- Responding to constituents' enquiries and representations fairly and impartially, dealing with individual casework and otherwise effectively representing the interests of their ward and of individual constituents.
- Balancing the different interests identified within the ward, representing the ward as a whole and acting as a point of mediation between the Council and the communities of their ward.

Corporate Role

6.3 The corporate role of the members' contribution to the decision making process, is achieved by;

- Participating in the Council's committees whilst acknowledging the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision making.
- Understanding and engaging in Overview and Scrutiny.
- Working with officers and other Members to ensure that local needs are understood and accounted for.

Partnership Role

6.4 The partnership role of the members involves working with external organisations, by:

- Representing the Authority on local outside bodies.

- Representing the Authority on local partnership bodies, promoting common interest and co-operation for mutual gain.
- Representing and being an advocate for the Council on national bodies and at national events.

Political Role

6.5 Whilst acknowledging that some members may not necessarily align themselves with a political party it is generally accepted by the public that elected representatives are seen as politicians. Consequently, members need to understand how to work in a political environment by:

- Engaging in cross-party working where necessary for the public good.
- Engaging in responsible leadership or constructive opposition.
- Building an understanding of political working among officers.

7. TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

7.1 Central Bedfordshire is fully parished with 70 town and parish councils. The attendance of elected members at meetings of town and parish councils is an essential element of their representational role – listening to and acting as an advocate for their local towns and parishes. This responsibility is increased in a single tier area, since the unitary councillor is the only principal authority member representing the parish.

7.2 The Council considers that attendance at town and parish council meetings is both a significant and vital element of the councillor's workload and whilst some members have only a single town council within their ward, more than half of the Central Bedfordshire councillors, being those representing rural wards, have at least 3 parish councils within their ward and in extreme cases up to 10 parish councils.

7.3 Additionally, in some parts of the Council's area it has been the practice that members would be invited to attend resident associations and community led forums and initiatives.

8. OUTSIDE BODIES AND SCHOOL GOVERNORS

Appointments to Outside Bodies

8.1 The Council appoints approximately 165 elected members as representatives on 85 outside bodies, some members serving on several different bodies. These include national and regional local authority associations; strategic joint partnership bodies covering

priorities such as health, housing, sustainable growth, community safety, sport and recreation, transport, accessibility, environmental protection, conservation and flood safety; as well as local voluntary/community groups and grant-making charities.

- 8.2 Appointment to an outside body represents a personal responsibility for the councillor concerned requiring regular attendance at the meetings of the organisation, preparing for meetings and bringing feedback from the organisation back into the Council. In some cases councillors are appointed as trustees or a director which carries a further degree of personal responsibility and accountability.
- 8.3 The Council sees this representation as forming an integral part of both its strategic policy planning and its community engagement agenda. The Monitoring Officer has recently issued advice and guidance to Members on their role on outside bodies and a policy on the Council's engagement with outside bodies is currently in the course of preparation.
- 8.4 On average each member serves on 2½ outside bodies. The Council therefore regards it as critical that there is sufficient capacity for the Council to participate fully in the work of these outside bodies having regard to the wider impact these organisations have on the communities within Central Bedfordshire.

Local Authority School and College Governors

- 8.5 The Council is required by the instruments of government of the 139 nursery, lower, middle and upper schools across Central Bedfordshire to appoint 318 local authority governors to the schools' governing bodies. Nearly half of these positions are taken by elected councillors, the Council have taken the line that each councillor should ideally sit on at least two school governing bodies. The role of a school governor is vital to the governance and improvement of standards in all our schools and the Council expects those appointed to continue to develop our engagement with the communities by making a regular and active contribution to the work of their governing body, contributing towards the Council's strategic priorities to transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners, particularly underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances.
- 8.6 As these bodies will meet at least termly and the majority will appoint sub committees which meet more frequently, the average Central Bedfordshire councillor serving on two governing bodies would need to make time for in the region of 12 meetings a year.

9. THE ROLE OF THE COUNCILLOR ON THE FRONTLINE

- 9.1 The Council recognises that the role of the non-executive member has changed considerably following the introduction of the

executive/scrutiny model for local authorities. However, it welcomes this change which has presented members with the opportunity to develop their role as both community advocates and problem-solvers for their respective neighbourhoods, as well as being community leaders, galvanizing engagement at grass roots level and initiating local action. Councillor Calls for Action, coupled with opportunities for locally-devolved budgets, wider scrutiny powers and more flexible member conduct rules on representing ward interests (most notably in relation to planning and licensing matters) all strengthen councillors' ability to influence policy and decision making by all public sector providers in their locality and to help improve the well-being of their community and locality.

- 9.2 The frontline councillor needs to assess the scope for harnessing and sharing local talents and skills from within the town and parish councils, the residents' and tenants' association, the local community and voluntary groups by establishing local networks that can identify and resolve local issues.
- 9.3 We see the frontline councillor as a conduit to the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny committees, bringing the necessary evidence to their attention and affording them the opportunity to take the appropriate action.
- 9.4 The "Joint Proposal for Unitary Local government in Central Bedfordshire" submitted to the Secretary of State, recognised that the development of efficient and effective frontline councillors was critical to the Council providing strong, effective and accountable strategic leadership to its communities.
- 9.5 The joint proposal also recognised the need for excellent member support to assist councillors in their frontline role. A small Members' services team provides advice and guidance to members and assists with arrangements and publicity for surgeries. Dedicated administrative support is also available to the Executive. IT equipment is provided for Councillors' use at home.

10. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

- 10.1 It is recognised that no Council can be successful without dedicated and skilled members and officers working in partnership. The Council is committed to providing excellent support, training and briefing for all of the members in order that they can play an active and meaningful part in the work of the Authority. There is a clear correlation between excellent/high performing Councils and well trained/developed members.
- 10.2 Our first Member Development Strategy acknowledges the contribution that elected members can make to create the culture for

the new Unitary Council and the achievement of its ambition to become an “Excellent” Authority by 2012.

- 10.3 The Council is striving to be a learning organisation, championing the continuing development of its councillors and staff and will be committing to achieve the Regional Charter for Elected Member Development and the National Investors in People (IIP) Charter Mark at the earliest opportunity.
- 10.4 A joint Member/Officer group called the “Member Development Champions” has undertaken the planning of the Councillor Induction Programme and the on-going Member Development Programme. The Group is cross-party, comprising the Leader, the Deputy Leader, the Corporate Services Portfolio holder together with other senior councillors, as appropriate. Meetings of the group take place every 6 - 8 weeks.
- 10.5 The Council implemented a comprehensive induction programme following the June elections with on average 2 half day events on key topics being held a week.
- 10.6 An on-going Member Development Programme has also been arranged which will begin in the Autumn of 2009.
- 10.7 1:1 sessions are to be held with councillors so that their individual development needs can be assessed and a personal development plan put in place.
- 10.8 Members are also encouraged to pursue personal development opportunities and the Council has worked with the IDeA to organise peer mentoring and attendance by members at the IDeA Leadership Academy.

11. COUNCILLOR WORKLOADS

- 11.1 The change from two-tiers of local government to a unitary authority has significant implications for member workloads, even for experienced councillors. The formation of the unitary authority has brought together the functions of Bedfordshire County Council and the two former districts of Mid and South Bedfordshire. Clearly, members will need to develop their knowledge and skills to incorporate these extended roles. Moreover, it is considered essential that members have a clear understanding of:

- The demographic, economic, political and social profile of the area.
- The Council’s key corporate challenges and values.
- The role and function of key partners.
- Knowledge of the relevant protocols and legislation governing the

highest standards of probity in public office and the operations of the Authority.

- The roles of senior officers and operational remit.
- Financial and performance data.

- 11.2 Members' higher profiles within the community will generate significantly greater workloads, particularly through engaging with the electorate. Additionally, their active participation with the town and parish councils, outside bodies, the police and fire authorities and their positions as school governors referred to earlier in our submission is further evidence of the need to ensure that sufficient numbers of Councillors are available to meet the demands placed upon them. Moreover, it is essential that a pragmatic councillor/elector ratio is also achieved.
- 11.3 A recent survey of members has indicated that, although the Authority is less than 6 months old, they spend approximately 9 hours per week on case work and a further 8 hours per week on simply dealing with Council and client case correspondence. The role profile for an "Elected Member" is set out at Appendix C.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The analysis in respect of Council size has been undertaken with due regard as to what might reasonably be expected of a member elected from any sector of the community.
- 12.2 In addition to the time that members spend on engaging with their constituents (17 hours), an analysis of the figures shown on the political management structure table indicates that on average a Central Bedfordshire member will attend up to one formal Committee meeting per week. The majority of meetings can involve an attendance of up to two hours, plus a similar amount of time or more for preparation. The above figure represents just the formal governance structure. In addition to the standing committees and sub-committees there are a myriad of task and finish groups, Panels, working groups, site visits, briefings and meetings with officers. Moreover, given the geography of the area some members can add a further hour's travelling time for each meeting they attend.
- 12.3 External representation on outside bodies (average two and a half bodies per member) together with attendance at school governor meetings (average two per Member) would account for a further 2 hours per week. Also a further nine members, as representatives on the police and fire authorities, will attend up to at least 6 programmed meetings per year on each respective authority. Additionally, both of the respective authorities have a considerable number of committees and the Council's representatives are required to serve on at least two

decision making committees which increases the time commitment to approximately 40 days per year.

- 12.4 Member development activities are estimated to be at least 2 hours per week with a further 2 hours per week being taken up on attendance at town and parish meetings or community based forums.
- 12.5 Collectively therefore, all of the aforementioned council/community activities amount to some 27 hours (not including travelling time) on average per week for each Member. This is higher than national average of 22 hours per week but commensurate with the national average for a metropolitan council as shown in the 2008 National Census. This commitment further supports the proposal for a Council of 66 Members and will ensure that the community is provided with the correct level of political representation.
- 12.6 The recommended number of Councillors for Central Bedfordshire is therefore determined as 66 which would give a ratio of 1: 2923 on the current electorate of 192,915 and a ratio of 1: 3,151 on a forecast electorate of 207,986 by 2014.
- 12.7 It is acknowledged that there is no prescribed electoral ratio in an electoral review; however, the table below shows the comparators within our Audit Commission family group and immediate neighbouring authorities which does indicate some similar ratios.

Council	Number of Councillors	2009 Electorate	Electors per Member
Bedford Borough	36 + Mayor	115,000	3194
Bury	51	141,378	2772
Kirklees	69	302,017	4377
Luton	48	138,328	2881
Milton Keynes	51	170,000	3333
Solihull	51	155,775	3054
South Gloucestershire	70	200,000	2857
Stockport	63	217,709	3455
Swindon	59	153,009	2593
Telford & Wrekin	54	121,221	2244
Thurrock	49	112,000	2285

Trafford	63	167,427	2657
Warrington	57	147,000	2578
West Berkshire	52	116,195	2234
York	47	150,928	3211

- 12.8 Central Bedfordshire aims to become an excellent authority, to deliver high quality democratically driven services and to provide strong, effective and accountable community leadership with an enhanced role for councillors in the frontline. It is against this background that this submission is made. The Council currently has 66 Members. The electoral review has allowed us to test whether that number is both appropriate for the new governance structure we now have in place and will provide the capacity to deliver the community leadership role to which we aspire. We have concluded that a Council of 66 will sustain effective governance and decision-making, will provide Executive members with the capacity they need to concentrate on their strategic and leadership roles, will allow all front line members to be engaged in policy development, review and scrutiny through overview and scrutiny and will provide capacity for ward councillors to effectively carry out their role as representatives of, and advocates for, their local communities. The Council commends its recommendation to the Boundary Committee.

APPENDIX A

Portfolio Holder Role Profile – Central Bedfordshire Council

1. Accountabilities

- To the Leader
- To the Executive (through collective responsibility)
- To Full Council
- Appropriate Committees of the Council (e.g. Audit, Overview and Scrutiny)
- To officers (Team working approach)

2. Role Purpose and Activity

- **Portfolio leadership**
 - To lead and develop policies and strategies within the portfolio
 - To decide the executive action to be taken in implementing those matters of Council policy relevant to the portfolio – seeking advice from the Leader, Deputy Leader, Senior Management Team and Heads of Service as appropriate
 - Be accountable for choices and performance in the portfolio
 - Work closely with members in overview and scrutiny to promote policy development within the portfolio remit and encourage robust and constructive challenge
 - Engender strong working relationships with the Leader and Deputy Leader and relevant senior officers within the portfolio area
- **Contribute to the setting of the strategic agenda and work programme for the portfolio**
 - Work with officers to formulate policy documents both strategic and statutory
 - Provide updates to Council and relevant committees on progress in the above areas
 - Carry out (and enable) consultations with key partners to facilitate policy development
 - Provide support to officers in the implementation of the portfolio programme
- **Provide representation for the portfolio**
 - Represent the Council on outside bodies.
 - Provide portfolio leadership on a wider strategic scale e.g. to represent and champion the Council on national and regional bodies ensuring that the challenges, successes and contribution of Central Bedfordshire are recognised

- **Reporting and accounting**
 - Report as appropriate to the Leader, Full Council, Executive, appropriate chairman of scrutiny, regulatory bodies and the media in consultation – or as directed by the leader
 - Lead consultation in (and facilitate) the drawing up of the revenue and capital budgets
 - Take decisions on resources and priorities to deliver the strategies and budget approved by full council

- **Leading partnerships and community leadership**
 - Provide leadership to local strategic partnerships and other key partners in the pursuit of common aims and priorities
 - Negotiate and enable solutions in the event of differing priorities and disagreement
 - Act as a leader of the local community by showing vision and foresight
 - Fulfil other ward duties as appropriate to the role description of a ward councillor

- **Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships**
 - Promote and support good governance of the Council and its affairs
 - Provide community leadership and promote active citizenship
 - Maintain a special interest to promote and support open and transparent government within the portfolio remit
 - Support, and adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council
 - Adhere to the Member's Code of Conduct, Member/Officer Protocol and the highest standards of behaviour in public office

3. Values

- To be committed to and demonstrate the following values in public office:
 - Openness and transparency
 - Honesty and integrity
 - Tolerance and respect
 - Equality and fairness
 - Appreciation of cultural difference and diversity
 - Sustainability
 - Inclusive leadership
 - Consensus building

4 **Skills, knowledge, qualities and personal development**

- To participate in opportunities for continuous professional development provided by the authority and participate in periodic personal development reviews. To work towards development of the key skills, knowledge and standards of professionalism required of this role. Skills, knowledge and qualities required for the various aspect of the role include:
 - **Skills relevant to:**
 - **The provision of Portfolio leadership and**
 - **Contribute to the setting of the strategic agenda and work programme for the portfolio**
 - **Reporting and accounting**
 - Wide knowledge of the strategies, policies, operations and challenges relevant to the portfolio
 - Knowledge of relevant performance measures, challenges and benchmarks
 - Knowledge of community strengths, areas of improvement and key issues
 - Understanding of the relationship between national and local politics and portfolio related policies
 - Good strategic awareness of issues facing Central Bedfordshire and an ability to promote continuous service improvement
 - An understanding of Central Bedfordshire’s strategy, policies, operations and resources
 - Provide political leadership and maintain group consensus
 - Provide a role model for members regarding the values and behaviours associated with portfolio management
 - Participation in advanced leadership development opportunities as appropriate to the portfolio
 - Knowledge of effective methods to undertake and promote elected member development to ensure widespread expertise in the portfolio remit
 - Entrepreneurial skills to lead initiatives to attract new resources to Central Bedfordshire to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area
- **Provide representation for the portfolio**
 - Articulating challenges and decisions using high level communication skills including
 - Public speaking skills
 - Presentation skills
 - Chairing and reporting skills
 - Medial liaison

- **Reporting and accounting**
 - Ability to plan and prioritise the business of Council, Cabinet and its committees having regard to the terms of reference and the key challenges facing the Council
 - Participation in advanced Chairing skills development opportunities as appropriate to encourage participation from all members
 - Ability to constructively challenge decisions and suggest alternatives
 - Knowledge and understanding of local and national policy objectives and the aspirations of other relevant organisations
 - Knowledge and understanding of budget making processes
 - Knowledge and financial and performance monitoring and ability to use such information to inform decision-making
 - Knowledge and skills to work closely with members in overview and scrutiny to promote policy development and robust and constructive challenge
 - Knowledge of best practice in local authority service delivery and commitment to supporting the authority to provide leading edge service and gain recognition for excellence

- **Leading partnerships and the local community**
 - Leadership and partnership development skills
 - Community engagement to represent all areas of the ward
 - Efficient case –work management and use of technology to report and monitor case progress
 - Interpersonal skills to manage sensitive case issues
 - Integrity, ability to act impartially and work within the codes of conduct and protocols of the Council
 - Ability to chair and manage the work of local meetings and committees
 - Knowledge and understanding of meetings law, rules and conventions
 - Ability to represent local views to the Council (e.g. in the Chamber or to officers individually) using appropriate professional protocols

- **Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships**
 - An understanding of the roles of officers, members and different agencies
 - Respect for and desire to work with different groups and individuals
 - Knowledge and understanding of Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol
 - Knowledge and commitment to the values of Central Bedfordshire Council

DEVELOPING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN THE ROLE

Use this section to:

- (a) 'Self assess' your knowledge and skills
- (b) Plan your own development and request support with the role
- (c) Discuss development opportunities at your personal development planning meeting

An effective portfolio holder **KNOWS:**

- The **requirements of this role profile** and has discussed it with a senior officer/ specialist HR practitioner to clarify potential knowledge deficits and set action plans
- The broad **demographic, economic, political and social profile** of Central Bedfordshire and key statistics relevant to the portfolio
- The Council's **key corporate challenges and values**
- The **strengths and development challenges** of his or her self and colleagues within the Group
- How to promote **continuous professional development amongst** colleagues
- The role and function of **key partners** and details of the key influencers within the each partnership relevant to the portfolio
- The relevant **protocols and legislation** governing the highest standards of probity in public office and the operations of the authority
- Details of all **senior officers and their operational remit with the Portfolio**
- How to read and interpret **financial and performance data**
- Party political** policies and stances relevant to the key challenges of the authority

An effective Portfolio holder **PRACTICES**

- The highest levels of **ethical conduct and probity** in public life
- Provide political leadership and accountability** relevant to the determination of policies, approaches, and financial priorities in the portfolio remit
- A variety of 'Leadership styles'** which demonstrates that he or she can both 'lead from the front' and enable others to lead where appropriate (e.g. in delegated or Portfolio areas)
- Strategies to produce a **vision and strategic ambitions** for the Council and the communities of Central Bedfordshire which is shared by others
- Community leadership skills:** e.g. producing strategies to work inclusively and equally with all sections of the community
- Equality and Diversity:** respecting and managing differences in society and understanding key legislation

- Practical **time management skills** to (a) prioritise work load (b) maintain work-life balance (c) delegate (d) develop partnerships to further aims (d) employ stress reduction strategies
- **Confident and effective communication** with a variety of individuals, groups and audiences. In particular, he or she demonstrates
- Excellence in **presentations** to colleagues, officers and outside bodies
- Excellent media liaison and presentation skills (e.g. TV, Radio, Press, Internet) to support the management of the Councils reputation
- **Effective reporting** to Council at meetings and in the Chamber
- **Effective Chairing skills** e.g. preparation strategy, meetings management, facilitating involvement, follow up strategies
- **Partnership development strategies** to produce win/win outcomes for the authority and its associated **external** partners
- **Partnership development strategies** to enable Overview and Scrutiny to provide an improvement planning and constructive challenge role within the remit of the portfolio
- **Ambassadorial skills** to welcome, recognise and foster the interest and contribution of individuals, groups, businesses etc. in Central Bedfordshire
- **Professional listening and questioning skills** to (a) build rapport with colleagues (b) gather evidence and (c) inform decision-making
- **Community leadership skills** to maintain the balance between his/her corporate responsibilities and ward based/ electoral duties
- **Up to date ICT skills to work remotely and efficiently and** is able to use **modern technology** to carry out **independent personal research**
- **Entrepreneurial skills** to work with the Chief Executive and others to attract new resources to Central Bedfordshire to promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of the area
- **Mentoring skills** to develop the skills and capabilities of other portfolio holders
- **Promote succession planning in the portfolio** to enable a smooth transition where applicable

METHODS OF ACQUISITION (KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)

Group Training or 1:1 mentoring is available in a range of areas relevant to this role i.e.

- Gaining an in-depth understanding of your **Role Profile** and
- Producing a **Personal Development Plan** to address your training needs

Training is available in the following areas (as appropriate to your needs)

- Central Bedfordshire Council:** Corporate Plan, Values, Structure, remit of each Dept and the portfolio, principal officers, budgets and challenges
- Key legislation** – what every portfolio holder should know about their remit
- Trends** in local government – key challenges in the months & years ahead
- A tour of the portfolio:** an induction programme for you to meet the people involved in delivering the service and find out about the resources and challenges facing the service
- Reading and using Key Performance data** – to monitor and improve performance in your Portfolio area
- Local Government Finance for the portfolio holder**
- Reading and using key financial data** to monitor and improve performance in your area
- Producing a budget:** options, challenges, protocols and considerations, matching the needs of your portfolio remit to the wider needs of the authority
- Developing Leadership skills** via the leadership academy
- Questioning and Listening Skills**
- Member/Officer relationships:** protocols and partnership working
- Using a **personal computer** (beginner and advanced)
- Using PowerPoint to enhance **presentation skills**
- Speech writing** – some of the classic techniques relevant to the modern audience
- Public speaking** in a **community environment**
- Public speaking** in the **Chamber**
- Press interviews**
- Radio interviews**
- TV Interviews**
- Internet interviews**
- Time management skills**
- Speed reading**
- Unlocking the potential of Overview and Scrutiny** to provide an improvement planning function for the Authority

- **Managing a 'Call in'**
- **Negotiating Skills** to provide win/win solutions with partners
- **High Performance team working** to get the most from working with other portfolio holders, other elected members, officers and partners
- **Benchmarking strategies** to learn from others about best practice in your portfolio area and avoid 're-inventing the wheel'
- **Stress reduction strategies** to avoid burn out promote a healthier lifestyle
- **Recognising your contribution:** opportunities to work towards a formal qualification which recognises your high level responsibilities and achievements
- **Chairing (internal) Council meetings:** subject includes the role of the Chair, meeting protocols, managing group behaviour, building consensus and dealing with difficult people
- **Chairing community meetings:** subject includes the role of the Chair, Opening the meeting, meetings protocols and outcomes, managing public contributions and hot topics, dealing with difficult people and building consensus
- **Elected member development strategies** to unlock the potential of your Councillor colleagues
- **Establishing a tracking system** to manage your case-work and committee agenda challenges
- **Assertiveness skills**

Peer Mentoring and coaching is also available to help the you to acquire knowledge and skills and involves focused support provided in defined areas from a former (or serving) portfolio holder in your own authority or another

Chairman of the Council Role Profile – Central Bedfordshire Council

1. Accountabilities

- To Full Council

2. Role Purpose and Activity

▪ **Ceremonial**

- To be the Ceremonial Head of Central Bedfordshire Council
- To represent the Council in the District and elsewhere on occasions where a civic representative is required
- To receive civic guests, delegations and visitors and host civic occasions
- To initiate activities designed to recognise and encourage civic awareness, action and pride
- To liaise proactively with the media and other bodies within and outside of Central Bedfordshire to raise awareness of individual, community and corporate contributions to community pride and well-being

▪ **Chairing**

- To attend and Chair briefings for Council meetings and be proactive in making proposals for the efficient and effective conduct of meetings
- To Chair Council meetings ensuring
 - Professional conduct and contributions by elected members in the Chamber
 - Fairness and equity in member contributions subject to the relevant standing orders and constitution
 - The application of the constitution and provide interpretation where necessary
 - Mutual respect for the members and officers in line with the Code of Conduct and appropriate protocols
 - That meetings are properly constituted and are a focus for debate on issues of concern to the communities of Central Bedfordshire

- **Managerial**

- To oversee the organisation of civic events (subject to budget availability) which will normally include an annual Civic Service and Civic Reception
- To ensure that the Civic budget is spent prudently and to the best advantage of Central Bedfordshire
- To ensure that Vice Chairman of the Council is kept informed of (and involved in) opportunities to support the role of Chair

- **Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships**

- To promote and support good governance of the Council and its affairs
- To provide community leadership and promote active citizenship
- To promote and support open and transparent government
- To support, and adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council
- To adhere to the Member's Code of Conduct, Member/Officer Protocol and the highest standards of behaviour in public office
- To ensure effective liaison, communication and excellent working relationships with the Leader, Deputy Leader, Opposition Leader, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive

3. Values

- To be committed to and demonstrate the following values in public office:
 - Openness and transparency
 - Honesty and integrity
 - Tolerance and respect
 - Equality and fairness
 - Appreciation of cultural difference and diversity
 - Sustainability
 - Inclusive leadership
 - Consensus building

4. Skills, knowledge, qualities and personal development

- To participate in opportunities for continuous professional development provided by the authority and participate in periodic personal development reviews. To work towards development of the key skills, knowledge and standards of professionalism required of this role. Skills, knowledge and qualities required for the various aspect of the role include:

- **Ceremonial**
 - Knowledge of the protocols, rules and cultural sensitivities involved in hosting and attending civic occasions
 - Preparation strategies to ensure that events, delegations (etc.) are managed appropriately
 - Excellent public speaking skills
 - Excellent media liaison skills
 - Ability to shape and manage a programme to promote civic awareness, action and pride

- **Chairing**
 - Detailed knowledge of the Council Constitution and
 - In depth knowledge of Standing orders relevant to Council meetings
 - Advanced Chairing skills to (a) conduct meetings effectively with (b) the ability to endorse, apply and interpret standing orders (c) manage contributions from elected members, officers and members of the public

- **Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships**
 - Ability to demonstrate the application of the highest ethical standards to the civic governance of Central Bedfordshire
 - An understanding of the roles of officers, members and different agencies
 - Respect for and desire to work with different groups and individuals
 - Knowledge and understanding of Code of Conduct and Member/Officer Protocol
 - Knowledge and commitment to the values of Central Bedfordshire Council

DEVELOPING YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN THE ROLE

Use this section to:

- (a) 'Self assess' your knowledge and skills
- (b) Plan your own development and request support with the role
- (c) Discuss development opportunities at your personal development planning meeting

An effective Chairman of the Council **KNOWS:**

- The **requirements of this role profile** and has discussed it with a senior officer/ specialist HR practitioner to clarify potential knowledge deficits and set action plans
- The broad **demographic, economic, political and social profile** of Central Bedfordshire and key statistics
- The Council's **key corporate challenges and values**
- The role and function of **key partners** and details of the key influencers within the each partnership
- The relevant **protocols and legislation** governing the highest standards of probity in public office and the operations of the authority
- The **correct civic protocols** to use in a variety of occasions

An effective Chairman of the Council **PRACTICES**

- The highest levels of **ethical conduct and probity** in public life
- Excellent ambassadorial skills** to welcome, recognise and foster the interest and contribution of individuals, groups, businesses, charitable initiatives etc. in Central Bedfordshire
- Provide civic leadership and accountability** relevant to the promotion of Central Bedfordshire and the achievements and aspirations of its citizens and the authority
- Community leadership skills:** e.g. producing strategies to work inclusively and equally with all sections of the community
- Equality and Diversity:** respecting and managing differences in society and understanding key legislation
- Practical **time and project management skills** to (a) prioritise work load (b) maintain work-life balance (c) delegate (d) develop partnerships to further aims (d) employ stress reduction strategies
- Confident and effective communication** with a variety of individuals, groups and audiences. In particular, he or she demonstrates
- Excellence in **presentations** to colleagues, officers and outside bodies
- Excellent media liaison and presentation skills (e.g. TV, Radio, Press, Internet) to support the management of the Councils reputation

- **Effective Chairing skills at full Council and other occasions** e.g. preparation strategy, meetings management, welcoming and managing contributions, resolving conflict, building consensus
- **Professional listening and questioning skills** to (a) build rapport with colleagues (b) gather evidence and (c) inform decision-making
- **Community leadership skills** to maintain the balance between his/her corporate responsibilities and ward based/ electoral duties
- **Up to date ICT skills to work remotely and efficiently and** is able to use **modern technology** to carry out **independent personal research**
- **Support to the development of skills for the successor to the role**

METHODS OF ACQUISITION (KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS)
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Group Training or 1:1 mentoring is available in a range of areas relevant to this role i.e.

- Gaining an in-depth understanding of your **Role Profile** and
- Producing a **Personal Development Plan** to address your training needs

Training is available in the following areas (as appropriate to your needs)

- Central Bedfordshire Council:** Corporate Plan, Values, Structure, remit of each Dept, principal officers, budgets and challenges
- Key legislation and updates** – what every Chairman should know
- Trends** in local government – key challenges in the months & years ahead
- A tour of the Civic function:** an induction programme for you to meet the people involved in delivering the service and find out about the resources available
- Member/Officer relationships:** protocols and partnership working
- Using a **personal computer** (beginner and advanced)
- Using PowerPoint to enhance **presentation skills**
- Speech writing** – some of the classic techniques relevant to the modern audience
- Public speaking** in a **community environment**
- Public speaking and making announcements** in the **Chamber**
- Press interviews**
- Radio interviews**
- TV Interviews**
- Internet interviews**
- Time management skills**
- Speed reading**
- Stress reduction strategies** to avoid burn out promote a healthier lifestyle
- Recognising your contribution:** opportunities to work towards a formal qualification which recognises your high level responsibilities and achievements
- Chairing Council meetings:** subject includes the role of the Chair, Meetings protocols, preparation and tracking strategies with Committee staff, managing group behaviour, building consensus and dealing with difficult people
- Meeting and greeting civic guests:** address protocols, gifts, building and maintaining relationships
- Establishing a tracking system** to manage your case-work and Civic responsibilities
- Project Management skills for Charity and Community events**

Peer Mentoring and coaching is also available to help the you to acquire knowledge and skills and involves focused support provided in defined areas from a former (or serving) Chairman of the Council in your own authority or another

APPENDIX C

ELECTED MEMBER ROLE PROFILE

The following detailed profile has been prepared to demonstrate the extensive and varied roles undertaken by Councillors elected to Central Bedfordshire Council.

1. Accountabilities

- To Full Council
- To the electorate of their ward
- The wider public
- External bodies

2. Role Purpose and Activity

Representing and supporting communities

- Lead, champion and represent ward interests
- Be an advocate for the Council in the ward and communities they serve
- Be a channel of communication to the community on council strategies, policies, services and procedures
- Represent individual constituents and local organisations, undertaking casework on their behalf and serving all fairly and equally
- Liaise with executive members, other council members, council officers and partner organisations to ensure that the needs of the local communities are identified, understood and supported
- Promote tolerance and cohesion in local communities

Making decisions and overseeing council performance

- Participate in Full Council meetings, reaching and making informed and balanced decisions, and overseeing performance
- Participate in informed and balanced decision making on committees and panels to which they might be appointed
- Adhere to the principles of democracy and collective responsibility in decision making
- Promote and ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of council and other public services

Representing the Council (subject to appointment)

- Represent the Council on local outside bodies as an appointee of the Council
- Represent the Council on local partnership bodies, promoting common interest and co-operation for mutual gain
- Represent and be an advocate for the Council on national bodies and at national events

Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- Promote and support good governance of the Council and its affairs
- Provide community leadership and promote active citizenship
- Promote and support open and transparent government
- Support, and adhere to respectful, appropriate and effective relationships with employees of the Council
- Adhere to the Member's Code of Conduct, the Member/Officer Protocol and the highest standards of behaviour in public office

3. Values

To be committed to the values of the Council and the following values in public office:

- Openness and transparency
- Honesty and integrity
- Tolerance and respect
- Equality and fairness
- Appreciation of cultural difference and diversity
- Sustainability

4. Skills, knowledge, qualities and personal development

- To participate in opportunities for continuous professional development provided for members by the authority and participate in periodic personal development reviews. To work towards development of the key skills, knowledge and standards of professionalism required of this role.

5. Representing and supporting communities

- Community engagement to represent all areas of the ward
- Efficient case-work management and use of technology to report and monitor case progress
- Interpersonal skills to manage sensitive case issues
- Integrity, ability to act impartially and work within the codes of conduct and protocols of the Council
- Ability to chair and manage the work of local meetings and committees
- Knowledge and understanding of meetings law, rules and conventions
- Ability to represent local views to the Council (e.g. in the Chamber or to officers individually) using appropriate professional protocols

6. Making decisions and overseeing council performance

- Knowledge and understanding of meetings law, rules and conventions
- Participation in opportunities to develop Council policy (e.g. through overview and scrutiny) and
- Provide effective and constructive to challenge and ideas to further the development of the authority
- Knowledge and application of negotiating skills and consensus building strategies
- Ability to interpret information and data from a range of sources
- Ability to act objectively on the basis of evidence

7. Representing the Council

- Good public speaking skills
- Good presentation skills
- Acting as an ambassador of the Council to outside bodies
- Effective media liaison whilst being able to identify when additional support from public relations specialists is required to ensure that the Council is represented positively and fairly

8. Internal governance, ethical standards and relationships

- An understanding of the roles of officers, members and different agencies
- Have knowledge and understanding of the Code of Conduct and Member/Officer relations
- A knowledge and commitment to the values of Central Bedfordshire Council

Developing Knowledge and Skills in the Role:

Once elected even experienced Councillors will want to develop their knowledge and skills in the role. Councillors need to be able to self-assess their knowledge and skills by using the Elected Member Role Profile set out in this guide, by planning their own development and discussing the opportunities available at a personal development planning meeting.

Being an Effective Councillor

To be an effective Councillor there is a need for involvement in the process of looking at the role profile to clarify potential knowledge deficits and agree an individual action plan based on areas of strengths and development challenges.

For all Members there needs to be a clear understanding of the following areas;

- **demographic, economic, political and social profiles**

- the Council's **key corporate challenges and values**
- the role and function of **key partners**
- knowledge of relevant **protocols and legislation** governing the highest standards of probity in public office and the operations of the authority.
- understanding the roles of **senior officers and their operational remit**
- how to read and make sense of **financial and performance data**.

Effective Leadership requires the practicing of :

- the highest levels of **ethical conduct and probity** in public life
- **contributing to new policies, approaches, and financial priorities**
- leading within the community and on the Council
- produce a **vision and strategic ambitions** for the Council
- practical **time management skills**
- **developing partnerships**
- **confident and effective communication** with all audiences.
- **media liaison and presentation skills** to support the management of the Council's reputation
- **effective contributions** to Council meetings
- **partnership development strategies**
- **ambassadorial skills**
- **professional listening and questioning skills**
- **community leadership skills**
- **community engagement skills**
- **up to date ICT skills**

Methods of Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills include;

- Establishing your **Personal Development Plan**
- **Group Training**
- **1:1 mentoring** to address your training needs
- **Peer Mentoring and Coaching** involving focused support from a former (or serving) Councillor

Development may be available in the following areas (dependant on demand and individual and corporate need):

- **Central Bedfordshire Council:** Corporate Plan, Values, Structure, remit of each Dept, principal officers, budgets and challenges
- **Key legislation**
- **Trends in local government**
- **Reading and using Key Performance data**
- **Local Government Finance for the Councillor**
- **Reading and using key financial data**
- **Producing a budget**
- **Developing Leadership skills**

- **Community leadership skills**
- **Equality and Diversity**
- **Questioning and Listening Skills**
- **Member/Officer relationships**
- **ICT Training**
- **Presentation skills**
- **Speech writing**
- **Public speaking in the community**
- **Public speaking in the Chamber**
- **Press interviews**
- **Radio interviews**
- **TV Interviews**
- **Internet interviews**
- **Chairing community meetings**
- **Time management skills**
- **Speed reading**
- **The role of Overview and Scrutiny**
- **The role of 'Call in' and the Councillor Call for Action**
- **Negotiating Skills**
- **High Performance team working**
- **Benchmarking strategies**
- **Stress reduction strategies**
- **Recognising your contribution: working towards a formal qualification**
- **Establishing a tracking system**
- **Assertiveness skills**

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Meeting: General Purposes Committee

Date: 17 December 2009

Subject: Electoral Review of Central Bedfordshire: Pattern of Wards

Report of: Director of Corporate Services

Summary: To consider 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 and to make recommendations to Council at its meeting to be held on 7 January 2010.

Contact Officer: Brian Dunleavy, Electoral Services Project Officer

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

This is a statutory review of the electoral arrangements for Central Bedfordshire as directed by the Electoral Commission in 2008. The objective of an electoral review is to provide for good, or improved, levels of electoral representation across a local authority area. Equal levels of electoral representation will assist the Council's capacity to provide effective and efficient governance.

Financial:

The conduct of the review is estimated to be in the region of £25,000 and these costs have been identified as part of the transitional costs. However, the Boundary Committee have determined that Central Bedfordshire Council should have 59 councillors; a reduction of 7 from the present number. This means that following the 2011 elections, savings of circa £85,000 will be made on the Members allowances budget.

Legal:

The review is being carried out in accordance with Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

The revised electoral arrangements will ensure equality of representation throughout all of the wards within Central Bedfordshire.

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. that the Committee consider the conclusions of the Electoral Arrangements Review Working Group in relation to the number and location of electoral wards for Central Bedfordshire and determine whether to recommend the Council to approve the pattern of wards as shown in either Appendix A or Appendix B now submitted;
2. that the Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Group, be authorised to prepare the draft submission to be presented to the 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. that the Council be recommended:
 - (a) to endorse the proposed pattern of wards as proposed by the Committee under recommendation 1 above;
 - (b) to consider any responses received from Town and Parish Councils;
 - (c) to approve the Submission to the Boundary Committee for England on the number and location of electoral wards for Central Bedfordshire.
 - (d) to authorise the Director of Corporate Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Group, to respond to questions raised in connection with the submission from the Boundary Committee.

Review of Electoral Arrangements

1. The electoral review of Central Bedfordshire formally commenced on 4 August 2009. Stage 1 of the process was consultation on council size and at meeting of Council held on 10 September 2009 this Authority submitted a proposal, with cross party support, for a council size of 66 members.
2. The Boundary Committee at stage 2, considered all of the evidence submitted on council size and concluded to recommend that Central Bedfordshire should have 59 councillors.

Pattern of Wards

3. Stage 3 invites submissions for a new pattern of wards based on the forecast electorate in 5 years time. The predicted electorate for 2013 is 207,720 which means that each councillor should represent 3,521 electors.
4. Whilst the Boundary Committee would prefer electoral equality, it is acknowledged that it is not always possible. Consequently, the Committee will consider variances which are within 10% of the average to be acceptable, particularly if supported by community evidence or easily identifiable boundaries.
5. It is considered that a good pattern of wards should:
 - Provide good electoral variance, with all councillors representing as near as possible to the same number of electors.
 - Contain considerations of community identities and include evidence of community links.
 - Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
 - Be supported by local residents or parish or town councils.

The Submission on Pattern of Wards

6. The Electoral Arrangements Working Group comprises of 3 Conservative Group members (Cllrs Peter Rawcliffe (Chairman), David Lawrence and Stephen Male) and 1 Liberal Democrat member (Cllr Peter Blaine). The substitute members, Cllr's Mrs Chapman and Ken Matthews from the Conservative Group together with the substitute from the Liberal Democrat Group also attended the meetings of the Working Group.
7. The Working Group has met on 3 occasions and concluded that their preference would be to submit two separate schemes on the pattern of wards for consideration by the Committee. Consequently, there are two alternative submissions for the Committee to consider. Each submission has been compiled following discussions with existing ward Councillors and has been subjected to various commutations throughout the process.
8. Both submissions have been circulated to all of the Town and Parish Councils for comment and it is intended to provide a schedule of replies for Members to consider at the meeting of Council on 7 January 2010.

8. The detailed cases are set out in the submission on Patterns of Wards attached at the Appendices.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Submission On Pattern of Wards (Conservative Group)

Appendix B – Submission On Pattern of Wards (Liberal Democrat Group)

Conservative Group Option

Total Electorate 207,720 Total Members 59

	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Pottton	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%

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	1,477	1,487		
(less Orchard Close)	-38	-38		
	6,920	7,063	2	0.31%

Conservative Group Option

Total Electorate 207,720 Total Members 59

	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
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%
Amphill	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%

Conservative Group Option

Total Electorate 207,720 Total Members 59

	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
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%
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%

Conservative Group Option

Total Electorate 207,720 Total Members 59

	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Houghton Regis	12,250			
	<u>12,250</u>			
Houghton Hall part TF4 (west of Tithe Farm Road)		6,041		
		422		
		<u>6,463</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-8.21%</u>
Parkside		3,576		
		<u>3,576</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1.57%</u>
Tithe Farm less: part TF4 (west of Tithe Farm Road)		3,645		
		-422		
		<u>3,223</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-8.46%</u>
Dunstable	27,097			
	<u>27,097</u>			
Northfields N2		1,800		
N5		790		
N6		671		
part N4 (north of Brewers Hill Road)		164		
		<u>3,425</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-2.72%</u>
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		
		<u>3,904</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>10.89%</u>
Central DC3		1,063		
DC4		500		
CT3		1,044		
part DC2 (west of Victoria St)		635		
part CT1 (east of Meadway)		470		
		<u>3,712</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5.43%</u>
Watling W1 to W5		5,516		
CT2		1,251		
part CT1 (west of Meadway)		988		
		<u>7,755</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10.14%</u>

Conservative Group Option

Total Electorate 207,720 Total Members 59

	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	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)		5,423		
		3,563		
		1,685		
		228		
part AS3 (north of Hockliffe Road)		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%

Conservative Group Option

Total Electorate 207,720 Total Members 59

	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	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	

Liberal Democrat Group Option

Total Electorate	207,720	Total Members	59
	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Potton	3,798	3,850		
Sandy (Fallowfield Ward) DW3 less (part) Rothbury Close	1,455	1,439		
Everton	434	444		
Tempsford	423	433		
Sutton	234	244		
Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley	612	632		
Eyeworth	70	80		
Dunton	526	536		
Edworth	66	76		
	7,618	7,734	2	9.84%
Ampthill	5,396	5,828		
Lidlington	1,019	1,029		
Millbrook	105	115		
	6,520	6,972	2	-0.98%
Cranfield (BN)	3,126	3,430		
Marston Moretaine	3,439	4,135		
	6,565	7,565	2	7.44%
Sandy (Beeston Ward)	635	665		
Sandy (Ivel Ward)	2,830	2,840		
Sandy (Pinnacle Ward)	3,880	3,900		
Sandy (Fallowfield Ward) DW3 add (part) Rothbury Close		26		
	7,345	7,431	2	5.53%
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%
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	1,477	1,487		
(less Orchard Close)	-38	-38		
	6,920	7,063	2	0.31%

Liberal Democrat Group Option

Total Electorate	207,720	Total Members	59
	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Aspley Guise	1,780	1,800		
Aspley Heath	498	508		
Brogborough	240	250		
Cranfield (Wharley End Ward)	842	852		
Hulcote & Salford	144	154		
	3,504	3,564	1	1.23%
Battlesden	31	41		
Eversholt	348	358		
Heath & Reach	1,136	1,145		
Husborne Crawley	170	180		
Milton Bryan	130	140		
Potsgrove	31	41		
Ridgemont	327	337		
Steppingley	198	208		
Tingrith	115	125		
Woburn	714	724		
	3,200	3,299	1	-6.30%
Flitton & Greenfield	1,094	1,114		
Silsoe	1,353	1,582		
Gravenhurst	472	482		
	2,919	3,178	1	-9.73%
Flitwick East	4,448	4,468		
Flitwick West	5,651	5,671		
	10,099	10,139	3	-4.01%
Campton & Chicksands	918	928		
Meppershall	1,394	1,404		
Shefford	4,257	4,471		
	6,569	6,803	2	-3.39%
Clophill	1,358	1,368		
Maulden	2,397	2,417		
	3,755	3,785	1	7.51%
Houghton Conquest	1,124	2,257		
Haynes	975	985		
	2,099	3,242	1	-7.92%
Clifton	2,328	2,391		
Southill (Broom Ward)	457	467		
Southill (Southill Ward)	256	266		
Southill (Stanford Ward)	190	200		
	3,231	3,324	1	-5.59%

Liberal Democrat Group Option

Total Electorate	207,720 Total Members		59
	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Arlesey	4,306	4,316		
Henlow Camp	1,137	1,147		
Henlow Village	1,670	1,744		
Langford	2,409	2,436		
Stotfold (GW)	1,332	1,691		
	10,854	11,334	3	7.31%
Blunham	792	802		
Moggerhanger	498	508		
Northhill	1,817	1,837		
Old Warden	252	262		
	3,359	3,409	1	-3.17%
Shillington	1,471	1,481		
Stondon	1,774	1,784		
	3,245	3,265	1	-7.26%
Astwick	22	32		
Stotfold (GR)	1,409	2,230		
Stotfold (GS)	1,990	2,000		
Stotfold (GT)	1,791	2,032		
	5,212	6,294	2	-10.61%
Harlington	1,824	1,834		
Westoning	1,637	1,647		
	3,461	3,481	1	-1.13%
Barton-le-Clay	3,936	3,991		
Pulloxhill	714	760		
Streatley	1,440	1,449		
Sundon	374	383		
	6,464	6,583	2	-6.51%
Toddington	3,454	3,497		
Chalton	441	450		
Chalgrave	390	401		
Eggington	216	227		
Great Billington	264	273		
Hockliffe	613	715		
Stanbridge	591	602		
Tilsworth	307	318		
	6,276	6,483	2	-7.93%

Liberal Democrat Group Option

Total Electorate	207,720	Total Members	59
	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Caddington	3,024	3,195		
Hyde	308	317		
Slip End	1,571	1,580		
Kensworth	1,168	1,179		
Totternhoe	1,025	1,036		
	7,096	7,307	2	3.77%
Eaton Bray	2,111	2,127		
Studham	975	986		
Whipsnade	394	403		
	3,480	3,516	1	-0.13%
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%

Liberal Democrat Group Option

Total Electorate	207,720	Total Members	59
	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	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%
Manshead				
M1 to M3		3,842		
		3,842	1	9.13%
Icknield				
ICK1 to ICK4		5,474		
part DC1 (south of Dog Kennel Path)		697		
DC1 (New Development)		908		
		7,079	2	0.53%

Liberal Democrat Group Option

Total Electorate	207,720 Total Members		59
	Average	Max (+10%)	Min (-10%)
1 Member Ward	3,521	3,873	3,169
2 Member Ward	7,041	7,745	6,337
3 Member Ward	10,562	11,618	9,506

Parish	Electorate 2008	Electorate 2,013	Members	Variance From Average
Leighton-Linslade	<u>28,389</u> <u>28,389</u>			
Linslade				
L1 to L3		3,991		
SO1 to SO4		5,452		
part AS1(Vimy Road, Tower Bridge Mill, Leighton Road)		180		
		<u>9,623</u>	3	-8.89%
Brooklands				
PLS1 to PLS3		3,563		
PLTN4		918		
G1		1,027		
G2		1,842		
		<u>7,350</u>	2	4.38%
Grovebury				
G3		1,115		
G4		1,576		
G5		2,029		
G6		1,925		
part AS2 (Grove Road, Lindler Court etc)		263		
part AS3 (Woodman Close, Dudley Street etc)		720		
		<u>7,628</u>	2	8.33%
Plantation				
PLTN1		1,665		
PLTN2		1,239		
PLTN3		1,601		
part AS1 less (Vimy Road, Tower Bridge Mill, Leighton Road)		1,685		
part AS2 less (Grove Road, Lindler Court etc)		679		
part AS3 less (Woodman Close, Dudley Street etc)		794		
		<u>7,663</u>	2	8.83%
Total	192,915	207,720	59	
Electorate/Councillor	3,270	3,521	0	

Meeting: General Purposes Committee
Date: 17 December 2009
Subject: Adoption of the Managing Change Policy, Redundancy/Redeployment Guidelines, Work Life Balance Policy and Flexible Retirement Policy
Report of: Acting Assistant Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development
Summary: The report is to seek Members' agreement that these HR policies be adopted for all non schools based employees of Central Bedfordshire.

Advising Officer: Gordon McFarlane, Acting Assistant Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development.
Contact Officer: Catherine Jones, Head of HR Strategy & Policy
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: n/a
Function of: Council
Key Decision No
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) n/a

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

These policies continue to contribute to the Harmonisation project to establish a single set of HR employment policies covering all (non schools based) employees of Central Bedfordshire which will assist with developing a new culture and providing a consistent approach to dealing with HR matters.

Financial:

None specifically although the implementation of these policies may incur costs which would be reported separately.

Legal:

The policies comply with employment legislation and where appropriate the Local Government Pension Scheme regulations.

Risk Management:

None resulting from this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Trade unions have been consulted on the newly developed HR policies for Central Bedfordshire and will continue to be consulted.

Equalities/Human Rights:

All policies referred to in this report comply with employment and equality legislation and take account of human rights.

Community Safety:

n/a

Sustainability:

n/a

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- n/a

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. that the Committee

- (a) adopts the Managing Change Policy for non schools based employees with immediate effect**
- (b) adopts the Redundancy/Redeployment Guidelines for non schools based employees with immediate effect**
- (c) adopts the Work Life Balance Policy for non schools based employees with immediate effect**
- (d) adopts the Flexible Retirement Policy for non schools based employees with immediate effect.**

Reason for Recommendation(s): So that the HR policies referred to above can be 'rolled out' to all Central Bedfordshire non schools based employees to provide a consistent and fair approach to HR matters.

Background

1. An important part of establishing the same terms and conditions of employment for central Bedfordshire employees is the establishment of new HR policies for all non schools based employees.

2. An initial set of policies were adopted by the General Purposes Committee in May and subsequently these have now been 'rolled out' to all non schools based employees, and training for managers on these policies is now taking place.
3. This report covers a further set of HR policies which are attached as appendices as follows:

Appendix A – Managing Change Policy

Appendix B – Redundancy/Redeployment Guidelines

Appendix C – Work Life Balance and Flexible Working Policy

Appendix D – Flexible Retirement Policy

These policies were presented to the Employee Partnership Committee on 17 November 2009 and the Committee unanimously agreed that they be recommended to the General Purposes Committee for adoption.

Managing Change Policy – Appendix A

4. All three legacy authorities had slightly different Managing Change policies and it is important that when moving forwards we have one consistent approach for all employees particularly as many teams are made up of employees from all three legacy authorities.
5. This policy sets out the details around the important consultation process during any restructuring and in particular if there is any possibility of redundancies from that process. It also provides a consistent approach to appointing employees within the new structure and the protection of salary should an employee be appointed into a post following any restructuring that is at a lower salary than their current salary.
6. In the event that there is a redundancy situation or early retirement in the efficiency of the service, the policy provides a consistent approach to any compensatory payments.

Redundancy/Redeployment Guidelines

7. These guidelines sit closely alongside the Managing Change policy providing the necessary guidance to managers and employees when an employee is 'at risk' of redundancy and is looking to be redeployed into a suitable alternative position that may be vacant within the authority.

Work Life Balance and Flexible Working Policy

8. The Council recognises the importance of supporting employees balance their home and work life. The evidence from recent years has demonstrated that this ensures the Council is more able to recruit and retain good employees who are motivated to work and a more flexible approach also helps to deliver improved services and increases efficiency.

9. This policy document covers the statutory right to request to work flexibly and also requests from employees who are not covered by the legislation to request to work flexibly. The options that employees may consider are set out in Section 2.
10. The policy also includes under Section 3 information regarding 'Time off from Work' that reflect arrangements that are covered by employment legislation, for example, maternity leave.

Flexible Retirement Policy

11. Within the regulations of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) there is a discretion for flexible retirement, with the early release of pension benefits which is linked to a reduction in hours of work or grade subject to the agreement of the employer.
12. There is also a requirement that all authorities have in place a Flexible Retirement Policy.
13. We are aware that a number of employees are interested in exploring this option however there can in certain instances be a cost to either the employee because of the 'early payment' element and/or a cost to the employer. The table set out in Appendix 1 to this policy covers the different possible scenarios to give some guidance. Each application will have to be considered on its own merits by the Service areas as they arise.
14. Following concerns expressed by the unions regarding the lack of appeal under this particular policy, there has been discussions and agreement that this part of the policy has been amended to provide an appeal to the Service Director. As there are costs that will impact on the service, it is important that decisions are taken at a local service level especially as this is a discretionary policy.

Conclusion and Next Steps (optional)

14. Further HR policies will be presented to this Committee for review as they are finalised.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Managing Change Policy
Appendix B – Redundancy/Redeployment Guidelines
Appendix C – Work Life Balance Policy
Appendix D – Flexible Retirement Policy

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Location of papers:

MANAGING CHANGE

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of Central Bedfordshire Council to ensure, as far as possible, the security of employment of its employees. However, the Council is subject to many pressures, and changes will occur which may result in a need to vary staff levels and structures.

This document aims to ensure that employees affected by organisational change are treated fairly and consistently. (A flow chart is attached at Appendix 1 to assist in the process).

This procedure applies to all staff employed on Central Bedfordshire terms and conditions, including those protected on other terms and conditions of employment following TUPE transfer to Central Bedfordshire Council, with the exception of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), The Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) and the Director of Corporate Resources (Chief Finance Officer). Separate procedures apply to these officers as detailed in the Constitution of Central Bedfordshire Council, Part H4, Officer Employment Procedures Rule.

The Council is committed to ensuring that this policy does not discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of race, colour ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, trade union membership and activity.

2. CONSULTATION

Directors and or Line Managers must undertake meaningful consultation with individual staff and trade unions on all proposals involving organisational change before any decisions are made. This will allow time for alternative suggestions to be considered.

Consultation should take place at the earliest opportunity. Managers must seek the advice of Human Resources before any consultation takes place.

Line Managers must explain the business reasons for the proposed changes and provide information on possible revised structure charts and individuals affected.

Line Managers must listen to the views of employees and trade unions and take these into account prior to finalising proposals.

There are statutory time limits and criteria for the format and content of consultation that must be followed. (See Consultation Process at Paragraph 6.2)

It is essential that there are both group consultations where it is applicable and individual consultations with those directly affected.

3. APPOINTING TO POSITIONS IN A NEW STRUCTURE

The need to restructure an area of Council activity may arise as a result of changes in demand for services, changed priorities or the need to improve efficiency. Where such a need arises, employees and trade union representatives must be fully briefed and consulted on proposals to change the structure and jobs within it.

In order to secure an appointment in the new structure, employees will be subject to the following process, provided they are in a permanent post or on a fixed term contract: Employees affected by restructuring will be entitled to discuss their concerns with management and may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

(a) New Posts

For New posts, a Job Evaluation questionnaire will be produced and, once evaluated, the posts will be advertised within the ring-fence and employees who have not already been slotted in will be invited to apply. Selection will be in accordance with normal recruitment procedures such as interviewing and will include an assessment of relevant competencies.

(b) Assimilation

Assimilation will occur when there is a post in the new structure which is the same or broadly similar to a post in the previous structure. Where only one employee has met the criteria for assimilation, that employee will be slotted into that post. Normally a post will be deemed as being broadly similar if the nature of the post and level of responsibility remain much the same. In some circumstances an individual may be assimilated into a post of a higher or lower grade.

If assimilated into a new post employees will have a new contract based on the job-evaluated grade with the appropriate conditions attached.

Where more than one employee is eligible for assimilation to a particular post, then the decision as to which employee is to be assimilated will be made through a competitive selection process, ring-fenced to only those employees who meet the criteria for assimilation.

Once assimilated, employees will not be eligible to apply for any other new posts in the structure until other employees have been considered.

(c) Ring-Fence

Posts which are not filled by an assimilation process will be advertised internally on a 'ring fenced' basis in the first instance. Ring fencing is a procedure used to re-appoint permanent and fixed term employees who are affected by the restructure, to newly established posts. The objective of ring fencing is to minimise possible redundancies.

Eligibility to apply will be from a pool of affected employees determined by the relevant Director in consultation with the Assistant Director of HR & OD and the relevant trade unions. Employees will normally only be entitled to apply for posts one grade up or down.

Employees eligible to apply for the ring fenced posts will be subject to a recruitment procedure and will be assessed for the job(s) in which they have declared an interest. The successful candidates will be appointed in accordance with the Council's appointment arrangements.

The normal recruitment and selection procedure will be used to fill any jobs which cannot be filled from within the ring fence. All other Central Bedfordshire Council employees will have the opportunity to apply at this stage of the process.

(d) Redeployment

Following assimilation and ring fencing, any posts remaining unfilled in the new structure will be considered as redeployment opportunities for all those employees who remain 'at risk';

At risk employees have a right to prior consideration for appointment to any suitable vacancy at the same or lower salary level to their existing post, for which they meet the basic requirement, or would do, given suitable training. Prior consideration means that they will be entitled to an interview before any other candidate. Any appointment must be made by a fair interview process.

The training provided has to be reasonable, given the circumstances of each appointment and each of the potential candidates. The type of training that is most likely to be appropriate is 'top-up', 'refresher' or skills training where the training requirement is fairly limited. The training provided should be to equip employees to successfully acquire posts at broadly their own grading level, and it would be unreasonable for there to be an expectation that training will be given to support a substantial promotion. The indicative training period should not normally exceed 3 months.

Where the 'at risk' candidate satisfies the requirements of the interview they should be appointed. If they are not appointed the interviewing panel must inform the employee in writing, within 5 days of the interview, giving reasons why they were not appointed, before another appointment is made.

Where an offer is made, the employee will be given reasonable time, normally 5 days, following the offer to reach a decision and to discuss relevant issues or concerns. After agreement by all parties, the proposals will be implemented.

The employee who is under notice of redundancy has a statutory right to a trial period of 4 weeks in the alternative job. If at the end of the trial period the role is considered to be unsuitable by either the line manager or the employee, the employee will still be entitled to a redundancy payment.

If posts remain unfilled despite the steps explained above then the jobs will be advertised externally and in the rest of the Council in accordance with normal recruitment procedures.

The Council's Redundancy Guidelines for Employees sets out in more detail the procedure to follow and is available from Human Resources, or the Intranet.

(e) Specialist Posts

It is recognised that the specialist nature of some posts may be such that it is unlikely that they could be filled by internal recruitment. If managers identify such a situation this must be referred to the Head of Resourcing, Human Resources and the Director, who, in consultation with the recognised trade unions will be authorised to determine those posts where it would be more appropriate to follow the normal recruitment procedure.

4. PROTECTION OF CONDITIONS

4.1 Salary

If employees are redeployed to a suitable alternative role of a lower basic grade than their current contractual grade, they will be offered a new contract of employment. This new contract of employment will be based on the job-evaluated grade, but will include a provision for personally protecting the basic salary of the employee for a period of three years.

Salary protection will apply to redeployment in the following way where the new role is graded at a lower level than the current role:

- 1 Establish the CBC grade equivalent using the employee's current salary under their historical pay scheme.
- 2 Where the new job is evaluated at up to two grades lower than the equivalent CBC grade (as established under point 1 above), pay protection will apply in full and the employee will have the benefit of three years on their current salary until it reduces to the substantive salary for the new job;
- 3 During the 3 year period an employee's protected pay will be 'frozen' as at the date of implementation of the new grade. Therefore an employee's pay will remain the same and the employee will not receive any incremental or cost of living rise for the duration of the period of protection.
- 4 Protection arrangements will continue for 3 years unless:
 - a The total level of pay in the new post exceeds the level of the protected pay
 - b The employee is appointed to a post which attracts an equal or higher basic salary; or
 - c The employee moves to any other post of their own accord, including a post attracting lower pay or grade than the post the employee was working in prior to redeployment; or
 - d The employee leaves the Council.

5. RELOCATION

As part of any restructuring under existing contracts of employment employees may be required to undertake duties other than those to which they were originally appointed and at other locations. If an employee *unreasonably* refuses relocation to suitable alternative employment with protected terms, then they may be dismissed on the ground of redundancy and the Council *may not be prepared to make redundancy compensation available*. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis.

If employees are required to relocate to an office which is in excess of the mileage incurred in travelling from their home to the old work base at a distance of at least 5 miles further from home than their existing work location, they may be eligible to claim Excess Travelling Expenses unless their Contract of Employment states otherwise. Excess Travelling Expenses will apply for a four-year period. Details are available from the Intranet or Human Resources.

6. REDUNDANCY

Redundancy may occur in the following situations:

- Where a reduction in the number of employees is required;
- A substantial change to the duties and responsibilities of the post occurs;
- A post is no longer required, or is relocated.

In these instances the Council will implement a redundancy procedure, which is set out below.

Redundancy is a very complex area and procedures and statutory requirements need to be strictly adhered to. Line managers are advised to seek further assistance at the earliest opportunity from Human Resources.

7. MEASURES TO AVOID COMPULSORY REDUNDANCY

Where the need for a reduction in resources has been clearly identified, following an efficiency review, change of policy or other Committee decision, the Council will examine if the saving can be achieved by means other than redundancy of established permanent and fixed term staff.

The Council will try to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible. Measures for avoiding compulsory redundancy may include:

- Natural wastage
- The ending of temporary contracts. Specialist advice must be sought when it is proposed to terminate a temporary contract, as the reason for, and the terms contained within the contract, need to be considered
- Terminating employment of casual staff and staff employed via agencies
- Considering whether volunteers for voluntary redundancy can be sought taking into account the retention of a viable, skilled and experienced workforce and the financial implications
- Redeployment, including re-training if necessary, to other parts of the organisation
- Reduction or elimination of overtime working
- Restrictions on recruitment
- Considering volunteers for part-time working
- Early flexible retirement (?)
- Short time working
- Considering suggestions from trade unions / employees
- Trying to make savings in other areas

Trade union representatives will be consulted on the outcome of the examination of these alternatives.

7.1. Voluntary redundancy

If it is possible, compulsory redundancies will be avoided by considering voluntary redundancy. If the consideration of volunteers is a viable option open to management, the manager will target the appropriate group of employees affected by redundancy, in order to seek volunteers.

The decision to seek volunteers and the consideration of any applications from employees, must take into account the need to retain a viable, experienced and skilled workforce and on the financial implications.

Decisions on whether or not to accept a formal application for voluntary redundancy will be made by the manager in consultation with Human Resources. The considerations for this decision will include:

- The impact on the organisation in terms of the individual leaving, for example the loss of their experience and skills
- The cost of redundancy compensation and any early retirement costs.

The above considerations will also be applied if there are more applications for voluntary redundancy than there are redundant posts. The decision making process will be fair and transparent and all employees involved will be given the reasons why their application has been accepted or rejected. An employee may appeal in writing against a decision to reject an application for voluntary redundancy.

8.0 COMPLUSORY REDUNDANCY

If the Council considers that compulsory redundancies may be necessary consultation with staff directly involved and with trade unions must commence as soon as is reasonably practicable. Managers must liaise with Human Resources to ensure the redundancy process is carried out in accordance with legal requirements and Council policies.

8.2 Consultation Process

Informal consultation with the recognised trade unions

The line manager and / or Human Resources should commence informal consultation as soon as they are aware that redundancies may occur in order to provide the trade unions with the opportunity to have an influence on any outcome. The naming of individuals should be avoided, as this may cause worry needlessly if they are subsequently not selected for redundancy and can imply that a definite decision has already been made. It does not matter if the number of redundancies is not known at this stage.

Consultation with Employees

Employees have a right to be consulted individually about proposed redundancies at the earliest possible opportunity and dismissals may be deemed unfair if this has not taken place. This will help to quash unfounded rumours and allay fears. You should discuss the possibility of redundancies and give a timetable of events when they will find out more detailed information.

It is good practice to allow employees to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at the consultation meetings.

Formal Consultation with the recognised Trade Unions

It is a legal requirement under 'section 188' of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, for employers to consult recognised trade unions about proposed redundancies BEFORE individual redundancies are implemented. The employer must formally consult with the trade unions whether or not the employee or groups of employees are members. At this stage management must involve Human Resources in order to ensure that the Section 188 notification can be sent out. (See Appendix 1)

In accordance with Central Bedfordshire Council's practice, a Section 188 notification is still required even if only one employee is to be made redundant. A Section 188 notification is also required if the redundant employees are volunteers.

The period of consultation where less than 100 employees are to be dismissed as redundant at any one time, at one establishment, *will be at least 30 days*.

Where 100 or more employees are to be dismissed as redundant at any one time, at any one establishment, the period of consultation *will be at least 90 days*.

Whilst consultation must start at least 30 or 90 days (as appropriate) before the redundancy notices take effect, it is not necessary that consultation should last for all that time if agreement or a conclusion is reached between the trade unions, employees and management. Likewise, where consultation has not been completed by the end of the 30 or 90 day period, consultation should continue until adequate consultation has been completed.

Agreement does not need to be reached with the trade unions. However, their comments to the proposals and responses to the comments must be noted and attempts must be made to agree, especially on selection criteria.

Redundancy notices can only be issued when consultation has been completed. Therefore the consultation period and the notice period cannot run concurrently.

Failure to consult either individual employees or trade unions may result in claims for unfair dismissal and protective awards.

NB If less than 20 employees are to be dismissed as redundant at any one establishment at least 30 days' CONSULTATION MUST STILL TAKE PLACE.

8.3 Selection Criteria

This selection policy for redundancy will be operated in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and will therefore ensure that selection criteria do not directly or indirectly discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, spent offences, age, trade union membership and activity, political or religious belief.

8.4

The selection criteria and the selection process will be the subject of consultation with the Trade Unions and affected staff prior to any decisions being made.

Opportunities for redeployment and relocation will be considered throughout. Human Resources will provide assistance for employees.

The method of selection will be based upon individual employees being measured against the person specification of the posts that will be needed in the future. Detailed person specifications will need to be produced for those posts that will remain in the work areas where redundancies have been identified.

Selection of the employees who best match the person specification will then take place and may include interviews and appropriate tests. Those not selected will be identified as redundant. Where interviews and appropriate tests are not used, a detailed record of a selection process must still be recorded.

The selection criteria used on the person specification will be -

- Realistic - i.e. the criteria must relate directly to the duties that will need to be performed and must not be overstated.
- Justifiable - the division between 'essential' and 'desirable' attributes must be accurate and defensible
- Specific and measurable - each factor in the selection process must be capable of being accurately and objectively measured or supported by substantial evidence.
- The person specification will normally cover most (if not all) of the following areas:
 - Knowledge
 - Experience
 - Skills (Social and Technical)
 - Other Requirements

In order to ensure that there is no unfair discrimination in the selection process, assessment of the selection criteria will be undertaken by at least two managers. A representative from Human Resources will also be present in order to ensure that there is no breach of this policy, or of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. All members of the assessment panel will be fully aware of the importance of not discriminating unfairly in the selection process.

The assessments will be approached in an objective a way as possible using written evidence wherever this is available. Detailed records of the selection decisions will be kept.

Where necessary, the criteria may be weighted to reflect their relative importance to the future requirements of the posts that will remain.

Details of the person specifications to be used in the selection process, together with any weighting to be applied, will be notified to the trade unions as part of the formal consultation process. Copies of the person specifications to be used will also be distributed to all employees in the area where the redundancies need to be made.

Attendance/Disciplinary Records

Where interviews and appropriate tests are not used and a 'paper selection' is carried out, if the above stage of the selection process fails to differentiate between two or more employees, then the next stage will be a selection by considering attendance and disciplinary records.

Attendance records will be assessed first and the reasons for and extent of absences will be carefully assessed. Absences relating to pregnancy and maternity will be discounted, and absences relating to certain other illnesses or medical conditions which occur uniquely, or with greater frequency in one gender or race, will be carefully considered. Management will also ensure that persons with disabilities are not unfairly discriminated against throughout this process but particularly at this stage of the procedure. Reasonable adjustments must be made to any selection criteria to make sure the criteria do not discriminate against disabled employees, for example a reasonable adjustment may be discounting disability related sickness absence.

Any absences agreed by management e.g. unpaid leave, compassionate leave etc. will also be discounted.

If attendance records fail to select individuals for redundancy then disciplinary records will be used care will always be taken not to penalise an employee by 'double counting' i.e. a formal warning for absence would be an example of 'double counting'.

9. SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

In the unfortunate circumstances where compulsory redundancies have to be made there is a process for line managers to follow and a service to be provided for employees.

If an employee is in this position, managers should arrange a meeting for the individual with Human Resources. Information and guidance will be provided including estimated redundancy compensation or opportunities for redeployment and/or retraining.

Redundancy Guidelines for Employees have been produced for employees faced with redundancy and all line managers should familiarise themselves with that pack. Managers are responsible for ensuring that the Pack is issued to all employees who might be affected. This should be undertaken when the areas of potential redundancies are decided and formal consultation has started.

The Redundancy Guidelines for Employees is available from Human Resources or the Intranet.

10. COMPENSATION PAYMENTS FOR REDUNDANCY

All employees with 2 years' continuous service, irrespective of hours worked, are eligible for redundancy payments. For the purposes of calculating payments under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations (DCR) 2006 provisions, an employee's reckonable continuous service under the Redundancy Payments Modification Order (RPMO) will be used as the basis for the calculation of entitlement. Although an employee with less than 2 years' service is not entitled to a redundancy payment, they still have the right to be consulted and the serving of notice.

The Council will normally pay severance in redundancy situations based upon the Statutory Redundancy Payment Scheme i.e. up to a maximum of 30 weeks redundancy payment based upon the age/length of service calculator. (See Ready Reckoner, Appendix 2)

Redundancy payments will be calculated using an employee's actual weekly wage.

An automated Redundancy Ready Reckoner is available on the Intranet

In order to facilitate change management, the Council in exceptional circumstances may use the provisions of the DCR 2006 and at its discretion pay severance payments of up to 45 weeks. These payments will be determined by applying a "multiplier of 1.5" to an employee's reckonable service entitlement under the Statutory Redundancy Scheme. The discretionary payment will be inclusive of the employee's Statutory Redundancy entitlement.

Redundancy payments will be made if employment ceases with Central Bedfordshire Council and:

- (i) The employee does not take up employment at all;
- or (ii) Takes up employment with an organisation **not** covered by the RPMO;
- or (iii) Takes up employment with an organisation covered by the RPMO 4 weeks after their contract ends.

Where an employee accepts an offer of a job with a body covered by the RPMO the timing of the job offer is crucial. If the offer is made **after** the contract with the Council ends, then the entitlement to a redundancy payment remains. If the offer is made

before the contract ends, there must be a 4 week break in service, or there is no entitlement to a redundancy payment.

In redundancy situations, where an employee refuses, without good reason, what the Council judges to be “suitable alternative employment” then there will not be any entitlement to a redundancy payment.

11. EARLY RETIREMENT

In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, an employee whose employment is terminated on the grounds of redundancy or efficiency of the service and who is aged 50 (55 from 1st April 2010) and with at least 3 months’ or more pensionable service, will be eligible to access their pension benefits immediately.

11.1 Early Retirement on the Grounds of Redundancy

Employees will also receive a statutory redundancy payment calculated using actual pay.

In exceptional circumstances and in order to facilitate change management the Council may grant an employee a discretionary compensation payment. This request must be supported by a sound business case from the Service Area Director. All discretionary payments must be considered and approved by a Panel of Elected Members

Directorates are responsible for absorbing all costs associated with severance including the Actuarial Strain associated with any early retirement unless a central provision has been established for specific elements. All costs will be required to be met in the financial year that they occur.

11.2 Early Retirement in the Efficient Interest of the Service

There may be circumstances where management would wish to discuss with employees aged 50 (55 from 1st April 2010), the possibility of early retirement in the interests of the efficient exercise of its functions. The situations which would warrant this discussion are:

- A substantial change in the function of the Directorate or its sections.
- Re-organisation/efficiency reviews of the Directorate or its sections
- A request by an individual employee who is experiencing difficulty in coping with the requirements of their post. Where deficiencies in an employee’s performance are detected and this is not as a result of misconduct or ill-health, the Council’s guideline for handling incapability should be followed.

In handling an early retirement in the efficient interests of the service it is important to follow the general procedure set out below:

- Discussion should be undertaken with the individual concerned and if there is a willingness by the individual to consider early retirement, assistance should be given to the employee by obtaining pension entitlement estimates to help in them in coming to a decision
- If after consideration of the employment and financial situation the employee wishes to proceed they should be asked to formally request the early retirement by writing to their Assistant Director.

- All requests for early retirement must be considered and approved by Elected Members. It should be noted however that these requests are only agreed in very exceptional circumstances.

It is important to identify to the individual employee that taking early retirement in these circumstances is solely their choice. It is not a dismissal. Therefore in order to protect the Council's position in these situations all correspondence between the Council and the employee who elects to retire early should make it clear that the decision to retire is that of the employee. In view of this point it is important to initiate 'efficient interest' retirements by requiring a written application from the employee. Notice of termination of employment does not need to be given as this is not a dismissal. Discussions should take place with the individual to mutually agree a termination date.

In exceptional circumstances and in order to facilitate change management the Council may grant an employee a discretionary compensation payment. This request must be supported by a sound business case from the Service Area Director. All discretionary payments must be considered and approved by Elected Members

Directorates are responsible for absorbing all costs associated with severance including the Actuarial Strain associated with any early retirement unless a central provision has been established for specific elements. All costs will be required to be met in the financial year that they occur.

If the employee does not want to consider early retirement in the efficient interest of the service, the employee's wish must be accepted. If an employee is coerced into retiring early this could be seen as unfair dismissal under the Age Regulations.

12. DISMISSAL PROCESS

12.1 Employees who leave their employment with the Council on the grounds of redundancy are subject to a dismissal process, whether this is a voluntary or compulsory situation. To conform to the minimum statutory requirement under the statutory dismissals procedure the following procedure must be followed:

- Employees must have been informed that their job was at risk at the earliest possible opportunity.
- A meeting must be held with the employee to discuss the situation and to hear the employee's views and suggestions and to discuss redeployment. The individual will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.
- The right to appeal against dismissal on grounds of redundancy must be given.

13. APPEALS

Employees must be informed in writing that they have the right to appeal against the dismissal to an appeals panel comprising an independent member of the Management Team. They must write to Human Resources within 10 working days of receipt of written notification of redundancy, stating their reasons for the appeal.

They may lodge an appeal on the following grounds:

- Unfair application of the selection criteria
- Failure to offer suitable alternative employment
- Unfair dismissal

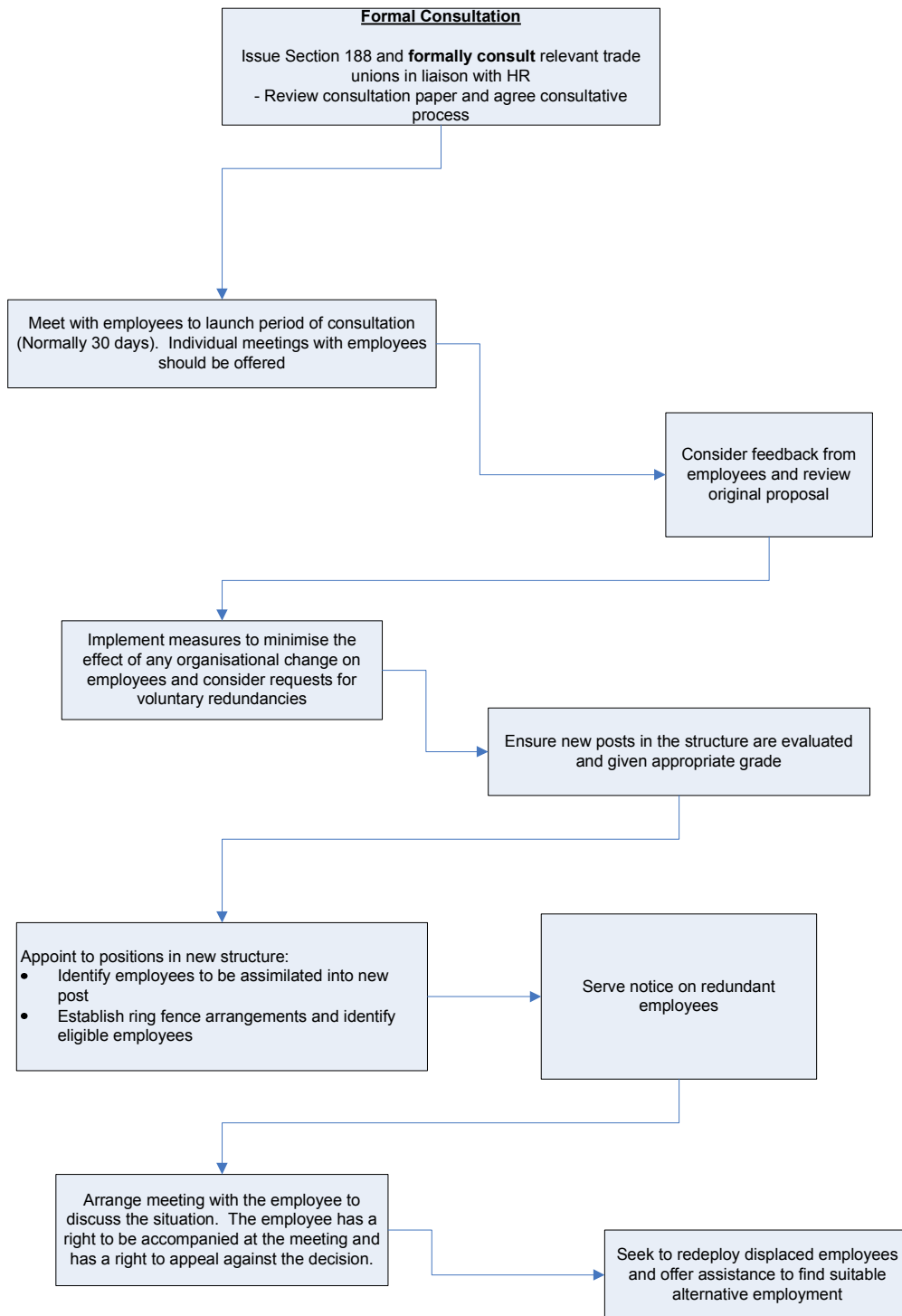
An appeal hearing will normally be held within 10 working days of receipt of their letter of appeal.

They will be sent a letter giving them at least 5 working days notice of the date of the appeal hearing, where it will take place and who will hear their appeal and that they have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or TU representative.

The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

After the appeal hearing, the employees will be informed of the decision.

The decision of the appeals hearing is final.



MODEL 'SECTION 188' LETTER

our reference
 please ask for
 direct line
 fax
 e-mail
 web-site www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
 date

Recipient's name and address

Please reply to:

Dear

Consultation on proposed Redundancies in accordance with s188 of the Trade Union & Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended

I am writing to consult you on proposed redundancies within (insert function and Directorate). The reason for these proposals is (insert reasons why proposed redundancies have arisen).

The numbers and descriptions of employees it is proposed to dismiss as redundant and the total numbers of employees of that description employed at the establishment in question are as follows:

Description of Employees	Number that it is proposed to dismiss	Total number of employees of that description employed at the establishment

The proposed method of selection for redundancy will be (Insert as appropriate)*

*in accordance with the Council's redundancy guidelines; or

*by virtue of the fact that the employees in question are the only employees of such description employed at the establishment.

It is anticipated that the redundancies will take effect from (insert date). I foresee the next (30 or 90 days - insert as appropriate subject to the number of potential redundancies) ending on (insert date) as being the formal consultation period. I would welcome your comments and the opportunity to discuss the proposals, with a view to reaching agreement about ways of avoiding the dismissals, reducing the numbers involved and mitigating the consequences.

(Note to Directorate/HR: the date when the redundancies take effect must be after the consultation period has concluded and allow for notice periods. This can be no less than 30/90 days from the beginning of consultation. Consultation and notice periods cannot run concurrently). REMOVE THIS NOTE BEFORE SENDING s188 OUT.

Alternative employment opportunities will be sought for employees who are identified as redundant and trial periods will be provided where necessary. Reasonable time off from work will also be provided to seek other employment or arrange training for new employment.

Any redundancy pay will be based on actual pay and calculated in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996. In exceptional circumstances the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 may be applied. Payment under these Regulations will be in accordance with the Council's policy in operation at the time and will be with the agreement of Elected Members.

Yours sincerely

cc:

Note: Establishment does not necessarily just mean an employee's normal place of work. Employees can be defined as engaged at one establishment even when they do not work at the same premises

Ready Reckoner for Redundancy Payments

**To use the table: Read off employee's age and number of completed year's service.
The table will then show HOW MANY WEEKS' PAY the employee is entitled to:**

Age	Service (Years)																			
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
17*	1																			
18	1	1½																		
19	1	1½	2																	
20	1	1½	2	2½	-															
21	1	1½	2	2½	3	-														
22	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	-													
23	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	-												
24	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	-											
25	2	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	-										
26	2	3	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	-									
27	2	3	4	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	-								
28	2	3	4	5	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	-							
29	2	3	4	5	6	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	-						
30	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	-					
31	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	-				
32	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	-			
33	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	-		
34	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	-	
35	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	
36	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	17	
37	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½	
38	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16½	17	17½	18	
39	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	17½	18	18½	
40	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18½	19	
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	19½	
42	2½	3½	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	
43	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
44	3	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	
45	3	4½	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
46	3	4½	6	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	
47	3	4½	6	7½	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
48	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	
49	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
50	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	
51	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
52	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	
53	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
54	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½	
55	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
56	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½	27½	
57	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25	26	27	28	
58	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	26½	27½	28½	
59	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28	29	
60	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	29½	
61+	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	30	

17 – It is possible that an individual could start to build up continuous service before age 16, but this is relatively rare and for this reason the table has been started at age 18.

61* - The table stops at age 61 because for employees age 61 and over, the payment remains the same as for age 61.

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REDUNDANCY/REDEPLOYMENT GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Central Bedfordshire Council recognises the trauma and stress that employees face in a redundancy situation and will do everything possible to minimise the effect of this. We owe it to our employees to ensure that such situations are dealt with professionally and sensitively.
- 1.2 Every effort will be made to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible. It is recognised however, that circumstances may arise which result in the council seeking to effect a reduction in staffing levels.
- 1.3 In these circumstances the Council recognises the benefit of early consultation with the trade unions and also recognises its statutory obligations in respect of consultation. Consultation will include consideration of the steps to avoid, or failing that, to minimise compulsory redundancies.
- 1.4 This Redundancy Information Pack has been produced in order to give employees as much information as possible to help them during this difficult period.
- 1.3 Employees served with a redundancy notice are entitled to take reasonable time off with pay during their notice period to seek work or retraining.
- 1.5 You are also encouraged to seek advice from all sources, your line manager, colleagues, Human Resources and trade union representatives.

2. THE REDUNDANCY SUPPORT SERVICE

The following redundancy support services are offered to all potentially redundant employees, and you are encouraged to make the best use of them. If you wish to take advantage of any of the services on offer then please either contact them direct, or inform your line manager who will make the appropriate arrangements.

2.1 Training Courses

Details of Learning and Development activities can be found on the Bedfordshire Academy which can be accessed on the Intranet page or contact a member of the Learning & Development Team on Ext 42989, external (01234) 228989

The Council's Learning and Development activities provide essential skills and knowledge for all employees as well as underpinning the Council's objective of transforming into a high performing organisation. Activities are free to Central Bedfordshire Council employees (excluding school based employees).

2.2 The Open Learning Centre

The Open Learning Centre provides a supported, open learning environment for all employees wishing to acquire new skills. Tailored training programmes can be provided, together with advice and a job search facility.

The Open Learning Centre has a number of workstations giving access to CD-ROM and Computer Based Training Packages, the internet and the Council's intranet. This is supported with a vast range of books, videos and audiotapes that are all available to loan.

The Centre is open from 9.00am – 5.00pm each day and at other times by appointment. The Open Learning Centre is located on the 6th floor, Borough Hall.

Please ring the Open Learning Centre Manager on (01234) 228498 to discuss your needs further.

The Open Learning Centre can also be accessed through the Bedfordshire Academy on the Intranet page where you can browse the catalogue of resources available and book a slot for the package you want to study.

2.3 Career Consultancy and Personal Development Service

Meet with a Career Consultant to discuss your career and development issues:

- Advice on specialised training needs
- Clarify your career aspirations
- Identify your transferable skills
- Information about further education

For more information or to book a free individual one to one session contact the Learning and Development Team on Ext 42989, external (01234) 228989.

2.4 Employees will have the right to reasonable time off during working hours whilst under notice of termination of employment on the grounds of redundancy to look for another job or make arrangements for training for future employment.

3.0 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR REDUNDANCY

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.2 The selection criteria policy outlined here will apply to all National Joint Council for Local Government Services (Green Book) employees, employed within Central Bedfordshire Council in situations where selection for redundancy occurs.
- 3.1.3 This policy is based on the premise that merit selection will be used in order to select for redundancy. Merit selection will also include taking into account attendance and disciplinary records where necessary.
- 3.1.4 This selection policy for redundancy will be operated in accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and will therefore ensure that selection criteria do not directly or indirectly discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, spent offences, age, trade union membership and activity, political or religious belief.
- 3.1.5 Details of the Selection Criteria are contained in the Managing Change Policy which is available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

3.2

Individuals selected as redundant will be served notice of termination of their employment. This letter will inform the employee of their right of appeal against their dismissal. . Employees who appeal will be allowed all relevant information relating to their selection for redundancy in order to assist them with understanding the reasons for their selection.

4.0 REDUNDANCY PAY

- 4.1 Employees may be entitled to a statutory redundancy pay. They need to have completed two years' service and the pay is based on age and length of continuous service. Full details of potential entitlement can be obtained from Human Resources

5.0 APPEAL

- 5.1 All employees will have the right to appeal against dismissal for redundancy and to exercise this right must apply to the Assistant Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development within 5 working days. Employees who appeal will have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a workplace colleague. If the Principal has been involved in the detail of the dismissal, the Appeal will be to the Corporation.

6.0 REDEPLOYMENT PROCEDURE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This procedure applies to all Council employees.

Specific examples of circumstances where redeployment may apply are listed below

Redundancy- please also refer to the Council's Redundancy Guidelines
Restructuring
Health grounds- only when recommended by the Council's Occupational Health Advisor or as an alternative to dismissal
Capability grounds- as an alternative to dismissal
Disciplinary grounds- as an alternative to disciplinary action/dismissal
Exceptional Circumstances (e.g. in proven cases of unfair treatment)

- 6.1.2 The Council acknowledges that there will be occasions when employees will be affected by organisational change which makes it impossible for them to continue in their current post. In such instances, redeployment of employees within the Council should be considered as an alternative to the ending of the employment. Retaining the skills and experience of such employees will avoid the costs and potential disruption to the delivery of services that can be caused by having to recruit and train new employees in areas of work where vacancies exist.
- 6.1.3 Employees will normally be redeployed to existing, substantive posts within the Council. However, where there are exceptional circumstances, such as to avoid the employee being on "garden leave", the employee may be redeployed to a temporary vacancy on a short-term basis.
- 6.1.4 Successful redeployment will depend on employees being given effective assistance and support and on the efforts employees themselves make to achieve redeployment.
- 6.1.5 Employees who need to be redeployed will be treated fairly, equitably and consistently, in line with the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity.

6.2 Roles and Responsibilities

6.2.1 *Human Resources*

- As soon as an employee falls within the scope of redeployment, a meeting will be arranged between the employee and a member of HR. The employee will be offered the right to be accompanied at this meeting by either a trade union representative or a work colleague.
- The purpose of this meeting is to explain why the employee is on the redeployment list, how the process works including the role of the Redeployment Panel and to determine the employee's work experience, skills, career aspirations and training needs.
- The employee will be given guidance on what opportunities are realistically available to them, who will contact them in the future, and how they can apply for jobs. The consequences of the Redeployment Panel being unable to find them suitable alternative employment within the agreed time scales will also be explained.
- The employee will be asked to complete a Career Profile, which will be returned to Human Resources.

- The employee will be made aware of the possibility of receiving reasonable training in order for them to meet the essential criteria for a post. Is this when a post has been identified or will we offer training in other areas to enable an employee to be identified for posts i.e computer skills?
- A checklist detailing the meeting and future action to be taken, together with confirmation that the employee is on the redeployment list, will be given to the employee, as soon as possible after the meeting. Written detailed records of all further actions will be kept for future reference.

6.2.2 *Employees*

- The employee is expected to take an active role in the redeployment process and they must be made aware of their role in the search for redeployment. The importance of them playing an active and positive part, including the need to be open and flexible in the opportunities they consider.

6.2.3 *Management*

- Managers will provide support for the employee, including regular liaison with all the other parties in the process.
- Employees should not remain at home during the redeployment search (unless signed off sick) and every effort will be made by management to redeploy an employee to cover a temporary vacancy on an short term basis, or to cover part time needs in more than one vacancy.
- Efforts must also be made by management to seek out supernumerary posts for the employee whilst they are on the redeployment list. HR Services will co-ordinate and support management in making the necessary arrangements to facilitate such redeployments.

6.3 Vacancy Bulletin

- 6.3.1 The employee will be sent a weekly copy of the Council's vacancy bulletin by the Recruitment Team within HR Services. Checks will be made to ensure this is happening at the regular redeployment meeting with the employee and the appropriate HR Manager.
- 6.3.2 Should the employee identify a vacancy from the internal vacancy bulletin that has not previously been referred to them, they should contact their HR adviser as soon as possible. If it is agreed that the employee meets the essential criteria for the post, the post will be frozen and the process outlined in paragraph 4.6 below, will be followed.

6.4 The Career Profile

- 6.4.1 The career profile is an essential document in the redeployment process as it is the only means by which suitable vacancies are identified for the employee. The employee will complete the career profile (*see page 12*) and it is crucial that the information on the career profile is accurate, detailed and as broad as possible as this will assist with the matching process. A date will be agreed between the employee and the HR adviser for the return of the career profile. The career profile will need to be reviewed at regular intervals by the HR adviser and the employee.

6.5 The Process

- 6.5.1 All permanent vacancies will be notified to the Redeployment Panel before any external advertisement is placed.
- 6.5.2 A redeployment panel comprising of a HR adviser, and a trade union representative, will meet on a weekly basis to match career profiles against essential criteria of vacant

posts. This is subject to consultation with the employee as to what they would be prepared to consider or where reasonable retraining could be given.

- 6.5.3 The panel will consider as wide a choice of suitable alternative posts as possible, including those that can be done with reasonable training. It is important that the panel meets weekly; therefore on occasions it is recognised that full membership may not always be possible.
- 6.5.4 Where the panel identifies a suitable post, the post will be frozen and the employee will be sent details of the post (job description and person specification).
- 6.5.5 If the employee is interested in the vacancy they will be asked to complete an application form for the post specifically covering the relevant requirements for the post.
- 6.5.6 If not interested, the employee must notify the HR adviser within 2 working days stating the reasons why they are not interested. The employee should be made aware that if they unreasonably refuse suitable alternative employment they may lose any entitlement to a redundancy payment.
- 6.5.7 Where a suitable post is identified, the HR adviser on the Redeployment Panel will inform the recruiting manager that their post has been frozen together with the name(s) of the identified employee(s). HR will then act as a liaison between the recruiting manager and the employee in order to ensure that an application form is completed and interviews are set up.
- 6.5.8 Employees who submit an application will be offered a 'prior consideration' interview and assessed against the essential criteria for the post.
- 6.5.9 It is essential that an HR adviser is present at any redeployment interview to ensure procedures are followed.
- 6.5.10 If, after interview, an employee is not considered suitable, the recruiting manager will explain the reasons for this to the employee detailing the justification for the decision and follow this up in writing with a copy to the relevant HR adviser.
- 6.5.11 If there is more than one "at risk" employee being considered for the same vacancy, the Council's recruitment and selection rules will be followed and therefore, all matching applicants from the redeployment pool will be interviewed and the best person for the post will be appointed.
- 6.5.12 The Redeployment Panel will keep detailed records of all actions taken.
- 6.5.13 *Training*

In order to maximise the redeployment opportunities for employees it may be necessary to identify whether or not any training could be given to employees to enable them to meet the essential criteria of the post.

The training provided should be to equip employees to successfully acquire posts at broadly their own grading level. It would be unreasonable for there to be an expectation that training will be given to support substantial promotion.

In assessing what is reasonable training, the panel will take the following into account:

- The requirements of the post;
- The skills and potential of the employee;
- The training resources available, i.e. the cost implications must be reasonable; and affordable; and
- The actual training required before the employee would reach an acceptable standard. (The indicative training period should not normally exceed 3 months.)

Where it has been established that an employee would only be able to meet the essential criteria of the post with appropriate training, these training needs should be discussed with the candidate.

The training will be undertaken during a trial period, prior to the appointment being confirmed. The length of the trial period will be determined by individual circumstances and the length of the training required. It is suggested that a minimum trial period of 1 month and a maximum period of 3 months is used.

6.5.14 *Suitable alternative employment*

Certain factors will be taken into consideration when looking at suitable alternative posts, such as:

- the skills of the employee
- the nature of their previous job
- the earnings of the new job compared to their previous earnings
- hours of work
- status - loss of status should be avoided
- the location of the new job, etc.

The employee should be able to meet the essential criteria contained within the person specification or alternatively be capable of meeting those criteria with reasonable training or re-training.

Jobs that are considered suitable alternative employment will be at the same salary as the employee's existing post level or up to 2 grades lower, as set out in the CBC Managing Change Policy. The employee must meet the basic requirements of the post, or would do, given suitable training.

6.5.15 *Part time employees*

If an employee meets the essential criteria of a full-time post they may be eligible to apply for this as a job-share opportunity.

6.6 What is prior consideration?

Prior consideration is where an employee is identified and considered for a post before the post is advertised. If the identified employee meets all the essential criteria for the post and is considered suitable (not necessarily the optimum candidate) following application and interview, the post should be offered to them.

6.7 How long can an employee stay on the redeployment list?

An employee can remain on the redeployment list for the length of their notice period. An employee may be placed on the redeployment list before they receive notice of termination of employment. In these circumstances the timing will start once they receive their notice.

6.8 What happens if the employee is sick during their notice period and whilst on the redeployment list?

There is no right to extend statutory or contractual periods of notice due to sickness. This also applies to the amount of time an employee can remain on the redeployment list.

6.9 Review of Employees on Redeployment list

The relevant HR representative reviews employees on the redeployment list weekly to ensure that the process is working correctly. This will involve a review of the career profile and the numbers and types of jobs that have been offered to the employee through the redeployment process.

6.10 Pay Protection

To qualify for pay protection employees must be appointed to a post attracting a lower rate of pay, not number of hours worked.

Pay protection will only apply in as a result of an organisational restructure. It will not apply in 'budget cut' redundancy situation.

In general terms, the Council's current pay protection policy is to protect employees on their current salary on a 'mark time' basis. The protection will be for a period of 3 years, unless the new substantive grade overtakes the 'mark time' salary, due to annual pay awards.

The protection will be at the employee's existing hourly rate only, that is the protection does not maintain contractual hours or any other contractual payments such as guaranteed overtime.

If the employee has been appointed into the new position before the end of their formal notice period, the pay protection will not implemented until the notice period is concluded.

Further information on the pay protection policy is available from Human Resources.

6.11 Disputes/Concerns

Any dispute or concern about the redeployment process from managers, employees or trade unions should be handled as quickly as possible and if an attempt to resolve the dispute fails the matter should be referred to the Assistant Director, HR & OD.

CAREER PROFILE

Full Name	Home Address
Work Telephone no	
Authority:	Postcode
Current work Location	Current Service Area:
E-mail address work or home (optional)	Home Telephone no
Current post title	Hours per week
Post grade/scale	Salary per month/annum
CV attached :	

Please ensure all sections are completed in as much detail as possible, and attach further sheets if necessary. This will assist the Redeployment Panel in finding you suitable alternative employment.

Please state the type of work you would be interested in:

Qualifications	Training:

Main Responsibilities of Current role

Relevant Previous Experience

Limitations/Commitments

- Location
- Hours of work
- Days of work
- Caring responsibilities
- Health Limitations
- Other jobs
- Other limitations/Commitments:

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

What hours / days would you prefer?

Would you consider : Part Time Term Time Only

What areas of the County would you be prepared to work in?

Any other preferences:

TRANSPORT

How do you normally travel to work?

Do you have a driving licence?

Do you have use of a car for work?

Are you currently required to use your car for work?

Vacancy Bulletin:

Please indicate how you would like to receive the vacancy bulletin:

Sent to home address

Sent to email address

Signed

Date

Please add any other information you may feel relevant on an additional sheet

CAREER PROFILE - GUIDANCE NOTES

Note 1- Type of work

You should specify what suitable alternative work you are seeking. It should be of similar status, pay, grade, hours and location as your own wherever possible. However, you may feel you would like to follow a new vocational path or that you would now prefer to do more hours etc. If this is the case you must be realistic in your aspirations and seek work of which you feel you have a reasonable chance of fulfilling the necessary requirements.

Note 2 - Qualifications/Training

This section should contain all academic, professional and vocational qualifications. You should also put down any in-service or other vocational courses you have been on (including Management Development). This will help the Redeployment officer to match your qualifications with the person specifications for appropriate posts.

Note 3 - Main Responsibilities of Current Role

This section should highlight what activities you are performing at present. Please outline what are the duties and responsibilities of your current position. You may find your current Job Description useful in completing this section.

Note 4- Relevant Previous Experience

This section should contain information about previous posts you have occupied and what skills/knowledge and experience you have gained from them. This will help the Redeployment officer to look for alternative posts in other areas of work that are not directly relevant to your current position.

Note 5- Limitations/Commitments

This section should specify whether you have any limitations that may preclude you from being suitable for some posts. (e.g. unable to lift heavy boxes. State any limitations and commitments such as location, hours and days of work, carer responsibilities, and other jobs.

You should also state whether you have any commitments that may limit what you are able to do.

GENERAL NOTE

This form is an essential tool in helping you to seek alternative employment therefore please complete the form as fully as possible. Please attach any additional information you may have (e.g. a curriculum vitae) that will assist the Re-deployment Panel in assessing your capability and potential.

7.0 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 In the unfortunate circumstance of being made redundant, you may be entitled to certain payments, provided you have completed 2 years' continuous service. Employees who have less than 2 years' continuous service are not entitled to a redundancy payment.
- 7.1.2 This section is a guide to those payments, how they are calculated and when they will be paid.
- 7.1.3 The information has been given in the form of answers to the most commonly asked questions and will help you to gain a clearer understanding of redundancy payments.
- 7.1.4 However, this is a guide only, and should be read in conjunction with other information contained within this pack, together with advice from your manager or a member of Human Resources.

7.2 How is Continuous Service Defined?

Continuous service is defined as service that runs consecutively, that is without a break, with any organisation covered by the Redundancy Modification Order.

7.3 What is Statutory Redundancy Pay?

Statutory redundancy payment is a one-off lump sum paid after your employment has ended. There are no further redundancy payments.

7.4 How is it calculated?

Please note: The following information sets out the method for calculating Statutory Redundancy Payment entitlement under the provision of the Employment Rights Act 1996.

- 7.4.1 In exceptional circumstances and in order to facilitate change management the Council may grant an employee a discretionary compensation payment. This request must be supported by a sound business case from the Service Area Director.

The amount of redundancy payment is determined by your age, length of continuous service and final weekly pay at your last day of employment.

- 7.4.2 A week's pay is defined as "that which the employee is entitled to under his or her terms of the contract at the 'calculation date'. This date is the last day on which the employee works". Weekly pay is calculated by dividing annual salary by 52 or averaging pay over the 12 weeks prior to the termination date if your pay is subject to variations through overtime etc. For each complete year of continuous service, up to a maximum of 20 YEARS, employees are entitled to:
- For each year of employment aged up to 21 inclusive - half a week's pay.
 - For each year of employment aged 22-40 inclusive - one week's pay.
 - For each year of employment aged 41 and above - one and a half week's pay.
- 7.4.3 The number of weeks' entitlement can be calculated quickly by referring to the ready reckoner in Appendix One.

7.5 Do I get a Pension as well?

You will receive a pension from the Council if you are aged 50 or over at the time of your last date of employment, (55 from 1st April 2010) and have been a member of the Council's Pension Scheme for at least 3 months. To calculate your retirement benefits you will need to work out how long you have been in the pension scheme in years and days, divide this figure by 60 and multiply the answer by your final pay. On retirement you will have the option to take part of your benefits as a tax-free cash lump sum by giving up some of your pension. You can take up to 25% of the capital value of your pension benefits as a lump sum.

If you joined the pension scheme before 1st April 2008 benefits based on membership to 31 March 2008 will be calculated differently to those based on membership from 1st April 2008. For membership built up to 31st March 2008 you receive a pension of 1/80th of your final pay, plus an automatic tax-free lump sum of 3 times your pension.

To summarise, any pension built up before April 2008 is still calculated at the 1/80th rate with a lump sum of 3 times pension. Only pension built up from 01/04/2008 is calculated at the better 1/60th rate and there is an option to take extra lump sum in exchange for some pension. An example of the benefits payable under the pension scheme is as follows:

An employee has 8 years' membership up to 31/03/2008 and 24 years membership after then when they retire at age 65. Their final year's pensionable pay on retirement is £20,000.

Benefits based on their 8 years' membership up to 31/03/2008 will be:

Annual Pension: $8/80 \times £20,000 = \mathbf{£2,000}$

Plus an automatic tax free lump sum: $3 \times 8/80 \times £20,000 = \mathbf{£6,000}$

Benefits based on their 24 years' membership from 01/04/2008:

Annual Pension: $24/60 \times £20,000 = \mathbf{£8,000}$

This gives total benefits of:

Annual Pension: £2,000 plus £8,000 = **£10,000**

Lump Sum = **£6,000**

It is possible to exchange some pension for extra tax-free cash.

Up to 25% of the overall value of the pension benefits can be taken as a lump sum with £12 lump sum for each £31 of annual pension given up.

These calculations are subject to a number of factors however; for example, whether service was full time or part-time, type of previous service, etc. Your benefits can be reduced or enhanced depending on your reason for retirement and there are HM Revenue and Customs controls on the pension savings you can have before you become subject to a tax charge. Detailed estimates of benefits are available from the Pensions Section via your HR Adviser.

All financial estimates and assistance in redundancy situations can be obtained from Human Resources

7.6 Are Payments Liable for Tax?

Lump sums from the Pension Scheme are not taxable and redundancy lump sum payments are not normally subject to tax or any other deductions. However, if your redundancy payment and any payment in lieu of notice exceeds £30,000, the excess over £30,000 becomes liable to Pay As You Earn, (PAYE) tax. Monthly pension payments are subject to the normal PAYE tax.

7.7 What is Pay in Lieu of Notice and How Does it Affect Payments?

Payment in lieu of notice arises where it is **agreed** between the department and the employee that the employee is not required to work out the full notice period. In this case, the last day of employment with Central Bedfordshire Council will be brought forward and the salary for the remainder of the notice period is paid as a lump sum with the final salary payment. Payment in lieu of notice is normally subject to PAYE and NI contributions and will affect registration for Unemployment Benefit.

It should be noted that payment in lieu of notice is only made in exceptional circumstances where it is not reasonably practicable for the employee to remain in employment to the end of his/her notice period.

7.9 If I get another job after I'm made redundant, will I receive a redundancy payment?

- (a) You **will** receive a redundancy lump sum payment if your employment ceases with Central Bedfordshire Council and you:
 - i) do not take up further employment; or
 - ii) take up employment with an organisation **not** covered by the RPMO. (The RPMO covers local authorities and related bodies); or
 - iii) take up employment with an organisation covered by the RPMO 4 weeks after your contract ends with Central Bedfordshire Council

- (b) If you accept an offer of a job with a body covered by the RPMO, the timing of the job offer is crucial. If the offer is made **after** the contract with the Council; ends, then you will receive a redundancy payment. If the offer is made **before** your contract ends with Central Bedfordshire Council there must be a 4 week break in service, or there is no entitlement to redundancy pay.

7.10 Will I have to repay my redundancy lump sum if I get another job?

- (a) Your redundancy lump sum **will** have to be repaid if you receive an offer of employment with an organisation covered by the RPMO **before** your contract ends with Central Bedfordshire Council and you take up your new job after an interval of **less than 4 weeks**.

7.11 If I take up employment with an organisation covered by the RPMO will my service continue?

- (a) Your service **will** continue if you receive an offer of employment with an organisation covered by the RPMO **before** your contract ends with Central Bedfordshire Council and you start your new job **within 4 weeks** of your contract ending with CBC.
- (b) Your service **will not** continue if you receive an offer of employment with an organisation covered by the RPMO:
 - i) **before** your contract ends with Central Bedfordshire Council and you start your new job after a break of **more than 4 weeks**;
or
 - ii) **after** your contract ends with Central Bedfordshire Council and there is a break in your service continuity before taking up your new employment.

READY RECKONER FOR REDUNDANCY PAYMENTS

To use the table: Read off employee's age and number of completed year's service. The table will then show HOW MANY WEEKS' PAY the employee is entitled to:

Age	Service (Years)																			
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
17*	1																			
18	1	1½																		
19	1	1½	2																	
20	1	1½	2	2½	-															
21	1	1½	2	2½	3	-														
22	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	-													
23	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	-												
24	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	-											
25	2	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	-										
26	2	3	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	-									
27	2	3	4	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	-								
28	2	3	4	5	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	-							
29	2	3	4	5	6	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	-						
30	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	-					
31	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	-				
32	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	-			
33	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	-		
34	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	-	
35	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	
36	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	17	
37	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½	
38	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16½	17	17½	18	
39	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	17½	18	18½	
40	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18½	19	
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	19½	
42	2½	3½	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	
43	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
44	3	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	
45	3	4½	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
46	3	4½	6	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	
47	3	4½	6	7½	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
48	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	
49	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
50	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	
51	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
52	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	
53	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
54	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½	
55	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
56	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½	27½	
57	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25	26	27	28	
58	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	26½	27½	28½	
59	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28	29	
60	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	29½	
61+	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	30	

17 – It is possible that an individual could start to build up continuous service before age 16, but this is relatively rare and for this reason the table has been started at age 18.

61* - The table stops at age 61 because for employees age 61 and over, the payment remains the same as for age 61.



Work Life Balance and Flexible Working Policy

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SECTION 1.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Central Bedfordshire Council recognises the importance of supporting employees balance their home and work life and has a range of policies to give employees the flexibility to manage work duties alongside personal lifestyles and responsibilities. .

The Council is committed to move towards more flexible working practices. The broad thinking behind this is to work more effectively whilst helping employees balance their commitments, but also making sure that staffing capacity remains in line with the needs of the business. Flexible working can mean different things, for example it can:

- Help the Council work more efficiently and effectively.
 - Help reduce unnecessary travel and thereby reduce the Council's carbon footprint.
 - Mean that it is effective to work at home or at another work location occasionally.
 - Help achieve office space savings.
 - Help employees manage their work/life commitments.
- 1.2 There is a statutory right to *request* a flexible working pattern for employees who have certain parental responsibilities as well for employees who care for certain adults. However, the Council recognises that the need to work flexibly is not confined to any one particular group and has extended the opportunity to *request* to work flexibly to all employees.
- 1.4 The Council is committed to ensuring that this policy does not discriminate directly or indirectly on grounds of race, colour ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, trade union membership and activity.

2.0 Application and Purpose

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees on Central Bedfordshire terms and conditions. Certain flexible working options will have criteria attached and these are set out below or in the appropriate guidelines.
- 2.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the different policies, procedures and arrangements in place within the Council to support work life balance.
- 2.3 An important element of this Policy is to support the Green Travel Plan which will help to reduce the environmental impact of everyone travelling to work on the same days and at the same time.

3.0 The Business Need

- 3.1 Although Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to providing the widest possible range of working patterns, both management and employees need to be realistic and recognise that the full range of flexible working options will not be appropriate for all jobs across all areas of the business.
- 3.2 Where some form of flexible working is proposed, the Council will need to take into account a number of criteria including (but not limited) to the following:
- The cost of the proposed arrangement
 - The effect of the proposed arrangement on other staff
 - The level of supervision/management required
 - The structure of the Group and staff resources
 - Other issues specific to the individual's Group

- Workload of the job
- Resourcing implications
- Health and Safety implications
- The need to provide cover during the working day.
- The employee's ability to carry out the job.

4.0 Statutory right to Request Flexible Working

- 4.1 There is a statutory right for employees to request a flexible working pattern if they:
- Have or expect to have parental responsibility of a child aged 16 or under or a disabled child under 18 who receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
 - Are the parent/guardian/special guardian/foster parent/private foster carer or as the holder of a residence order or the spouse, partner or civil partner of one of these and are applying to care for the child.
 - Are a carer who cares, or expects to be caring, for an adult who is a spouse, partner, civil partner or relative; or who although not related to the employee, lives at the same address as the employee.
- 4.2 Under the law the Council must seriously consider any application made and only reject it if there are good business reasons for doing so. Employees have the right to ask for flexible working - not the right to have it.
- 4.3 Where employees qualify for the statutory right to request flexible working, the requirements set out by the legislation must be adhered to.
- 4.4 The Guidelines on Statutory Flexible Working and application form are available from the Intranet or Human Resources.

5.0 Other Flexible Working Options

- 5.1 The Council has extended the facility to request flexible working to all employees, subject to the requirements of the service. This additional facility will be at the discretion of line managers following consultation with their Head of Service and HR Business Partner. It must be noted that the Council has no legal obligation to consider applications other than those covered by the paragraphs above. However, the Council is committed to developing Work Life Balance for all employees and will consider applications from all employees.
- 5.2 Examples of flexible working arrangements are set out in *Section 2* of this document. Examples of time off from work which aim to help employees balance work commitments and personal circumstances are set out in *Section 3*.

6.0 Records

- 6.1 It is important that a written record and copies of all correspondence are retained by the line manager throughout the application process.
- 6.2 At the final stage of the application copies of *all* relevant forms and any other correspondence (e.g. extension of time limit records, letter of appeal etc) should be forwarded to Human Resources so that:
- Any contractual change can be actioned and pay adjustments made.
 - Copies of correspondence are retained on the employee's personal file.
 - Data can be obtained to assess the level of take up of each stage of the process.

7.0 Temporary periods of working flexibly

- 7.1 In some circumstances a permanent change to an employee's contract of employment may not be the best solution for them. In such circumstances the manager might consider that a temporary period of flexible working, agreed informally, might be appropriate. The temporary period would not normally exceed 3 months. Alternatively, the manager and employee might agree to a time-limited change after which they would revert back to the original pattern.
- 7.2 The manager must ensure that Human Resources are informed of any temporary changes to the employee's contract of employment.

SECTION 2

FLEXIBLE WORKING OPTIONS

Most applications to work flexibly will be adjustments to the hours and days worked in a specific post. However, there are a number of other options that will be considered under this procedure. The following gives examples of flexible working but given the diversity of jobs and working practices with the Council, it is not possible to have an exhaustive list and employees may request consideration of alternative flexible arrangements.

1.0 Career breaks

1.1 Career breaks allow an employee an extended period of time away from paid work where possible, with a return to the same or a similar job at the end of the time.

1.2 Career breaks of between six months and two years may be requested. A career break will only be agreed if adequate cover arrangements can be made.

1.3 . The period of break will count as leave of absence and an employee's service prior to the break will be protected. Annual leave will not accrue during the period of absence covered by the career break.

1.4 Employees will be required to pay pension contributions on the first 30 days of unpaid leave and this will be deducted from the last payment of salary before the start of the career break. Following the career break, employees can elect to pay back the contributions for the period of their absence and they will maintain their full pension benefits. If the employee elects not to continue paying contributions, this period will not count towards membership of the pension scheme.

1.5 The Career Break Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

2.0 Compressed hours

2.1 Compressed working hours permit employees to work their total number of contractual hours over fewer working days. Either a five day week is compressed into four and a half days, or a 10 day fortnight into nine days.

2.2 Where more than one employee within a team wishes to work compressed hours, a rota may be necessary to ensure fairness as some days (usually Monday and Friday) will be more popular choices for time off.

2.3 An employee would have a 'normal' half day or day off, but that would be subject to change depending on the needs of the team and, for example attending meetings and workload.

2.4 The employee will work an equal number of additional hours each day to make up the time.

3.0 Flexible Working Hours Scheme

3.3 A Flexible Working Hours scheme is currently in operation for employees of the Council. This scheme aims to give employees some freedom to arrange their working hours to suit their own commitments or to avoid the rush hours. The scheme applies to all employees who are covered by NJC conditions of service except those whose duties make flexibility impractical. Exclusions to the scheme will be decided by Directors and new employees will be advised if their post is covered by the scheme. It is a fundamental requirement of the flexitime scheme that the efficiency of the Council and levels of service provided are maintained. Employees are expected to co-operate with the need to ensure minimum staffing levels are maintained during the normal working day, including the lunch period and other breaks, to facilitate contact with the public and other customers. This scheme will continue to operate alongside other flexible working arrangements provided the duties of the post do not make flexibility impractical.

4.0 Homeworking

- 4.1 Generally speaking any job which does not require time spent in one location for example to operate machinery or to deliver direct customer care, and which is capable of being managed by objectives and defined outputs, may be adapted for home-working.
- 4.2 Homeworkers are employees of the Council with the same contractual rights as other employees. They have the same terms and conditions except where specifically varied in relation to place of work.
- 4.3 Homeworking arrangements may be formal or informal. Informal arrangements should be short term only, for example to enable an employee to work undisturbed at home on a particular project, or to cater for the short term personal needs of an employee.
- 4.4 The Council's Homeworking Guidelines refer to formal arrangements for homeworking and approval for formal homeworking for suitable posts must be within the provisions of this scheme. The Guidelines and Homeworking Pack are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

5.0 Part-time working

- 5.1 The Council offers a range of part-time and term-time posts in line with the needs of the service. Additionally, full-time employees may request to work part-time at particular points in their career. Managers should carefully consider such requests taking into consideration:
 - operational needs
 - the needs of the employee
 - whether the post can be split
 - whether workloads or responsibilities can be allocated differently
 - whether more flexible working hours can be agreed if part-time work is not possible
 - whether an alternative part-time post may be available.
- 5.2 If the manager decides that part-time work is not an option they should contact their designated HR Officer to ensure that all options have been considered and that the reasons for the decision are clear and recorded.

6.0 Job Share Arrangements

- 6.1 A job share is a formal arrangement where two people voluntarily share the responsibilities of one full time post, with the salary and leave entitlement allocated on a pro-rata basis. Full details of how Job Share can be arranged are to be found within the Job Share Guidelines but key points are as follows:
 - Job Share requests can be received either through application for vacant posts or through applications from existing employees to job share their current post.
 - The pattern of work and the respective allocation of tasks and responsibilities can be arranged in line with the needs of the service and the individuals concerned and every effort should be made to ensure that these are done equitably.
 - The Head of Service will make decisions concerning requests for job share in consultation with their designated HR Manager
 - There is no automatic right to job share but an unjustifiable refusal to allow a job share not based on business needs, may be viewed as discriminatory under the Sex Discrimination Act.

- The Council reserves the right to review the job sharing arrangement should it cease to meet the needs of the service. Such a review would be carried out in consultation with the job share partners and with the designated HR Officer.

6.2 The Job Share Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

7.0 Flexible Retirement

7.1 Within the regulations of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), there is discretion for employees to request to voluntarily reduce their grade and of hours or work, on a permanent basis with adjustment to pay, coupled with receipt of their accrued pension benefits and the option to continue paying into the pension scheme. Whilst the Council is required to have a written policy on Flexible Retirement the discretion remains with the Council with regard to the application of the policy.

7.1.2 The employee must be of minimum pensionable retirement age currently 50 (55 from 01/04/2010).

7.1.3 All requests will be subject to operational considerations and the reduction of grade/hours should be of substance. Reduction in hours should normally be a minimum of 40% for both full and existing part-time employees. The employee should normally identify a suitable *lower* graded post to which they are appointed on merit. This could be either within their own Directorate or elsewhere in the Council.

7.1.4 In some instances there may be a financial strain to pension fund and this cost will need to be paid from the Service budget should the flexible retirement be agreed. Full information is set out in the Guidelines.

7.1.4 The Flexible Retirement Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

8.0 Term-Time Working

8.1 Term-time working is an arrangement whereby employees work during term-time only, usually 38 weeks a year, although some employees may work more weeks depending on the need of the service.

8.2 There are different ways in which term-time working can be implemented:

- The employee is given unpaid leave of absence during school holidays. The annual salary is reduced accordingly to the amount of unpaid leave required and is paid at the same monthly rate throughout the year; or
- The employee can choose to use annual leave during school holidays thereby reducing the amount of unpaid leave needed.

8.3 Term time working is an agreed variation to the contract of employment.

9.0 V-Time (Voluntary Reduction of Hours)

9.1 V-time is where an employee reduces their contractual hours for a short period of time, normally not exceeding 3 months, and then returns to their previous contractual hours. This could assist with short term domestic problems or assist with dedicating time to studying. Pay and conditions are changed during the period of V-time, but there is a guarantee that the previous contractual hours can be resumed at the end of the agreed period.

10.0 Flexible Working Application Form

- 10.1 Employees who wish to be considered for flexible working should complete the form at *Appendix 1* and submit to their line manager for consideration. Managers should aim to consider and reply to the employee within 28 days of application, although there may be occasions when this will not be practicable.
- 10.2 Managers will consider the effect of the request upon the service area, customer/clients and the employee's colleagues, in particular the impact if more than one employee in a specific area works flexibly.
- 10.3 All applications that are accepted will be permanent, subject to the requirements of the service area. However, if an employee requests a short term arrangement for a specific reason this will be considered.

SECTION 3

TIME OFF FROM WORK

Flexible working options contribute significantly to improving the working lives of employees. Additionally, but of equal importance are the arrangements in place for employees to take leave in order to balance work commitments and personal circumstances.

Line Managers are responsible for supporting time off in these situations, recognising that employees are individuals and their personal circumstances deserve individual consideration. Human Resources are able to provide support and guidance to employees and managers whenever they feel it is appropriate.

1.0 Adoption Leave

- 1.1 The Council's Adoption Leave scheme aims to assist employees who adopt a child and to allow them to be with the child for a settling in period. This policy applies to anyone who has a child placed with them for adoption.
- 1.2 The entitlement to adoption leave is up to a maximum of 52 weeks in total for each child adopted, dependent upon length of service. There may also be entitlement to adoption pay.
- 1.3 An employee will have the contractual right to return to work following adoption leave.
- 1.4 The Adoption leave Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

2.0 Carers' Leave

- 2.1 Central Bedfordshire is the lead organisation for supporting local carers. We recognise that 1 in 8 of employees also have caring responsibilities outside of work and we are committed to enable you to continue working and caring.
- 2.2 The term 'carer' means those who provide care for others on an unpaid basis, as distinct from those who are paid (for example home carers, care workers etc). Carers help those who are ill, frail or disabled to live as independently and with as much dignity as possible.
- 2.3 To be eligible for carer's leave, the employee must live at the same address as the person they are caring for.
- 2.4 In such circumstances the manager might consider that a temporary period of flexible working, agreed informally, might be appropriate. Alternatively, annual leave, flexitime or unpaid leave may be considered.
- 2.5 The manager must ensure that Human Resources are informed of any temporary changes to the employee's contract of employment.

3.0 Emergency Care of Dependants

- 3.1 Employees have a statutory entitlement to unpaid time off for dependants. This right allows employees time off to deal with an emergency involving a dependant in the following circumstances:
 - To help out, or make arrangements when a dependant falls ill, is injured or assaulted, this includes where a dependant has not been physically injured but is distressed, for example as a result of a mugging incident;
 - To help out when a dependant gives birth (see Maternity Support Leave)

- To cope when arrangements for caring for a dependant break down unexpectedly, for example where a nurse or carer fails to arrive as arranged or where a nursery is unexpectedly closed;
- To deal with the consequences of a death of a dependant. (See Special Leave, paragraph 9).
- To deal with an unexpected, serious incident at school, or during school hours, for example where a child has been involved in a fight, injured at school or is being suspended from school.

3.2 Employees should be allowed time off to deal with emergency situations as they arise and make alternative arrangements for care. For most cases up to 1 day's leave, should be sufficient to deal with the problem. This should be taken as annual leave, flexi-time or unpaid leave.

3.3 The Guidelines on Emergency Care of Dependants are on the Intranet or from Human Resources

4.0 Fertility Treatment

4.3 The Council recognises that fertility treatment is a stressful and emotionally demanding experience.

4.4 To support employees who are undergoing treatment personally, we will allow up to a maximum of 5 days' paid leave overall for investigations or treatment. These days may be taken as a block or separately as necessary. 3.5 To be eligible for leave for fertility treatment, employees must have been continuously employed by the Council for at least 26 weeks.

4.6 The employee should provide their manager with a letter from the hospital/clinic where the employee is being treated. This letter should state the expected week and the duration of the investigations or treatment.

4.7 Request for leave for fertility treatment will be treated in the strictest confidence.

5.0 Foster Care Leave

5.1 The Council values the contribution to the community made by foster parents and the commitment of employees who provide foster care for children. To support employees to make the necessary arrangements to receive the child being fostered, and to settle them into the family home, a maximum of 2 days' paid leave will be allowed following a formal fostering arrangement. This arrangement is only applicable to long term fostering, which would not normally be less than 6 months.

5.2 To be eligible for Foster Care Leave staff must have been continuously employed by the Council for at least one year.

5.3 If you require leave for foster care, you should notify your line manager at the earliest opportunity and provide relevant documentation in evidence of the arrangement.

5.4 Foster Care Leave is available for fostering children through the Local Authority or other recognised agencies and normally does not apply to the short or long-term care of children who are family members. However, foster care leave may also be available to members of staff where children of very close relatives would otherwise have to be fostered or go into local authority care for a period not normally less than 6 months.

6.0 Maternity Leave

- 6.1 The Council has Maternity Leave Guidelines which set out both Statutory and Contractual/Occupational benefits for pregnant employees. The precise entitlements will depend on the employee's length of service.
- 6.3 The Maternity Leave Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

7.0 Maternity Support Leave

- 7.1 Maternity Support Leave (MSL), of 5 days with pay shall be granted to the child's father, the partner or nominated carer of an expectant mother at or around the time of birth. A nominated carer is the person nominated by the mother to assist in the care of the child and to provide support to the mother.
- 7.2 All employees regardless of their length of service are entitled to maternity support leave provided they meet the requirements outlined below.
- 7.3 The granting of MSL is subject to the following conditions:
- Applications must be made in writing to the employee's line manager and should declare that the employee is the nominated carer.
 - Applicants should give as much notice of their request for MSL as circumstances allow.
 - Submission of medical advice of the expected date of childbirth.
 - The timing of the MSL should be agreed in discussion with the line manager and should normally be completed within 56 days of the birth. Where a child is born early, MSL can be taken any time between the actual date of the birth and the end of the 56 day period running from the Sunday of the week the baby was originally due.
 - The expectant mother is not receiving any care and support from any other person in respect of her confinement.
- 7.4 MSL can only be taken once in any 9 month period.
- 7.5 MSL may count towards, but may not be taken in addition to parental or paternity leave.
- 7.6 The scheme also applies in the case of adoptive fathers, partners or nominated carers and shall be granted at or around the time of the initial placement. The MSL should normally be completed within 56 days after the placement of the child with the prospective adoptive parents.

8.0 Parental Leave

- 8.1 Parental Leave is the statutory right of any parents who have a child under 5 (18 if disabled). Key characteristics are as follows:
- Employees should have worked for the Council for 12 months to qualify
 - The full entitlement is 13 weeks for each eligible child
 - A parent may take up to 4 weeks in any one year
 - Parental leave may be taken in complete weeks
 - Parental leave is unpaid
 - Parents should give at least 21 days notice of their intention to take parental leave
 - If the Line Manager considers that the absence would be unduly disruptive then he/she can postpone parental leave for up to 6 months but must give reasons in writing for doing so

8.2 The Parental Leave Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources

9.0 Paternity Leave

9.1 The Council allows 5 days' paid paternity leave per child to all fathers (natural or adoptive) who have been continuously employed by the Council for a period of 12 months before the expected week of confinement or, in the case of adoptive fathers, before the expected week of placement. Paternity leave will be paid at the rate of statutory paternity pay (SPP) or 90% of average weekly earnings if this is less than SPP. This is the same as the standard rate of statutory maternity pay.

9.2 The leave must be taken from the actual date of birth or placement of the child.

9.3 In certain circumstances, the line manager may use their discretion in allowing a delay in the start of the paternity leave. This would typically be requested when mother and child are unable to leave hospital for a period and require care on their return home.

9.4 In cases where fathers need extended leave at the point of the birth or placement of the child their request should be dealt with under the Parental Leave Guidelines.

8.5 The Paternity Leave Guidelines and application form are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

10.0 Special Leave for personal reasons

10.1 If an employee needs time off to cope with a situation that doesn't fall under the 'time off for dependants' right (see paragraph 2.0), they may have a right to time off under the Council's Special Leave scheme.

10.2 Special leave is somewhat difficult to define, but would normally be applied to necessary absence from work when a close relative has died or is terminally ill; (previously referred to as 'Compassionate Leave') or for other serious personal difficulties, which arise unexpectedly or suddenly.

10.3 Where leave is requested due to the death of a close relative, paid leave up to 5 days may be granted at the discretion of the line manager who will take into account the specific circumstances of the request. These could include such activities as arranging the funeral; dealing with matters relating to the estate of the deceased or travelling to attend the funeral etc.

10.4 Managers may approve reasonable periods of annual leave, flexi- time or unpaid leave of absence for employees who request time off to care for terminally ill/chronically sick relatives.

10.5 For domestic emergencies such as house fire, burglary etc., up to 1 day's paid leave may be granted at the discretion of the line manager. The provision for such paid leave is to allow the employee enough time off to make alternative arrangements and return to work.

10.6 The Special Leave guidelines are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

11.0 Other Leave

11.1 In addition to the time off for work set out above the Council has a number of other schemes that allow employees to take time off work.

11.2 These include:

- Appearance as a court witness
- Interviews with other Public Sector Bodies
- Local Authority Member leave
- Magistrate's leave
- Professional Study leave
- Time off for Public Duties

11.3 Further details of these and other schemes can be obtained the Intranet or from Human Resources.

3. Impact of the new working pattern

I think this change in my working pattern will affect the Council, my section / team and colleagues as follows:

I have discussed this application with my colleagues in my team.

4. Accommodating the new working pattern

I think the effect on the Council, my section / team and my colleagues can be dealt with as follows:

Signed:	
Print name:	
Date:	

Appendix 1

NOW PASS THIS APPLICATION TO YOUR MANAGER



FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

	Page Number
1. Introduction	2
2. Reducing Hours or Grade	2
3. Pension Benefits	3
4. Flexible Retirement Process	3
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1. INTRODUCTION

Within the regulations of the Local government Pension Scheme (LGPS) there is discretion for flexible retirement, with the early release of pension benefits (where agreed by the employer) which is linked to a reduction in hours of work or grade.

Central Bedfordshire Council will normally only apply their discretion and agree to flexible retirement if there is no cost to the Council.

Flexible retirement occurs when an employee draws their pension and carries on working, either at a lower grade or on reduced hours. It is available to LGPS members who are 55 or over, (or 50 for employees who were LGPS members prior to 1st April 2008, increasing to 55 for all LGPS members from 1st April 2010).

All requests will be subject to individual negotiation and the reduction of grade/hours should be of substance (see below for further clarification). Whilst the Council is committed to providing a balance between employees' professional and personal lives, this must be considered alongside the Council's duty to maintain service delivery.

Employees who are not members of the LGPS may request flexible working hours through the Council's Work-life Balance and Flexible Working Policy.

This scheme will not apply in cases of conduct or performance issues.

2. REDUCING HOURS OR GRADE

The decision to reduce an employee's hours or grade is an operational decision made by the employing service group in liaison with the appropriate HR Officer.

Voluntary reduction can be achieved in a number of ways:

Hours:

Reduction in hours should normally be a minimum of (40%) for both full and existing part-time staff (this is the equivalent of reducing by 2 days per week (14.5 hours) for full time staff.)

This can be achieved by:

- Reducing the hours on a number of, or, every working day
- Reducing the number of days worked in the week

Grade

The employee should normally identify a suitable lower graded post to which they are appointed on merit. This could be either within their own Directorate or elsewhere in the Council.

Salary

Flexible Retirement will be subject to a reduction in salary similar to the level of pension to be received, such that an employee's new pay plus pension is not significantly more than they received prior to flexible retirement.

The employee will receive the revised salary for the reduced hours and/or grade in addition to their pension benefits. In all cases, employees must receive advice as to how flexible retirement will affect their net pay and pension entitlement. This is

important, as an employee's pension will normally be actuarially reduced if paid before age 65. In addition, any job held while in receipt of pension benefits may attract a higher rate of tax.

All other conditions of service, for example annual leave entitlement will be recalculated on a pro rata basis to take account of any reduction of hours.

3. PENSION BENEFITS

The employee will receive their accrued pension benefits to date which will be the accrued lump sum and the annual pension. This lump sum and annual pension may be actuarially reduced due to the early release of the benefits*. Whilst the Council may waive this, in whole or in part, it is the general policy of the Council not to agree to this.

*In some cases the employee may have a personal 'Rule of 85' Protection. In this circumstance the employee's retirement benefits will not be actuarially reduced. In such cases there may still be a considerable cost to the Council and the Directorate must bear the cost of agreeing to the release of the pension earlier than their normal retirement age.

Employees have a choice to rejoin the LGPS from the date of their new contract of employment providing they are under 75 years of age and the contract is for 3 months or more.

There is no cost to the service in most cases, but please refer to the Summary of Qualifying Criteria and Payments Due (Appendix 1).

Should consent be given to the early release of your pension benefits then an employee will not have the right to subsequently request a second flexible retirement under current Council policy.

Employees should be aware that the early release of pension benefits accrued to date could have an effect on the ill-health retirement benefits that would be due to you should you fall ill and be permanently incapable of undertaking their role.

They should also be aware that the 'death in service' lump sum grant would only be paid related to their reduced pay and any spouse's pension due would only be based on the pro-rate memberships or on the lower pay whole time equivalent should you have a reduction in your grade.

For further information on these provisions within the Local Government Pension Scheme, please contact Pensions on 01234 228740 or via email at pensions@bedford.gov.uk

4. FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT PROCESS

The employee should discuss their request with their line manager.

The line manager will make a recommendation to the relevant Assistant Director to either approve or refuse the request. This would include details of business/organisational requirements and any costs.

Following confirmation from the Assistant Director the line manager will reply in writing to the employee indicating the decision. This would normally be within one month of the employee submitting their request.

If, after consideration, the request is refused, the reasons should be clearly communicated to the employee. The application should only be refused if there will be a detrimental impact on business requirements or if there is likely to be a burden of additional costs on the service.

If the employee wishes to appeal against a refusal to allow a flexible retirement, this should be made in writing, to the service Director, within 5 working days of receipt of the decision.

If the request is agreed, the employee will be provided with a pension estimate from the Pensions' section which should be requested by the line manager via their HR Business Partner.

Should the flexible retirement be agreed, then this would be on the basis that the reduction in the hours or grade will be permanent. There will not be an option for the employee to increase their hours again in the role that they had at the time of their application.

The line manager will notify Human Resources and Pensions of the changes.

Following agreement by the appropriate Assistant Director, Human Resources will send a formal letter to the employee confirming the agreed arrangements.

FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT – SUMMARY OF QUALIFYING CRITERIA AND PAYMENTS DUE
LGPS centrally employed staff

	What is it?	Pension benefit payable	Employer's consent needed?	Cost to Service	Other Key Factors
Scheme member meets the '85 year' Rule Age 50 – under 60	Flexible retirement under age 60 if age and LGPS membership = 85, eg age 58 + 27 years	Pension benefits with no reduction	Yes (Assistant Director or HR Head of Business Operations)	Financial strain to pension fund*	Member reduces, with the employer's consent, his/her hours by greater than 25% or has a reduction in grade. Flexible retirement needs to benefit the Service.
Scheme member meets the '85 year' Rule Age 60 - 65	Flexible retirement at age 60-65 if age and LGPS membership = 85, eg Age 60 + 25 years Age 61 + 24 years	Pension benefits with no reduction	Yes (Assistant Director or HR Head of Business Operations)	None	
Age under 65 without satisfying the '85 year' rule	Flexible retirement under age 65, if age and LGPS membership equals less than 85, eg Age 60 + 20 years	Pension benefits with reduction	Yes (Assistant Director or HR Head of Business Operations)	None	
'85 year' rule not satisfied by time of election, but will be satisfied before aged 60	Flexible retirement under age 60 if age and LGPS membership = 85 by the time age 60 is reached but not at point of retirement	Pension benefits with reduction	Yes (Assistant Director or HR Head of Business Operations)	Financial strain to pension fund*	
Aged over 65	Other flexible retirement option	Pension benefits with no reduction	Yes (Assistant Director or HR Head of Business Operations)	None	

*This cost cannot be waived by the Service and will therefore need to be paid from the Service budget should the flexible retirement be agreed

Flexible Retirement – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What happens to the accrued pension if an employee takes flexible retirement?

Under the new provisions, if a request to permanently reduce hours by more than 25%40%, and/or grade, is approved, and an election is made to and consent given to receive the early release of pension benefit, then the accrued pension is paid and a new pension is started. This new pension is not abated due to the earnings in continued employment.

For example, an employee working full time (37 hours) asks to reduce their hours to half time (18.5 hours). They will get their pension (lump sum and annual pension) paid which has been accrued to the date of working reduced hours. A reduction to the pension may be applied depending on age and length of service. Please see Appendix 1 for a summary of this provision. The employee will continue to be paid for 18.5 hours work and will start to accrue a new second pension on these 18.5 hours (unless they opt out of the LGPS).

2. What happens to an employee's pension if they leave the Council's service after electing to receive flexible retirement benefits?

This will vary depending on the following circumstances:

(a) employee leaves the Council to work in a private organisation (not covered by the LGPS)

The pension already being paid will continue to be paid. If the employee is between 60 and 65, an election can be made to receive the second accrued pension and the employer's consent is not needed as long as the employer does not waive the pension reduction for the employee.

If the employee is aged under 60, the employer's consent will be needed.

(b) employee leaves the Council to work for an organisation covered by the LGPS

This is the same as above, but the employee could continue to accrue pension membership and the second accrued pension could be transferred to the new fund if they are aged up to 65.

(c) employee decides not to continue to work

The employee can elect (as in (a) above) to have a second pension paid or defer to age 65.

- 3. Does an employee have to elect to receive their retirement benefits if their hours are permanently reduced by more than 25%40% or they have a reduction in grade?**

If an employee is aged 50 or more, it is their choice if they wish to elect to receive the early payment of their accrued pension benefits. The early release of pension benefits is with the employer's consent.

- 4. Can I opt to take flexible retirement if I am working full time and obtain a part time job in another service?**

Under the terms of the LGPS you can make a request for flexible retirement. However, you will need to still complete a pension election form to request the early release of your pension benefits. You will also need your new line manager to sign this form to indicate that there is service support for your application. Should your application for the early release of your pension benefits incur a cost to the service, this may mean that your flexible retirement application may not be approved.

- 5. I reduced my working hours a few months ago and didn't know about flexible retirement. Can I now apply for the early release of my pension benefits?**

The Council's policy is that an election has to be made within 3 months of the permanent reduction in your hours by greater than 25% 40% and/or the reduction to your grade. Therefore you may apply for the early release of your pension benefits if you are within this timescale. This will need the approval of your service area.

- 6. I would like to reduce my hours in 12 months but apply now for flexible retirement so that I can plan ahead. Can I get this agreed now to be implemented in a year's time?**

Whilst it is appreciated that you would wish to plan ahead for your flexible retirement it is not possible to plan this far in advance and agree such contractual arrangements now. Three to six months for example before you wish to work reduced hours, would be the time to approach your line manager to discuss this. At this time you will be able to request an estimate of the early retirement benefits which would be payable to you.

7. **To avoid a redundancy, I have elected to take another role with pay protection for three years. Can I get an agreement now to take flexible retirement benefits when this pay protection ends on the basis of a reduction in grade?**

It will not be possible to agree a flexible retirement request this far in advance. You should discuss this with your line manager three to six months before your pay protection is due to end and consider if this is an option that you would wish to consider. At this time you will be able to request an estimate of the early retirement benefits which would be payable to you. Your service would need to agree to this flexible retirement.



APPLICATION FOR FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

Name					
National Insurance Number					

Part one: Employee’s declaration:

Either:

I will reduce my grade*/hours per week* from _____ to _____. The date for this change will be with effect from a date to be agreed with my line manager. If this change to my contract is agreed, I elect to receive immediate payment of my pension and lump sum.

I understand that this election will not be valid unless my employer consents to the release of my pension and lump sum.

I also understand that I may withdraw this election (and where appropriate the request to work reduced hours or the arrangement to work in a lower graded role if this at my request) once I have considered the estimate of benefits provided by Pension Services.

Or:

I have reduced my grade*/hours per week* from _____ to _____ on _____ 20___. I elect to receive immediate payment of my pensions and lump sum.

I understand that I may withdraw this election once I have considered the estimate of benefits provided by Pension Services.

*delete as appropriate

Signed (employee) _____ Date _____

Service area _____

This form should now be given to your line manager to arrange for consent to be obtained from the service area.

PTO



Part two: Service Area Consent

I confirm that the service area supports the changes to the contract as detailed from the date given*/date to be agreed* and supports this application for flexible retirement.

Signed (Manager) _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Designation: _____

*delete as appropriate

This form should now be returned to Human Resources.

Meeting: General Purposes Committee

Date: 17 December 2009

Subject:

Report of: Acting Assistant Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development

Summary: The report is to seek Member approval for the delegation of decisions involving the termination of employment on the grounds of redundancy/early retirement for both non schools and schools based employees.

Advising Officer:

Contact Officer: Catherine Jones, Head of HR Strategy & Policy

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: n/a

Function of: Council

Key Decision

Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate) n/a

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The efficient and timely decision making by Members supports both the need to provide management and staff affected with a quick, efficient but robust decision making process.

Financial:

None arising from this report.

Legal:

The proposed arrangements ensure that Human Resources can confirm that all employment law is complied with.

Risk Management:

None resulting from this report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Trade Unions have been consulted on the details of the proposal.

Equalities/Human Rights:

Will be taken into account.

Community Safety:

n/a

Sustainability:

n/a

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

-

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. **that the Committee**
 - (a) **approves the recommendation as set out in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the report, to delegate authority to the Service Portfolio holder, the Portfolio holder for Corporate Resources and the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee to approve redundancy/early retirement scenarios**
 - (b) **that any redundancy/early retirement payments for non schools based employees are made in accordance with the Managing Change policy of the Council or any other policy in force at the time of the delegation being implemented**
 - (c) **that in line with the practice of the predecessor authority, Central Bedfordshire should only operate the discretion available under Regulation 52 of the Local Government Pension Scheme or the Teachers (Compensation for Redundancy and Premature Retirement) Regulations 2006 except in the most exceptional circumstances.**

Reason for Recommendation(s): To ensure that there is an efficient, effective and robust decision making process in place with regard to redundancies/early retirement severance arrangements for both non schools and schools based employees.

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Background

1. The Shadow Executive of Central Bedfordshire approved a report at their December 2008 meeting which set out the terms of the redundancy policy for non schools staff and also provided for delegated authority to the Interim Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources, to implement the severance/early retirement policy for non schools based staff with immediate effect. There was no end date to this delegation.
2. On 17 March 2009, the Shadow Executive approved a report which set out the terms of the redundancy/severance policy for schools based staff in Central Bedfordshire and similarly provided for delegated authority to the Interim Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources, to implement the severance/early retirement policy for schools based staff with effect from 1 April 2009.

Terms of Reference for General Purposes Committee

3. While it is acknowledged that there is a delegation in place as referred to above, the terms of reference for the General Purposes Committee includes:

To determine the award of any discretionary payments to employees under the Local Government Pension Scheme or the Council's Severance policy.
4. This report proposes that the current delegations be reviewed and a new delegation put in place that takes account of the Terms of Reference of this Committee.

Reasons for Redundancy/Early Retirements for CBC Non Schools employees and funding of associated costs

5. For non schools based employees, redundancies may be on a 'one off' basis' from a limited change in functions of a post, or more widespread involving major reorganisation of a team.

Where there is a 'one off' redundancy the cost of severance/early retirement will normally be met by the service budget and within the financial year the costs are incurred.

7. Where there are a number of redundancies and the costs cannot be met by the service budget in the financial year, additional budget needs to be approved possibly requiring a report to the Executive seeking approval for funding. The redundancies will still need to meet the three year 'pay back' period and be supported by a robust business case. In these circumstances the anticipated costs of any redundancy/severance arrangements will be referred to in the report to Executive.

Reasons for Redundancy/Early Retirements CBC Schools based employees and funding of the associated costs.

8. Redundancies/early retirement in Schools arise for two different reasons:
- (a) The school may have decided that they need to make changes to the curriculum which may then result in redundancies/early retirements of one or more employees. In these circumstances the School is expected to fund the costs of any redundancy/early retirements. The decision will have been made by the Head Teacher in conjunction with the Governing Body. Consultation will also have involved Human Resources to ensure compliance with employment legislation and CBC policies, and Finance who will need to confirm the costs are correct and the impact on the school's budget can be absorbed within the financial year. In some cases the costs may result in an overspend for up to 3 years. This will be assessed by Finance before they approve the costs.
 - (b) The second and most common reason is budget overspend and the need to urgently address the overspend by reducing the number of employees. In these circumstances the School Improvement Team will also become closely involved to ensure that the issues raised by the budget are addressed not only in reducing costs but managing the school going forwards with the reduced staffing compliment. The Schools Improvement Team will also be concerned to ensure that the remaining team of teachers and support staff will be able to support the delivery of the curriculum going forwards.

- (c) Where a School is facing budget difficulties, there is provision within the existing Schools Policy, that the cost of any redundancy/early retirements will be funded by a centrally held budget, the 'Schools Contingency Fund'. This fund is financed from the Direct Schools Grant with the agreement of the Schools Forum. It is important to note that there is a statutory requirement for Local Education Authorities to fund the costs of redundancies/early retirements caused by budget difficulties in Schools unless it is felt that the governing body has acted unreasonably. 'Unreasonable' action by the governors might be, for example, agreeing to severance arrangements outside the existing constraints..
- (d) The final decision regarding the numbers and categories of employees affected (Teaching or Support) will be taken by the Head in conjunction with the Governing Body.

Business Case

For both Schools and Non Schools redundancy/early retirement cases, a detailed business case will be required. For non schools this will be signed off by the Service Director, for Schools the business case will be signed off by the Head and Chair of Governors.

Proposed Delegations

- 9. As with any redundancies the decisions that are taken impact directly on individual employees. By proposing that we continue with delegating decisions, this will ensure that decisions are taken at the appropriate time, promptly and without delay and minimise uncertainty for the individuals affected. The process must still remain robust

10. For any proposed redundancy/early retirement scenario, for both schools and non schools, it is proposed that a pro forma is completed which will provide the detailed business case for the proposal, setting out the reasons for the redundancy and explaining what other alternatives have been explored including any redeployment.

The pro forma will also state the full financial liability of the redundancy/early retirement providing the details of the redundancy payment and where applicable, actuarial strain costs if there are associated early retirement pension costs.

Any case coming forward to members will need the support of the following:

- The Assistant Director of the Service Area of Head Teacher as applicable
- Finance who will need to confirm the impacts on budgets and how this is being funded.
- Human Resources to confirm the total costs and that all Policy and employment legislation has been complied with.
- Schools Improvement Team to confirm that the proposed redundancies within the School will not detrimentally affected the education provision
- Service Director or Director of Childrens, Families and Learning in the case of any schools related redundancies/early retirements.

11. Having completed the details under paragraph 10, the pro forma will then be passed to the following members to seek their approval.

- (a) Portfolio Holder of the relevant Service Area
- (b) Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources
- (c) Chairman of General Purposes Committee

12. These members will also need to determine the redundancy payment and whether any discretion should be applied. The Shadow Executive in approving the reports referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, above stated that Central Bedfordshire should only operate the discretion available 'in the most exceptional circumstances'. The discretion allows members to increase the statutory level of redundancy payment of a maximum of 30 weeks to up to a maximum of 45 weeks.

Historically, there has been very little application of the discretion for Schools redundancies and the legacy BCC very rarely applied any discretion. The most recent voluntary redundancies by the legacy district authorities resulted from the very different circumstances caused by LGR and reflected different organisations, circumstances and different policies.

Conclusion and Next Steps

13. An annual report to the General Purposes Committee will be submitted in July of each year setting out the numbers and associated costs of any redundancies/early retirements approved during the previous financial year.

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Location of papers: